



Check against delivery

Third Committee
General Assembly
63rd Session

Statement by
H.E. Adiyatwidi Adiwoso A.
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia
to the United Nations

Agenda Item 59:

- (a) Advancement of Women
- (b) Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

14 October 2008

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

325 East 38th Street, New York, NY 10016 • Tel. (212) 972-8333 • Fax. (212) 972-9780

www.indonesiamission-ny.org email: ptri@indonesiamission-ny.org

Mr. Chairman,

The delegation of Indonesia is in full support of agenda item 56 concerning the advancement of women. We wish to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his reports and the recommendations contained therein. In contributing to this item, Indonesia aligns itself with the statement by the distinguished Representative of Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the G-77 and China.

Indonesia believes that no society can aim for genuine people-centered development if it chooses to leave women behind. That is why Indonesia wishes at the outset to reiterate its firm commitment to the full implementation of the relevant resolutions before us. We therefore welcome the opportunity to share with other Member States the progress being made to improve the quality of life enjoyed by women in Indonesia.

Indonesia recognizes the need for women to live with boundless opportunities to enjoy their fundamental human rights. We have diligently sought to create those conditions that will facilitate the achievement of such ideals. But there have been myriad social, economic and political obstacles to the process of change. There are also legal and budgetary constraints that work against easy implementation.

However, all of these hindrances are being tackled simultaneously at all levels by Indonesia with vigor. Under Presidential Instruction in 2000, gender mainstreaming of the national development process has been ongoing. As a result, all Government agencies are obligated to mainstream gender in their work. Regional governments have been mobilized in this process. Accordingly, national and regional budgets are now structured, as mandated by 2003 legislation, to make them more gender-sensitive. This ensures reliable funding for projects to empower women.

Many other areas of life in Indonesia are being impacted by gender mainstreaming, gradually changing societal attitudes. In the area of education, the goal is to halve female illiteracy by 2009, or earlier than the 2015 MDG deadline. Towards this end, gender responsive strategic plans for 2004-2009 have been formulated. Several measures have been adopted and implemented to increase school enrolment at the primary and secondary levels in both urban and rural areas. Poor families and remote areas with heavy concentrations of girls have been targeted for assistance with grants and scholarships. School curriculums are being adjusted to free youth of limiting gender stereotypes.

Recognizing that the health of women is vital for development, policies and programs on the reduction of maternal and infant mortality rates as well as other female disorders are being implemented. One such disorder is obstetric fistula. Though the data on this health problem is not readily available, there is an awareness of its presence. Studies suggest that there needs to be more services to provide counseling, prevention and treatment. And to ensure effective strategic interventions, there had to be more training and research on fistula.

There are other threats which compromise women's health. Physical violence and economic deprivation take a heavy toll on the health and well-being of women. Without steady income from decent employment, women are made dependents who often have to suffer various forms of abuse to live. These factors prevent women from maximizing their potential.

Due to these painful realities, there has been a developing culture of zero tolerance for violence against women. Acts of violence, including rape, is treated as a serious criminal offence. Women's rights are also protected through laws that outlaw domestic violence. Similarly, the Law on Human Trafficking in 2007 safeguards the rights of female migrant workers.

To reduce poverty among women, the National Strategy to Alleviate Poverty has been in place since 2005. Among its many goals are employment creation and capacity building for needy men and women. In addition, laws on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises as well as on Cooperatives are being developed to help women with business ambitions to achieve their goal.

However the process of change can be halted if not fuelled by strong advocacy by women themselves. Gender-biased laws are being revised so that women can have the legal and social protection that facilitates their progress. The Laws on General Elections, on Political Parties and on the Status of Members of Parliament have been amended to ensure that, after the 2009 general election, 30 per cent of the representatives in parliament are women.

To these end, the contribution of the relevant UN Funds and Programmes, including UNIFEM, has been an important factor in the progress being made for the advancement of women in Indonesia.

Mr. Chairman,

Looking ahead into the future, Indonesia will continue to be guided by the conviction that progress for women is progress for all. We will use the social and economic indicators embedded in the resolutions to measure the progress that we make. Indonesia's aim is to build a just, stable and inclusive society. We believe we are on the right path. In closing, we urge that close attention be paid to the following:

The need for sufficient resources to match policy commitments,

- The need for an indiscriminate policy for education of girls and women,
- Closer attention to physical disorders that debilitate women and hinder their progress,
- The urgent need to have more employment opportunities for women,
- The need for legal sanctions to be vigorously enforced to prevent violence against women.

I thank you.