



ITALY

55th SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

STATEMENT BY

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(New York, 24 February 2011)

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COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF KARNATAKA
2011

STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR 2011
STATE OF KARNATAKA

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Mr. Chairperson, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

Last year the celebration of the anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and its related platform gave us a unique opportunity to reiterate forcefully our wish and our progress towards the goals of equality, development, and peace for all women wherever they may be, in the interest of all humankind.

This is why in my statement last year I had the pleasure to announce the imminent adoption in Italy of two important plans for action. To day, one year later, these plans have become a reality. They constitute a valuable aim that highlights the role for women in the economic and social life of my country. I am referring to the plan "Italia 2020: Roadmap Program for the inclusion of women in the labor market" (adopted in December 2009) and the related Memorandum of Understanding regarding the criteria for allocating 10 billion euros in financial resources to projects that assure a balance between the work and social dimensions of life. Both achievements encourage the presence of women in the labor market by introducing concrete new measures, namely, the creation of child-care services; economic support for those who work from home through teleworking, and other breaks for women Italian women. This extensive program has been followed by many smaller projects that establish the principles of equal opportunity and gender mainstreaming to improve the quality of life and promote female entrepreneurship, especially in the regions of Southern Italy where women experience particular hardships.

As regards this year's theme, I wish to underline that in Italy the number of women who take up a career in the Sciences has seen a remarkable increase in the past twenty years. However, only a minority of them hold leading positions in the world wide research are occupied by women. According to the 2009 Report of the European Commission "Figures: Statistics and Indicators of Gender Equality in the Sciences" 33% of Italian researchers are women (higher than the European average of 31%, but only 20% of them attain leadership positions). The Sciences therefore suffer from many of the same phenomena of exclusion that affect women in other areas of political, economic, and social life.

In Italy we have achieved full parity of rights, so there is no government concern over this issue today. The Government is committed to increasing the participation of women, especially in the under-represented areas, through training courses, in view of today's knowledge-based global economy. The disparities continue to exist in these fields and have a debilitating effect on research and the labor market.

To address this failure, I am glad to briefly mention what has been done recently to assure the implementation of equal opportunities policies in every relevant field of science, technology, and scientific research. I would like to draw your attention to two important programs coordinated by my Ministry. The first project, named "Promoting Gender Equality in Science", indicates good practices in the field of science for research introduced in 2009 with the publication of "Guidelines on Equal Opportunities in the Sciences". The second project, entitled "Women's Career", is currently being implemented, and analyzes gender diversity in university public research and will conclude its findings in the near future.

In September 2010, together with my colleague the Minister of Education, Universities and Research, I signed the Memorandum of Understanding aimed at achieving gender equality in the sciences and the advancement of women's careers, particularly in the decision-making positions.

My Ministry has also made it a priority in Italian state schools "the week against violence." In education, students, teachers, parents and teachers come together to reflect on and debate issues concerning the dangers to society caused by gender stereotyping.

Italy's commitment to the fight against gender-based violence has been constant. I am pleased to announce that for the first time Italy has adopted a national law to fight violence against women and it is the Italian law draws on the experience of anti-violence centers spread throughout Italy. Another important achievement has been the recent adoption of a National Action Plan on the implementation of the Security Council Resolution 1325 on "Women, Peace and Security", that will strengthen our action in this field.

In closing, I wish to briefly mention Italy's long standing commitment to the eradication of the inequality of female genital mutilations. In the context of this commitment, on February 24th, within the margins of this session of the CSW, we are hosting, together with a series of distinguished personalities an event that will discuss the measures already adopted and the new strategies proposed to fight this phenomenon. I hope this event will further progress toward our common goal.

Thank you for your attention.