



SLOVENIA

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**STATEMENT
BY**

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Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me first to express Slovenia's full alignment with the statement delivered by Spain on behalf of the European Union.

The Beijing Conference was a critical milestone in the advancement of women. Since then, my government, non-governmental organisations, in particular women's organisations, and other relevant actors have responded to the challenges set in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in many strategic and specific ways, and in many critical areas significant progress has been achieved.

Let me briefly outline some of the efforts made in achieving gender equality and empowerment of women, policy gains and challenges ahead in some important areas.

To translate the letter and the spirit of international human rights law important legislative steps were made. Specific gender equality act of 2002 was complemented with the adoption of the general anti-discrimination act in 2004. Together they provide a basis for recognizing and prohibiting all forms of sex and gender based discrimination and intersecting forms of discrimination against women.

Prohibition of discrimination against women on the grounds of sexual orientation gained a new legal guarantee in the draft Family Code which was recently submitted to the national parliament for consideration and adoption. It equalizes, in all elements, the same-sex civil partnership with marriage that is now defined as a partnership between two persons of the same or opposite sex, and recognises the legal consequences of the partnership between persons of the same sex, who are not married.

To comply with the principle of equal representation and participation of women in political decision-making the so called quotas targeting the gender composition of the electoral lists were introduced in all elections acts. However, after first elections held upon the enactment of such provisions it became apparent that more attention has to be given to reducing structural disadvantages and overcoming gender stereotypes and prejudices that are constantly perpetuating under-representation of women in the Slovenian political life.

Gender-based violence, including domestic violence is recognized as a form of discrimination that seriously inhibits women's ability to enjoy their rights and freedoms on a basis of equality with men. Thus, prevention of violence against women and protection of victims have been constantly scaled-up. The adoption of the *Domestic Violence Prevention Act* in 2008 and the *Resolution on National Programme on Prevention of Domestic Violence* in 2009 are one of the results of the intensified government's efforts to end all forms and manifestations of violence against women.

One of the important decisions taken by the Government was also to act as a role model in guaranteeing a working environment free of any violation to dignity of a person. To set up positive example for other employers the Government adopted a Decree on ensuring dignity at work, which obliges all ministries and government offices to actively prevent any violation to dignity of a person, such as sexual harassment and bullying. To comply with the requirements under the Decree all ministries and government offices appointed adequately trained person to support victims of such forms of violence at work.

With the adoption of the *2005 – 2013 National programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men* gender equality policy gained a new momentum. The achievement of substantive gender equality and the empowerment of women has been increasingly understood and acknowledged as a joint and common effort of society as a whole, while responsibilities for implementation of the gender equality policy have been vested with all branches of the State and all levels of government.

Implementation of the first two action plans for implementing the gender equality national programme was already completed. The more systematic evaluation of the situation, formulation and adoption of comprehensive range of legal and programmatic measures and variety of actions carried out, as well as building on them continuously, in light of their effectiveness and new or emerging issues were instrumental in meeting the objectives set.

Yet the implementation of the laws, policies and programmes continue to lag regrettably behind the ambitious commitments made in Beijing.

Mr. Chairperson,

The report of the Secretary-General identifies gaps and challenges in regard to each of the twelve critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action. In this respect I would like to highlight three points which my Government views as pertinent to the realisation of Beijing objectives.

First on the social and cultural transformation required to achieve substantive gender equality. While acknowledging that it cannot be realized by short-term measures, we must not allow that culture and tradition, which often reinforce the notion of women being inferior to men, are used as an excuse for maintaining the unequal division of labour, power and responsibilities between women and men.

My second point concerns the positive role that education and the media should undertake in overcoming the traditional division of roles between women and men and in preventing newly emerging stereotypes in areas or circumstances where women made gains.

My last point is that gender equality is not only important for women and girls. Men and boys are also affected and their involvement in the process of change is instrumental.

Mr. Chairperson,

We need to translate our political commitments into swift undertaking of uncompromising policies and their effective implementation of the Platform for Action. UN is a world home for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Effective implementation of this mandate requires creation of the new composite entity without any further delay.

Thank you for your attention.