



12 October 2009

**Third Committee. Agenda Item 62
Advancement of Women**

**Fredrik Arthur
Ambassador**

Mr. Chairman,

Women and girls are still regarded as second rate citizens in too many parts of the world. This despite decades of conferences, conventions and UN resolutions addressing the issue. Conservative and archaic attitudes, often with cultural and religious connotations, leave women and girls at the margins of society. This is the root cause of the problem we are here to discuss.

These deeply rooted impediments deprive women and girls of their human rights - to

This is the broad perspective. And herein lie the challenges.

Two indicators are particularly telling when it comes to women's position in the world:

- Fewer girls than boys go to school.
- Fewer girls live up at all.

100 million girls and women are just missing. They die because they are not wanted or not fed or not given the care they need. In addition there is violence and death during pregnancy and childbirth

This week, the Government of Norway will present its budget for 2010. With this budget we will sustain and continue our development assistance at 1 per cent of GNI. We will

increased efforts in health which has tripled since the year 2000. Policies to advance women make up one third of our bilateral aid.

Let me now comment briefly on the four reports we have before us.

Both with regards to violence against women in general and women migrant workers in particular, we must pursue a number of strategies at the same time. The victims must be given adequate protection, medical care, legal advice and relevant support services.

Perpetrators of violence against women and girls must be held accountable and brought before courts of justice. Nobody should be able to hide behind a shelter of impunity. We must strengthen our endeavours to change attitudes, especially amongst men, and fight stereotypical perceptions that perpetuate inequalities between men and women. Boys and men must be engaged. The expression of masculinity must be challenged.

Mainstreaming means that boys must be sensitized to gender equality issues at an early stage of life to prevent cementing attitudes and behaviour that discriminate against girls

and women.

Mr. Chairman,

The past few years have seen encouraging progress in many fields of gender equality, most recently in the international community's resolve to address violence against women, including sexual violence in armed conflict. We also commend the Secretary General's Global UNite campaign, which obviously has inspired women and men in all corners of the world and led to significant increase in the demand for support.

As we heard this morning, the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, which

UNIFEM manages on behalf of the UN system, received an incredible 900 million USD in requests this year. But, as we also heard this morning, the Trust Fund's available resources is a mere 12 million USD. This is a stark reminder and reality-check: Few of us are willing to follow up our words with sufficient funds.

