



STATEMENT BY
MR. ANDY RACHMIANTO
MINISTER COUNSELLOR
AT THE 67TH SESSION OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE
Agenda Item 28: Advancement of Women

NEW YORK, 16 OCTOBER 2012

Please check against delivery

Mr. Chairman,

Indonesia associates itself with the statement made by Malaysia on behalf of ASEAN and by Algeria on behalf of the Group 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

It is true to say that our quest for gender equality and advancement of women has been progressing steadily over the years. Both the Convention on the Elimination of all forms and Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action, the two main global instruments for women's rights, have been widely accepted by the UN Member States. More importantly, this signifies a global commitment among member states to promote women's quality of life.

Indonesia's view remains unchanged, that those instruments inspire and strengthen existing efforts by member states to ensure women to have equal opportunities to actively participate in the public and economic life. Within our national context, we are convinced that the full participation of women will consolidate our democracy and propel the nation's economic growth forward.

At the global level, governments, international organizations and civil societies have taken major steps to promote gender equality and the advancement of women. However, gender gaps still persist and the results we seek remain largely unattained. The failure of the last session of CSW from adopting an agreed conclusion on the issue that is pertinent to developing countries, has brought a global disappointment. Therefore, it is undeniable that women across the globe continue to suffer from discrimination, inequalities, deprivation and are hardly visible in public and political life.

Mr. Chairman,

For Indonesia, the fulfillment of people's basic rights, including women's, is guaranteed under our constitution. This is consistent with our adherence to international human rights principles and instruments. Indonesia believes that the attainment of gender equality and the full participation of women in all spheres of life are among key indicators of democracy. Because half of Indonesia's total population is comprised of women of productive age, their stagnation would undermine national development.

As a result, relevant laws and policies have been put in place to safeguard and guarantee women's rights. Our commitment to improve the quality of life and the role of women in all spheres of life is stipulated within the National Medium Term Development Plan of 2010-2014 and the Long Term Development Plan of 2005-2025.

In the area of political participation, we have revised both General Election and Political Party laws to activate temporary special measures to increase women's representation in legislative bodies. Political parties are obligated to include 30% women among their legislative bodies at the central and regional levels.

But despite such progress, women constitute only 18% of our total national parliamentary membership in our legislative bodies based on the 2009 general elections. This is a slow rate of

increase due to the fact that women's representation remains below the desired 30% as stipulated in the General Election Law 10/2008.

Mr. Chairman,

In the area of the economic development, there are important measures that have impacted women in job creation. They have benefited from the provision of facilities to increase the capacity of micro, small and medium enterprises; the expansion of cooperatives through the development of entrepreneurial skills and capacity building for business management; and the expansion of the People-based Small Business Loans Programme.

Apart from assistance provided for business activities, the average annual growth rate of women entering the labour market over the past seven years has been substantially higher than that of men. Yet women remain under-represented in the labour force with higher unemployment rates among them. They function primarily as part-time and 70% are workers in informal sector.

However, despite these constraints, the number of women working in SMEs, as the backbone of the informal economy in Indonesia, increased by 42% and their annual growth in the informal economic sector exceeds that of men. But even as entrepreneurs, women lack access to capital and business advisory services.

Our women migrant workers abroad are similarly disadvantaged. They endure poor conditions of work and their range of employment opportunities is very restricted. The protection of our women migrant workers therefore needs to be strengthened.

Mr. Chairman,

As a means of getting over some of these hurdles, Indonesia recently joined the new initiative, *Equal Futures Partnership* (EFP), to intensify its efforts to help the quality of life of women. We believe that this initiative complements the existing international instruments to further the advancement of women in politics and economic activities.

Along with that, our national action plan continues to focus on policy reform and capacity development as well as the monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation. The society and media will play pivotal roles in raising awareness on gender equality and the fulfillment of children's rights.

We also propose to engage in stronger advocacy on behalf of women through, among others, public awareness campaigns and support for gender-responsive media.

Overall, our strategy targets gender stereotyping, patriarchal practices and gender-based discrimination and violence that hinder women's participation in politics and economic development.

Thank you.