

**PERMANENT MISSION OF DENMARK  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Statement by  
H.E. Ambassador Carsten Staur  
Permanent Representative of Denmark



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**THE 52<sup>nd</sup> SESSION OF  
THE COMMISSION  
ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN  
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*Check against delivery*



Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen.

It is an honour and a privilege for me to address the 52<sup>nd</sup> Commission on the Status of Women. The Secretary General's launch of his multi-year campaign to eliminate violence against women is as timely as is the priority theme for this year's session on "Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women".

Focus on the economic empowerment of women is crucial for our joint ambition to achieve the MDGs by 2015.

The MDGs have created a new momentum in the way we approach development. National development strategies, focusing on poverty reduction, based on broad national ownership, and supported by the international community are creating results in many countries. Much still remains to be done, not least in sub-Saharan Africa.

The MDG's have attracted attention on women's social empowerment, on health, nutrition, primary education, child mortality, maternal health and hiv/aids. Women's economic empowerment has been given less focus. We need to rebalance our approach and to deal with the issue of empowerment of women in a more holistic way, where social and economic empowerment is mutually supportive. Gender equality and empowerment of women is not only a central MDG but a means to achieving all the MDGs.

We see women consistently lagging behind men with regard to participation in the formal labour force, earning equal pay for equal work. We see women being consistently discriminated when it comes to access to credits, to inheritance and to ownership of land. And we see societies suffering from not utilizing the human capital of women to anything near the extent possible, largely due to culture and tradition.

The Danish Government has decided to make an effort to change this situation. We will sound a 'Call to Action'. Action to remove the barriers to women's economic empowerment. And action to refocus our pursuit of the MDG's on MDG3 – on equality

and the empowerment of women, stressing the importance of economic empowerment as a crucial part in the global fight against poverty.

To do so, we will launch a **global MDG3 campaign** - to intensify global action to achieve MDG3 and especially action on economic empowerment.

Denmark will establish an international MDG3 network and host an international conference in Copenhagen in April.

We will work for the conference to point at the necessity of establishing a **Global MDG3 Coalition** - of governments, decision makers at all levels, including the private sector, international organisations and civil society actors – and thus hopefully contribute to deliver tangible commitments at the High Level Event on the MDGs, planned for 25<sup>th</sup> September this year here in New York.

We will ask of the coalition-members to commit themselves to do something extra – to go that extra mile to advance the objectives of MDG3.

Donor governments might consider to allocate more development assistance to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Business leaders and companies might do their utmost to eliminate discrimination in respect of employment opportunities for women.

And governments in developing countries might enhance the integration of gender equality in PRSPs and might allocate more resources and track expenditures to these tasks.

For its part, the Government of Denmark will double its financial support to gender equality and empowerment of women from 2008 through 2010 and track ODA to gender.

Mr. Chairman,

In development cooperation Denmark speaks loudly and clearly for empowerment of women, and we are a strong advocate for gender responsive budgeting. We find the

inspiration at home. At national level, we mainstream gender equality and we target use of public resources.

In Denmark, gender and gender equality perspectives must be incorporated into all aspects of state and local policy-making, planning and administration.

We have developed tools for gender assessments of new legislation, campaign activities, resource allocation and gender segregated data and statistics, shared experiences and best practice and developed skills – all necessary for implementing gender mainstreaming strategies. And we have been rewarded.

An evaluation of the Danish gender mainstreaming initiative tells us, that state agencies dedicating themselves to implementing gender mainstreaming achieve higher quality in policy-making and administration.

Our next step is to ensure that women and men, boys and girls benefit from the improved quality of services and gender equality. That's a goal set in the perspective and action plan of 2008 of the Minister for Gender Equality--- and in two years we will know the results of those endeavours.

Mr. Chairman,

On our international agenda we envisage to show results even faster than in two years.

The Danish Minister for Development Cooperation will - in relation to Women's International Day on the 8th of March – present the very first “MDG3 championship torches” in a worldwide public diplomacy campaign. A number of leaders that stand ready and willing to do something extra will receive a torch. The list will encompass individuals representing not only themselves, but also their companies, their governments, their organizations and their countries.

They will have one thing in common: Their belief in the importance of taking action to empower women and achieve MDG3.

We have a tremendous task in front of us. Action to increase women's access to formal employment, to business opportunities, to land and to resources, to credit, to technology and to essential infrastructure such as transport, water and energy is needed, and it needs something extra from all of us.

It is our firm hope, and our strong belief, that as many as possible in this room will join the MDG3 campaign.

Women have to play a much more significant role in economic and productive life, if the MDG's are to be achieved at the midterm of the next decade.

We can still make it – but only if we all increase our efforts – and go that extra mile.

Thank you.