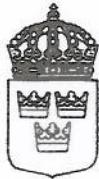


# SWEDEN



STATEMENT

by

H.E. Ms. Signe Burgstaller  
Charge d'Affaires a.i.

at the

66<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly  
under agenda item 28  
Advancement of Women  
of the Third Committee

United Nations  
New York

12 October 2011

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

SAFETY  
SVERIGE



## Trafikstatistik

af

Ulf Bergqvist och Karl-Erik  
Lindström bokgrupp

med in-

ledning av Lars-Göran Wiktorin  
och Åke Lindström  
med bidrag från  
various institutions  
and individuals

och redigerat av  
Lars-Göran Wiktorin

Högskolan i Göteborg

och den svenska tekniska universiteten

Chair,

The topic before us, advancement of women, will focus on equality. We have a number of statements by distinguished colleagues during which the committee has covered a wide range of issues. But at the core of them all lies one matter: that all women are entitled to full equality. In many countries, women's rights are still being fought for.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. And indeed, looking back on just three decades, we can all agree that progress has been extraordinary.

However, it is also easy to identify areas where we, the international community, are lagging behind, and embarrassingly so, women's right to equality under the law, including access to justice and legal remedies; women's participation in political and public life, including participation in decision-making at all levels; women's economic and social rights, including the right to own property; minority women's economic rights to health, including access to maternal services fully rights for women to control their own bodies and sexuality, including their effective access to services for reproductive health and rights.

In his address to the General Assembly, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said: "Religious leaders, civil society, and other political leaders in our region share the view that the unmet human political, economic and social rights of 25.5 billion women and girls worldwide is the most important human rights failure of all."

Gender equality is not only politically and morally, but also economically right. A society that ignores the rights of half of its population can not be democratic. No society that oppresses and discriminates against women can be truly just. And no society that excludes half of its talent can be called smart, or interested in development.

Chair,

Achieving gender equality will require a concerted effort by all. Women's emancipation and empowerment is key. And so is the concomitant battle of liberation from gender stereotypes – which exist in all societies and corners of the world.

Gender stereotypes are representations and identities that entrap persons in roles they have not designed themselves, sometimes evoking harmful behaviour. Therefore, perceptions of womanhood and masculinity need to change, which is a central question. We must change mindsets, now and always, regarding bias and narrowness. Realise instead "she is a girl," "because she is a woman" or "because she is a boy," "because she is a man."

Chair,

Stereotypes regarding sexual and reproductive rights are wrong. One of the defining marks of a modern and fulfilling relationship is the the control over one's body and sexuality. This comprises a right to be free from violence, threat and abuse. But it also rests on the recognition of choice.

Still in the year 2011, it is urgent that we continue to make a determined call – and underscore our unbreakable commitment – for the equal enjoyment of human rights and opportunities for everyone irrespective of race, ethnicity, language, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other status.

Discrimination against human rights is discriminatory, full stop. My delegation therefore welcome what the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination of Women has, and is, an exhaustive and state-of-the-art general recommendation on anti-discrimination, as understood in the core paragraph 2 of the CEDAW.

Chair,

Advancement of women is the advancement of all. It's a priority and possibility for all, and a benefit to all.

Therefore, the international community must relate its efforts to achieve gender equality. We look to UN Women to serve as a catalyst force, making the UN system as a whole work towards that goal.

Finally, I wish to thank and laud greater efforts for being responsive and supportive of all these very issues. We have witnessed across the globe – at local, national or regional – aiming at making societies more equal, just and smart.

Thank you.