



Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the United Nations

Statement

by

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at the

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Mr. Chairman,

Friends, members of the UN-CSW, fellow delegates, advocates, representatives of national women's machineries, ladies and gentlemen, I am honored to address you on this occasion to share with you the achievements of my government in promoting the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action(BPFA).

We started to take up the implementation of the BPFA on March 23, 2005, immediately after my government sent a delegation to the Beijing + 10 meeting of the CSW. That was the time when we have just started our new government, and therefore, our achievements were framed within the possibilities offered by an ever-changing development platform and political situation. Our achievements may be few and modest, yet, they are foundational to an enduring approach to women's empowerment and gender equality.

We institutionalized a strong policy framework for gender equality by restoring women's rights and declaring in our Constitution that women are equal with men and any gender based discrimination will be punished under the law. Likewise, we (i) ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women; (ii) adopted six critical gender targets on health, education, employment, political participation and access to justice under the Afghanistan Millennium Development Goals; (iii) adopted gender equality as a cross cutting concern of our national strategy; and (iv) mainstreamed gender into our sub-national governance policy. More importantly, in accordance with paragraph 297 of the BPFA, we adopted a ten-year plan of action for the women of Afghanistan which now serves as the government's main vehicle for implementing its commitments to women.

We sent our girls and women back to school, addressed their health concerns, implemented capacity development and economic support interventions.

We are just establishing a new set of leaders for our government and an International Conference on Afghanistan has just been held a month ago in London. This conference drew up an internationally-backed platform of my government for the next five years. I wish to report a reiteration of the State commitments to gender equality and respect for human rights in this new platform, including the accelerated implementation of the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA), implementation of the law on the elimination of violence against women, and the appointment of more women to policy, decision making and leadership positions.

More importantly, violence against women, which used to be private matter, is now recognized as a concern of public policy and action; we set up a multi-donor fund to assist civil society and NGOs to undertake projects that will respond to VAW cases in their communities.

I would also share that as per the London conference discussion regarding reconciliation and reintegration, we work harder to ensure that women are fully involved in the peace process. Afghan women must have equal participation to that of men during peace negotiation and reconciliation process. Women's human rights is not to be victimized for a peace building process and during reconciliation. We want peace with justice, not peace with injustice.

It is clear our main is insecurity- war, massive poverty, limited physical infrastructures, stunted human capacities, social polarization, undeveloped economy, unstable peace condition, deeply entrenched obstructive traditions, unmanaged population growth, depletion of natural resources, and a fragile political situation.

With these and many more, we will continue to work for women's empowerment and gender equality in solidarity with the women's movement globally. We need the support of the international community for promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.