



MYANMAR

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58th United Nations General Assembly

Statement by

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in the Third Committee on

Item 110 : Advancement of women

and

Item No. 111: Implementation of the outcome of the fourth

world conference on

women and of the twenty-third special session of the

general assembly , entitled

"Women 2000: gender

equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".

New York : October 17, 2003

Mr.Chairman,

First of all may I express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for his informative reports and also to Ms. Angela King, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Advisor on gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Ms. Carolyn Hannan, Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women, Ms. Noleen Heyzer, Executive Director of UNIFEM and Ms. Feride Acar, Chairperson of the CEDAW for their efforts to advance the cause of women worldwide. My delegation also wishes to align itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Morroco on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr.Chairman,

Whilst the cause of women has seen progress in many areas throughout the world, there are still certain places in the world where women still lack a fundamental to life - peace and security. In this we sympathize the plight of our sisters in Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq and hope that this year's General Assembly deliberations will lead to concrete steps to bring further positive developments for them.

The Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs

Mr. Chairman,

I wish now to give an overview of the endeavours that Myanmar has taken for the advancement of women. We have established the Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs in 1996 . Building upon the rights that women have traditionally enjoyed, the Committee has taken effective steps to further improve the lives of women in Myanmar. The Committee's patron is the Prime Minister and the Committee is chaired by the Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. Committees are also formed at various levels in all states and divisions of the country. The National Committee complements the Government's activities for development and further advancement of women, and works closely with NGO's and local communities.

Women in the education and health sectors

Mr.Chairman,

One of the Millennium Development Goals is to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015. Myanmar has always encouraged the educating of women, whether they choose to enter the work force or not. An educated mother is considered vital to rearing potential leaders of the country. Since olden days many Myanmar women had headed their family businesses, running their businesses from their homes, without the need to leave the home. However, traditional patterns are changing in Myanmar as they are worldwide, and more and more women are entering the work force in both the private and public sectors.

In Myanmar teaching is one of the most popular careers chosen by women. Myanmar has a large percentage of women teachers. Thus, schools in Myanmar at all levels are "female oriented". At the primary school level 73.11% of the teaching force are women and at the secondary level 76.49% of the teaching force are women. As for

the percentage of school principals, women principals constitute 51.92% in urban areas and male principals constitute 57.60% in rural areas.

At the university level the percentage differs by each discipline. In the Education discipline, 78.69% of the teaching force are women and in technology and computer studies 66.58% of the teaching force are women. In Medical Schools 73.58% of the teaching force are women. Among all University disciplines only Forestry has the least percentage of women teachers, standing at 16%. In the health profession, women medical doctors constitute 54.13% and women specialists constitute 52.17% of the work force.

Myanmar Women's Entrepreneurs Association.

Mr. Chairman,

In my country, the Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs Association, founded by successful women entrepreneurs plays an active part in the advancement of women. The Association reaches out to women entrepreneurs offering advice and micro-credit to women wishing to start out businesses or further expand their existing businesses. In September of this year, the Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs Association hosted the 10th Global Conference of Women Entrepreneurs in Yangon. This was an important step in giving recognition to the increasingly important role that women are playing in the economic life and social progress of the nation.

Trafficking

Mr. Chairman,

Trafficking of people, particularly women is a global phenomenon which poses serious danger to women everywhere. Myanmar a country with 3,805 miles of land boundary with five countries is very much aware of the issue of trafficking in persons and the Government is committed to combat this issue. Myanmar has put in place a National Action Plan for the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons and the National Action Plan consists of four strategies. They are preventive strategy, prosecutive strategy, protective strategy and repatriation, return and re-integrative strategy. Through two years of close collaboration the Myanmar National Committee on Women Affairs and the UN Inter-Agency Project on Human trafficking have released a Handbook on trafficking. A National seminar on human trafficking was also held in May this year. The Myanmar Penal Code contains provisions for meting out heavy sentences for human traffickers and the Government is taking strong enforcement measures in accordance with the provisions of the Myanmar Penal Code. To further strengthen national legislation, Myanmar is now in the process of enacting a separate Anti-human trafficking law.

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to conclude by assuring that Myanmar, a country which respects the rights of women as a tradition and a state party to CEDAW, will spare no efforts in further advancing the status of women.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.