



# NORWAY

**General Assembly  
63<sup>rd</sup> Session  
Third Committee  
12th meeting**

**Advancement of women**

Check against delivery

## STATEMENT

By

**Ms Mona Juul  
Ambassador  
Deputy Permanent Representative**

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*www.norway-un.org*

Mr. Chair,

Women represent half the talent, half the market, and when included in decision making, a better bottom line and better corporate governance. Extensive international research backs this claim. It is obvious that if you disregard a large part of the work force, you will miss out on some very important talents! No nation can afford that.

Let me mention two recent domestic policy initiatives Norway has taken to promote gender equality:

Public limited companies listed on the Norwegian Stock Exchange are required by law to have at least 40 percent women appointed to their boards of directors. When the bill was first introduced in Parliament in 2003 only seven percent of board members were women. Today the figure is 39 percent. State-owned companies face the same requirements as the private sector. In a country where almost 65 percent of university graduates are women, we found it unacceptable that boardrooms remained a male preserve. No stone had been left unturned in order to change this outdated boardroom culture. In view of the slow progress that was being made, the Norwegian government turned to affirmative action in order to effect change.

Mr Chair,

At the same time, we need to strike a better balance between work and family life. However, in the pursuit of this balance, gender equality must not become a second rung priority. Fathers must be given greater incentives to spend more time at home. This will encourage mothers not to abandon their careers while caring for children. To this end a bill is now before the Norwegian parliament to extend from six to ten weeks the exclusive fathers' quota in the parental leave scheme. If the father chooses not to use the quota it cannot be transferred to the mother.

Mr Chair,

Gender mainstreaming has been mentioned *ad infinitum* in interventions during the course of this week. However, the reports we have read attest to at best modest progress. Let me draw you attention to the upcoming Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Thirteen men and six women have been proposed as members of the new monitoring committee. When the 12 members are elected on November 3rd, let us make sure that there is a 50-50 balance.

Mr Chair, I thank you for your attention