



**Statement**

by

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**of the**  
**Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste**  
**to the United Nations**

**to the**  
**Third Committee**  
**of the 66<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly,**  
**on the**  
**Advancement of Women.**

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Check Against Delivery



Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished delegates,

As this is the first time I am taking the floor, let me first congratulate you and your Bureau on your election, and assure you of Timor-Leste's full support and commitment to the work of this important committee.

Timor-Leste associates itself with the statement delivered earlier today by Australia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

Timor-Leste considers gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls to be a priority, and the Government is fully committed to its realization. The Strategic Development Plan that will guide our development agenda places a strong emphasis on gender issues and recognizes women's role in development. We are working towards the goal of achieving gender equality where human dignity and women's rights are valued, protected, and promoted by laws and culture.

It is with this commitment that Timor-Leste approaches the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Since its adoption sixteen years ago, the Beijing Declaration has become the blueprint for the development and promotion of women's access to health and social services, education, and economic opportunities.

Mr. Chairman,

The ability of women to participate in, and to achieve political change is clear. This past year has demonstrated the drive and desire of women around the world to participate equally in all aspects of decision-making and the need for women to be included in development activities. In this regard, Timor-Leste welcomes the Beijing Declaration: on Advancing Women's Political Participation on the margins of the high level general debate in this year.

In promoting women's rights it is important to stress the transformative impact women have on politics and in peace efforts. In this regard, I would like to congratulate speakers in congratulating the 3 recent Nobel Peace prize winners from Liberia and Yunnan, and the non-violent work they are doing to achieve safety for women and the full participation of women in peace-building and conflict resolution.

We are proud to highlight that our National Parliament enjoys 25% representation by women, the highest in our region. Timor-Leste plans to reach its goal of 35% women parliamentarians by 2015. This will be achieved with assistance of the newly adopted Electoral Law, which provides for the full and equal participation of a political party must be a woman. At the local levels, leadership training for female

participation is expected to increase the level of women on village councils, allowing participation to surpass the current 28%.

However, increasing the representation of women in politics is only one of many steps toward empowerment and gender equality. In this regard, we welcome the flagship report by UN Women entitled, "In Pursuit of Justice" and agree that effective justice systems are crucial in providing a strong foundation for equality and protection of human rights.

My delegation believes that building a State based on democracy, human rights and the rule of law is a priority and a foundation to lasting peace and stability for all nations. As a young country, Timor-Leste is committed to building a strong justice system that promotes equality and equity at all levels of society. In this regard, The Justice System Programme, launched in 2009, will be implemented until 2013 has the goal of strengthening institutional capacity, and improving access to justice. The programme supports a number of key training institutions, the Legal Training Center, which provides courses and training for judges, prosecutors, police officers, private lawyers, legal aid providers, arbitrators, notaries and legislators.

The number of national judges, prosecutors, and public defenders has increased to 51, and includes 14 women. In fact, this year the first women judge was appointed to the Court of Appeals. The prevention of violence and discrimination is a very serious concern for Timor-Leste. The Law Against Domestic Violence together with the Penal Code has criminalized most sexual crimes. Currently work is being done to address the stigmatized crimes of child sexual violence.

Violence against women remains a serious problem which the Government is working diligently to combat. Sensitization and awareness campaigns continue and are conducted in approximately 10 sub-villages per month. In accordance with the law, women's centres, women centres have already opened, which provide shelter, as well as legal, medical, judicial and social services to women and children. Plans to open similar centres in every district are currently underway.

Mr. Chairman,

As the nexus between women and development opportunities, including politics, becomes increasingly clear, Timor-Leste welcomes the focus UN Women has placed to promote women and development responsibility within the Least Developed Countries.

While UN Women was established less than one year ago, Timor-Leste is confident in its ability to advocate and promote the rights and rights of women and girls worldwide, and we are committed to working together towards a strong entity. We welcome the commitment of UN Women to coordinate and coordinate their activities in areas of common interest to us, the best outcomes for women.

Thank you.