



The Permanent Mission of Iceland to the United Nations

Statement by
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Permanent Representative

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Mr. President,

Allow me to start by congratulating you on your election to the Chair of this very important committee. You can rest assured that the Icelandic Delegation will work with you in the spirit of cooperation throughout this session.

Mr. President,

Allow me also to use this opportunity to extend my sincere congratulations to the winners of this year's Nobel Peace Prize, Her Excellency President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, her compatriot, Ms. Leymah Gbowee and Mr. Ismael AwakKur, a leader of Yemen. These women have shown us the power of their fight for peace. Their fellow country men and women have followed their contributions not only to their own communities but also to the example they have set for women and men around the world. As with Ms. Karman's own words, "this is a prize for Yemen, Yemeni youth and women." We encourage the Government of Yemen to recognize the honor granted to the Yemeni people with this award and to give Ms. Karman and her supporters the opportunity to exercise their freedom of expression and their right to peaceful assembly, without fear of retribution.

Mr. President,

It is appropriate, when discussing ways to promote peace and security to make a reference to Security Council resolution 1325. As acknowledged in the resolution, the participation of women is an important prerequisite for sustainable peace. Iceland has both actively advocated and supported women's participation in peace negotiations.

There is no democracy without women. Women everywhere should be a part of the political process, including as candidates and voters. In this regard we welcome the part played by women in the Arab Spring and hope that their participation will bear fruit in the future of their countries. Libya is a case in point. Having played an important role in bringing about the change in Libya, women should be included in the rebuilding and reconciliation process. Iceland strongly encourages the Secretary-General and his representatives as well as others involved in the process of bringing stability to Libya to ensure that resolution 1335 is fully implemented in all their work.

We welcome the discussion that is taking place in the Third Committee this year on women and political participation, including through the draft resolution on the subject put forward by the United States. It is a timely discussion and should in no way be limited to countries undergoing political transition. The subject is relevant for all member states.

Mr. President,

It is of great importance to the full implementation and universal ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, CEDAW. Accordingly, we call upon all states that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to CEDAW as soon as possible. In the same way, we call upon those states that have made reservations that are incompatible with the purpose and objective of the treaty to immediately withdraw them.

Mr. President,

I would like to reiterate my Government's commitment to UN Women. We have a strong policy position and priorities set out in its Strategic Plan. In line with Iceland's strong support of CEDAW, the Icelandic Parliament recently adopted a Strategy for Iceland's Development Cooperation 2014-2014, where UN Women is identified as one of our four key multilateral partners.

As a UN member state, we have high expectations towards UN Women in continuing the advancement of women around the world. We continue to support UN Women with the help of our Member States, to live up to these expectations.

Thank you,

Mr. President.