



PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

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Statement by **Mme. Song Xiyuan**

Head of the Chinese Delegation to the 55th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, Vice-Chairperson of the National Working Committee on Children and Women under the State Council of China
(24 February 2011, New York)

Mr. Chairman,
Honorable ministers,
Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the Chinese Delegation, I would like to extend congratulations on the official launching of UN Women. We appreciate Mrs. Michelle Bachelet's leadership and her significant achievements in her position of the United Nations Secretary-General. Under her leadership, UN Women will effectively coordinate resources, further promote global awareness, improve international normative and operational levels, and play a leading role in UN's gender equality endeavors.

In the past year, under the guidance of people-centered development concept, China has taken a series of effective measures to fulfill its international commitments, such as Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Significant progress has been made in the promotion of gender equality and the protection of women's rights and interests, as reflected in the following areas:

1. Revising current laws and regulations to promote and protect women's rights and interests.

The year 2010 witnessed formulation and revision of four laws. Among them, the Law on the Mediation and Arbitration of Rural Land Contract Disputes, effective since 1 January 2010, has protected the contract rights and interests of the rural women, particularly any those who are

Committees safeguard the rights and interests of women at the grassroots to participate in decision-making and administration, stipulating that the villagers' committee shall include at least one female member and that female representatives shall account at least 1/3 of all members of the villagers' representative assembly. The Government equally prioritising the crimes of abduction and trafficking in Women and Children, issued in March 2010, marks a significant progress in combating trafficking in women and children.

The Program is the full realization of the goals defined by the National Program for the Development of Chinese Women (hereafter referred to as the Program), which is the guiding document on the development of Chinese women. Since the promulgation of the Program (2001-2010), governments at all levels have attached great importance to it with concrete actions to implement it to ensure accountability.

Monitoring statistics indicate that almost all main goals listed in the Program have been achieved by 2010.

Based on the implementation of the Program in the last decade, as well as relevant international documents including CEDAW, BPFA and MDGs, we are now drafting the new Program for 2011 to 2020. The new program will identify next decade's main goals and strategic measures in seven priority areas, namely, health, economic participation, decision-making and administration, education, legislation, social security and environment.

By increasing financial investment to solve the most urgent problems in women's development.

In order to ensure women's health rights, RMB 2.2 billion Yuan (equivalent to 340 million US dollars) has been made available from China's national budget to subsidize for rural women undergoing in-hospital childbirth, breast cancer and cervical cancer screening, and free sterilization project among rural women of childbearing age. In order to help women with their entrepreneurial initiatives, the State has made numerous efforts to implement the preferential national policy which has been implemented in providing small loans to women with interests incurred fully subsidized. In 2010, 740 million was subsidized by the national and local financial departments. The total loans of 16.605 billion that have benefited over 400,000 women in their efforts to start business or get employed.

Mr. Chairman, Dear colleagues,

Over the years, all states have made active efforts to implement BPFAs with marked progress in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. However, we still face a lot of difficulties. The international community should continue to strengthen its efforts to promote legislation on gender equality, enhance women's economic situation and political status, improve women's salary position in society, education and labor market, eliminate violence against women, and guarantee women's rights and interests.

The launching of UN Women clearly indicates the great importance that different parties have attached to, and the broad consensus reached on, the women issues. This marks a concrete step that the United Nations has taken to further pursuit for gender equality, and an important milestone in global women's movement. We all have great expectations on the new entity. Hereby the Chinese delegation would like to propose the following:

1. UN Women should be committed to the realization of women's full development. More input should be made to alleviate poverty, improve women and to improve their education and health. All kinds of women's issues should be treated with equal importance.

2. The need of the developing countries should be addressed with priority and their capacity building should be enhanced in UN Women's operational activities.

3. The principle of being open, transparent as well as geographical balance should be applied in the allocation of financial and human resources, and coordination with other UN entities should be strengthened.

The Chinese government stands ready to enhance cooperation with all states, adopt practical measures and make concerted efforts for the realization of gender equality and women's empowerment.

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