



MYANMAR

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Statement by
Mr. San Lwin, Deputy Permanent Representative
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at the
Fifty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women
on

Agenda Item 3:
"Follow-up to the fourth World Conference on Women and to the
twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled" Women
2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first
century"

New York, 28 February 2008

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to join the previous speakers in expressing my delegation's congratulations to you and assure you the support of my delegation.

My delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made by the distinguish Minister of Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

I wish also to commend the Commission for the decision to focus on financing for gender equality and development of women as the priority theme for the 52nd Session. We hope that the outcome of the Session will provide significant input on gender perspective to the upcoming Follow-up International Conference to the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development in Qatar.

My delegation is appreciative of the detail analysis on the implementation of the global commitments made for the financing for the development and empowerment of women contained in the Secretary- General's report.

Mr. Chairman,

The core message of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly is to advance the goals of equality, development and peace for all women in the world. The world leaders had committed themselves to address the constraints and obstacles to the advancement and empowerment of women the world over. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set out to be implemented by 2015, include the MDG3 on the gender equality and empowerment of women.

Mr. Chairman,

Women as paid or unpaid workers, have contributed significantly to the entire human development. The international community has acknowledged that progress for women is progress for all. Various outcomes and agreements of international conferences called for incorporating gender perspectives to the development goals. In 2002, the world leaders gathered in Monterrey, Mexico and resolved to address the challenges of financing for development. The importance of a holistic approach to financing for development, including the gender-sensitive development is highlighted in the Monterrey Consensus. We have all these commitments. What we need to do now is to implement them.

Mr. Chairman,

The Secretary-General rightly pointed out in his Report that the commitments on gender equality and empowerment of women since the fourth World Conference on Women, including through the Monterrey Consensus, have yet to be

implemented. According to the 2007 Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific, gender inequality costs \$80 billion a year to the region. The region loses up to \$ 47 billion per year because of restrictions on women's access to employment, and up to \$30 billion because of gender gap in education. Dedicated action is necessary both at the national and international level to bridge the gap between policy and practice in promoting gender equality and empowerment of women.

Mr. Chairman,

Credit, especially micro-credit, has a positive impact on women's empowerment. In 2004, it is estimated that 3,164 micro-credit institutions reached 92 million clients of which 83.5 per cent of the poorest clients were women. However, it must be stressed that the credit programmes should be carefully designed to benefit women.

Mr. Chairman,

In implementing the programmes to empower women, the key obstacle is lack of resources. Therefore, the Beijing Platform for Action called for adequate financial resources to be committed at the international level for the implementation of the Platform of Action in developing countries. The realization of the MDGs also depends on adequate financing. However, we find it regrettable that the estimated financing gap for achieving MDG3 in low-income countries, ranged from \$8.6 billion in 2006 and \$23.8 billion in 2015.

Mr. Chairman,

In my own country, the Government has been striving to achieve MDGs and to reduce poverty through a National Development Plan by and large utilizing our own resources.

In Myanmar, women constitute 50.3 per cent of the total population. The advancement of women is crucial for the overall development of the country. The effective implementation of the Beijing Platform of action is entrusted the Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs (MNCWA). Under the umbrella of MNCWA, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation (MWAFF) was formed in 2003. These two leading organizations, in collaboration with the line ministries, international and national NGOs and United Nations Agencies are working to implement the strategies designed for the advancement and empowerment of women throughout the nation.

Mr. Chairman,

It is important to address the welfare of women at the grass root level. In Myanmar, 70 per cent of the entire population reside in the rural and border areas. In order to promote their progress and welfare, the Government has established 18 special development regions. Since the 1990s, Five Rural Development Tasks,

focusing on areas of economy, transportation, health, education and safe water supply had been laid down.

Youth Development Training Centers, Vocational Training Schools, and Primary Health Care Training Schools are specially designed for women and girl child. Moreover, the Community Development for Remote Township Project implemented as a joint project of the Development of progress of Border Areas and National Races and the UNDP, is designed to give financial support to the women in the rural areas through self-help income generating programme. This programme, implemented since 2004, is geared towards poverty reduction through promotion of self-reliant micro business opportunities and provision of access to small-scale credit. Apart from this, MNCWA and other national NGOs are also providing temporary loans to the needy women through micro-credit schemes.

Mr. Chairman,

I hardly need to stress that international cooperation and global partnership is essential to assist the developing countries in their efforts to promote the advancement of women. In order to effectively implement the Beijing Platform Plan of Action and the MDGs, the realization of internationally agreed ODA target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product and of 0.15 per cent to 0.20 per cent for LDCs is absolutely necessary. Commitments must be implemented both at the national and international levels.

On our part, we will continue to strive for the promotion and protection of the rights of women and the girl child in conformity with the goals set out in the Beijing Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

I thank you.
