



Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the United Nations

**Statement**

**by**

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**Acting Minister of Women's Affairs**

**at the**

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**Mr. Chairman,**

Friends, members of the UN-CSW, fellow delegates, advocates, representatives of national women's organizations, ladies and gentlemen, I am honored to address you on this occasion to share with you the achievements of my government in promoting the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA).

We started to take up the implementation of the BPFA in July 2005, immediately after my government's first delegation to the Beijing + 10 meeting of the CSW. That was the time when we have explored the possibilities offered by an ever-changing development platform and political situation. Our achievements may be few and modest, yet, they are foundational to an enduring approach to women's empowerment and gender equality.

We have instituted a legal system for girls and women and declaring in our constitution that women are equal with men and any gender based discrimination will be punished under the law. Likewise, we (i) ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, (ii) adopted our national gender strategy on health, education, employment, political participation and access to justice, (iii) adopted gender equality as a cross cutting concern of our national strategy; and (iv) mainstreamed gender into our national governance policy. More importantly, in accordance with paragraph 29 of the BPFA, we adopted a ten year plan of action for the women of Afghanistan which is now serving as the government's blueprint for implementing its commitments to women.

We sent our girls and women back to school, addressed their health concerns, implemented capacity development and economic support interventions.

We are just establishing a new set of leaders for our government and an international conference on Afghanistan has just been held here a month ago. In the next five years, I wish to report a reiteration of the government's commitment to gender equality and women's rights on this new platform, including the accelerated implementation of the National Plan of Action for Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA), implementation of the law on the elimination of violence against women, and the appointment of women to political, judicial and leadership positions.

More importantly, violence against women, which used to be private matter, is now recognized as a concern of public policy and action. We set up a multi-sectoral task force to assist civil society and NGOs to undertake projects that will respond to VAW cases in their communities.

I would also share that as per the London conference discussion regarding reintegration and reconciliation, we want to ensure that women are fully involved in the peace process. Afghan women must have equal participation in the negotiation and reconciliation process. Women's human rights is not to be victimized for a peace building process and during reconciliation. We promote justice, not peace with injustice.

It is clear that in Afghanistan, there is insecurity, war, massive poverty, limited physical infrastructures, stunted human capacities, social discrimination, undeveloped economy, unstable peace environment, entrenched obstructive traditions, unmanaged population growth, depletion of natural resources, and a fragile political situation.

With these challenges, we have to work with women's organizations and women's equality in solidarity with the women's movement globally. We need the support of the international community for promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.