



BANGLADESH

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Statement by

**H.E. Dr. A.K. Abdul Momen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh, at the General Debate of the Third Committee of the 67th Session of the UNGA on 'Advancement of women' [agenda item 28]
New York, 16 October 2012**

Mr. Chair:

My delegation would like to align itself with the statement delivered by Algeria on behalf G77 and China. We thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive reports under this agenda item.

Mr. Chair:

We have quite a number of documents for ensuring the rightful place for women in the society, such as: the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against women, in existence for 32 years, Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women adopted in 1993, Beijing Platform for Action, 1995 UN Security Council resolution 1325 and MDGs and Rio+20 outcome document.

All of these instruments reaffirm the centrality of gender equality. In Rio we endorsed the importance of women's participation in all three pillars of sustainable development.

Mr. Chair:

In spite of global promises made for the advancement of women, violence against women is persistent. It is horrifying to learn that even today, 7 in 10 women experience some level of violence at some point in their lifetime. This shows the failure of implementation of various commitments taken by Member States since Beijing. The Report of Secretary-General has rightly pointed out that violence against women constrains the achievements of the MDGs and leads to high economic and social costs.

Mr. Chair:

Bangladesh has made substantial progress in ensuring women's rights. The Government of Bangladesh is committed to the advancement of women through their political and economic empowerment. To this end, emphasis is given on the education of girls. Girl's education has been made free up to higher secondary level. Special stipend for girls has increased their enrollment in higher secondary and graduation level. Gender parity, a prime target of MDG-3, has been achieved in primary and secondary levels. Currently, the male-female ratio at secondary level is 47:53. The National Women's Development Policy, which is in place since 2001 has been revised to suit our current needs. 10% of all government jobs is reserved for women. Women now hold high positions in the judiciary, administrative, diplomatic, armed and law enforcement services. In the Parliament, we have 6 female cabinet members. Deputy Leader of the House, Whip is also female. Recently for the first time the country has elected its first female mayor.

For the economic empowerment of rural women, collateral free micro-credit is given with 5% service charge. Women entrepreneurs receive 10% of the Small Enterprise Fund and 10% industrial plots. Currently 3 million women are working in the RMG sector and many are working abroad and sending remittances.

Mr. Chair:

In order to stop violence against women, several laws are in place. Such as *Suppression of Violence Against Women and Children (Amendment) Act 2003*; *Acid Control Act 2002*; *Dowry Provision Act, 1980*; *Family Court Ordinance, 1985*; *Prevention and Restraint of Human Trafficking Act 2012*, *Pornography Control Act 2011*, and *Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010*. In addition to enactment of laws, one stop crises centers in 7 divisions are providing medical treatment, legal support, policy assistance and rehabilitation to the victims. DNA profiling lab and DNA screening labs have been established in few national hospitals. When a woman is victimized, the first place she seeks remedy is nearby police station. In this situation female police personnel plays an instrumental role. Accordingly, in the last few years, the government has recruited more than 3,000 female police officers. Our victim support center is run by trained, professional women officers making the center more approachable for women victims. Training on international laws and conventions are being imparted to judges, and law enforcement agencies to make them conversant with the existing international framework.

Mr. Chair:

Laws and rules cannot alone ensure justice for women if the mindset of the male partners is not changed. Awareness raising programs and advocacy are conducted with specific focus on engaging men and boys in prevention of violence against women and changing stereotype mindset.

Finally Mr. Chair, it is true that governments bear primary responsibility for realizing advancement of women. However, international community, development partners and UN agencies have significant role to play. While financial support is essential, developing countries also need technical support. I hope such support would be forthcoming for the betterment of situation of womenfolk in developing world.

I thank you all.