

*STATEMENT BY*

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS*

*AT*

*THE FIFTIETH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION*

*ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN*

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*In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful*

Madam Chairperson,

At the outset and on behalf of the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I would like to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your election. I wish you all success in performing the immense responsibility that you deservedly have assumed. I would also like to thank the Secretariat for the hard work and preparation of this session.

Madam Chairperson,

Clearly, it is of paramount importance for all members of the international community to employ approaches that are capable of keeping pace with the dynamism of international developments and new emerging standards on how women would better live in our world. No doubt that new and innovative approaches lead to devising new and more practical solutions for all challenges, in particular for those related to the roles of women in development and decision making processes.

Establishment and strengthening the foundations of families - with special attention to the role of women as promoters of solidarity, empathy, wisdom and organization in the context of

development, amongst others, is a part and parcel of the Islamic Republic of Iran's principal policies. This aspect compliments other empowerment efforts made and numerous steps taken in other sectors evolving women across the country.

We are of the view that the international community should continue to develop new and innovative concepts -- based on the latest scientific and analytical findings -- to best describe the important role of women and family to the national and international developments. Indeed, the empowerment of women in such fields as education, economics, health-care and so on is directly related to the strengthening of the family as one of the most important components in designing sustainable development at the national level. The contributing factors and indicators of this relationship and interaction must be identified by the experts at governmental and non-governmental levels and communicated to the public.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is doing its utmost to create a conducive and supportive atmosphere for the family so as to benefit future generations, amongst other things. In this context, we feel that it is incumbent on all of us to seriously and actively participate in the international efforts to empower women. We have tried our best in this regard and continue to fulfill our responsibilities.  
Madam Chairperson,

In our view, women's participation in the decisions – making processes must not be cosmetic. In a dynamic and democratic system of governance, such participation starts at the lowest echelons of the decision making process and rises to the highest offices. Accordingly, to promote the qualitative presence of women at the highest decision making levels, we must instill a culture based on the local level in its indigenous beliefs - as well as fundamental changes - to contribute to sustainable development. In other words the Women's role at the three levels: Participation, Representative and leadership is more characterized with qualifications at the grass root level and the highest offices, and less with the quantity and physical presence.

Madam Chairperson,

At the national level, the Islamic Republic of Iran has taken many important steps to facilitate the presence of women in different fields, be it social, economic, cultural or political and has also promoted their participation in decision making processes. Moreover, important steps have been taken to improve the women's educational, health and employment situation. Some of these measures can be summarized as follows:

- Strengthening the role of women in improving the welfare of the family.
- Allocation of special budgets to conduct programs that relate to the activities of women in the family.
- Financial support for women who take care of the household, sponsoring self-employment, entrepreneurial schemes and increasing the number of women's co- ops.
- Adopting general policies to alleviate poverty, move towards social justice and to improve the livelihoods of lower income citizens - including women.
- Expansion of the national women's organizations and increasing the number of women NGOs, as well as new strategies to foster women's participation in the development process and cooperating with overseas GOs and NGOs.

- Strengthening and promoting the activity of Women's NGOs.
- Inclusion of gender considerations in the fourth socio- economic development plan.
- Increase in the number of girls admitted into universities by 62%,
- Increased life expectancy of women.
- Increased number of women members and candidates for the national parliament, city and village councils.
- Revision of a number of laws that were previously said to be possibly discriminatory against women.
- Training the women police officers and establishment of women's police stations.
- Promotion of women's sports.

Madam Chairperson,

Undoubtedly promoting and implementing these policies by my Government has not been without obstacles. It is crystal clear that issues such as the threats posed by globalization and its negative impacts, the dire consequences of the unilateral economic sanctions and inadequate access by women to new ICT and other technologies, due to the restrictive international pressure on my country have been and continue to be but a few impediments in this regard.

Before concluding, Madam Chairperson, I would like to stress on the importance of the exchange of information and views in international for a on the challenges and achievements of women's progress projects, some of which relate to practical plans to address new and emerging issues that pertain to Globalization.

The Islamic Republic of Iran will continue to actively participate in activities that foster the progress of women and the initiatives that help improve their situation. We will faithfully strive to implement our national and international commitments and will keenly participate in common and coordinated efforts to empower women.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson