



KAZAKHSTAN

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**Statement by H.E. Mrs. Byrganym Aitimova,
the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan
to the UN at the Third Committee general discussion on the
Advancement of Women
(New York, 14 October 2008)**

**Dear Mr. Chair,
Distinguished Colleagues,**

In the outset of my statement I would like to express gratitude to the Secretary-General for the thematic reports prepared by his staff for the current general discussion. I would also like to wish you, Mr. Chair, all the success in leading this session today on such an important issue. Now that we have recently reviewed Millennium Development Goals achievement progress at the midpoint to 2015, we know that progress on the advancement of women being a focus of several MDGs is among the most difficult.

Mr. Chair,

Unfortunately violence against women remains a prevalent crime among human rights violations; therefore Kazakhstan fully supports the UN Secretary-General's Campaign to End Violence against Women launched in February 2008. We strongly believe that with the concerted actions of the world community this Campaign could become a solid ground for future efforts of Member States at global, regional and national levels, as well as the UN system in ensuring effective prevention and protection of women and girl-children from violence.

In line with the major recommendation of the recent Reports of the Secretary-General on the *Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women* and on *Trafficking in women and girls*, Kazakhstan strongly advocates for providing a secure strengthened system of human rights protection in the country with a special focus on women and children. Therefore we follow the UN recommendations that advancement of women among other development issues should be aligned with the MDGs, mainstreaming cross-sectoral integration of gender concepts into socially-oriented development policies in all national development strategies and processes.

Kazakhstan has undertaken commitments under 30 international human rights instruments, including on gender equality and women empowerment, such as for example. against slave-trade and exploitation of prostitution by third parties. Kazakhstan has co-sponsored the ECOSOC resolution concerning trafficking in persons. We also support the efforts of Belarus on the establishment of the UN interagency coordination group for effective anti-trafficking measures' coordination.

Due to Kazakhstan's specific geographic location, our country is prepositioned to be the transit hub for trafficking in women and girls. A Special Task Force of the Ministry of Internal Affairs was established to address such challenge. National legislative practice and methodology is being improved, while Kazakhstan has achieved significant progress in prosecution, conviction, and punishment of traffickers.

Extensive work is conducted nationwide for preventing, suppressing and punishing for crimes related to trafficking in persons and slave-trade for exploitation, including human trafficking public-awareness raising and victims' rights protection through the network of 25 specialized NGOs. The hotline for victims of violence and trafficking was established throughout Kazakhstan.

On the note of inter-state collaboration, the Government of Kazakhstan actively participates in preventing and suppressing human trafficking in close cooperation with the government agencies of the Commonwealth of Independent States and other countries. Kazakhstan actively uses the potential of Interpol and the CIS Bureau for Combating Organized Crime and Other Dangerous Crimes, for timely exchange of useful data, experiences and good practices on anti-trafficking activities of the partner agencies with Governments, international and regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and other relevant bodies.

For the Republic of Kazakhstan implementation mechanisms in the area of gender equality and women empowerment have been reinforced in December 2005 under the frameworks of the foundation document, the Strategy on Gender Equality for 2006–2016 adopted by the Presidential Decree. The Equal Opportunities and Domestic Violence Law drafts are currently awaiting consideration within the Parliament. The draft law envisages mandatory gender sensitive evaluation of existing and emerging laws, regulations and national programmes and mandatory integration of gender aspects into budget drafting.

Kazakhstan's main objective today is to ensure that an established unified system of methods, techniques, and practices for the political and economic advancement of women, protection of the reproductive health of women, combating violence against women and children, achievement of gender equality in family relations is applied in practice by law-enforcement bodies, community organizations, the UN country team, non-governmental and international organizations and general public.

Mr. Chair,

Kazakhstan deems as crucial the idea of strengthening the substantive and programmatic aspects of the UN System's support to Member States towards achieving gender equality and women empowerment.

Last year the UN CEDAW Committee has highly evaluated the second periodic report of the Government of Kazakhstan on the progress achieved so far in gender equality and women empowerment. The CEDAW Committee members also gave a number of valuable recommendations for the further improvement of the status of women in our country with improving overall social-economic situation in the country.

Our delegation is convinced that adequate financing of progress in advancement of women is of paramount importance. That's why Kazakhstan

welcomes the new tendencies in integrating the best practices of gender budgeting into its national system.

One of the major aspects of advancement of women is their decent employment and increasing role in economic development. Our Long-Term Gender Equality Strategy sets forth the establishment of the system of women's training for decision-making, as well as state and public-private investing in social projects related to family and women. For example, the two thirds of all micro-credit recipients in Kazakhstan are women. There is quite a large number of women in political seats in Kazakhstan, and the number of businesswomen is increasing too.

This is why Kazakhstan hosted the Second Eurasian Summit of Women this June, the high-level international meeting that gathered more than 300 representatives of governments, business, and international organizations from more than 20 countries. In this regard we would like to extend our thanks to Ms. Rachel Mayanja, the Special Adviser of the UN Secretary-General on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment, for her active involvement in the work and outcome of the Summit.

Mr. Chair,

With its fast-developing economy, the Government of Kazakhstan is consistently increasing social spending, primarily in healthcare, education, employment, social protection of the vulnerable groups. My Government focuses on achieving higher standards of living in the country, including on individual and family well-being, adequate nutrition and access to safe drinking water, affordable housing, high quality education and health services, social protection and sustainable environment.

Kazakhstan's stand on the nation's health stems from the realization that health of citizens is the most important component of our country's development. As elsewhere in the world, the maternal mortality reduction is unfortunately the MDG, progress on which is less likely to be achieved in Kazakhstan. Reducing maternal mortality is precariously uneven throughout the regions, yet we are taking all the possible measures to improve the reproductive health of our population and render high-quality care, thus reduce MMR.

Kazakhstan is very proud and pleased to host the International conference these days that marks the 30th anniversary of the Almaty Declaration on Primary Healthcare. The United Nations is duly represented at this event by Ms. Ann Veneman, Executive Director of UNICEF. We pin hopes on the outcome recommendations of this important Conference.

Mr. Chair,

Despite my country's great accomplishments and the efforts to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women, we still face some challenges in this area. Discrimination of women in the labor market, lack of awareness of gender issues among boys and men, negative aspects of culture, including, for example, sex stereotyping, remain a major hindrance to the advancement of women. Recognizing these challenges, the Government of Kazakhstan intends to continue its work to fulfill these and other tasks, in close cooperation with the United Nations and other involved parties.

Mr. Chair,

Commending UN and its funds and programmes for actions in promoting MDGs in gender equality and women empowerment around the world, as well as for the positive arrangements undertaken so far for the improvement of the UN gender architecture and mainstreaming, the Government of Kazakhstan pledges to fully support the new undertakings within the transitional reform period and over years to come.

Thank you for your attention.