



Permanent Mission of Eritrea
to the United Nations

Statement

By

Amanuel Giorgio, First Secretary

Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the United Nations

At the 55th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW),
New York, 28 February 2011

Mr. Chairman,

I am making the following statement on behalf of Ms. Eudai Gebreab, President of the National Union of Eritrean women, who could not participate at this session because she could not get entry visa to the USA. This matter will be raised at the appropriate fora of the United Nations that specifically deals with issues related to the UN and the host country.

On behalf of my delegation, I wish to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election to preside over the work of the 55th session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

My delegation associates itself with the statements made by Argentina on behalf of NAM and Mozambique at the African Group.

Eritrea welcomes this session's priority theme "Focus on the participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work".

Mr. Chairman,

Education and training is recognized as one of the best tools to enhance the empowerment of women. Eritrea has committed itself to narrowing the gap between boys and girls, between urban and rural, as well as between coastal and highland regions by making education accessible to all children who are of school age. In view of its National Education Gender Policy and Strategy, Eritrea aims to eliminate gender gap in primary and middle schools levels by the year 2015. And by the year 2020, it expects to achieve gender parity at the secondary level.

To make these targets a reality, several schools, training centres and higher institutions have been built recently to enhance access to education, to provide and to gain and

women. Access to education is facilitated to persons with disabilities and to girls and women in disadvantaged circumstances by providing proper attention and support.

Affirmative action is applied to promote women's access to education, skills training, employment, credit and other resources with a view to rectifying women's disadvantaged position. This is a temporary measure until a level playing field is created in the social, economic, cultural and political spheres.

Mr. Chairman,

The overall participation of women in the tertiary level is much lower than their men counterparts, but there is a significant upward trend. However, it must be stressed that there is an upward trend in the number of girls entering into colleges and in graduating in fields of study that traditionally favoured the domain of men. The average of girls that passed the college entrance exam between 2003 and 2008 was 26.5%. The recent average of girls attending colleges has gone up significantly to 43.6%. The current figure for college girls attending natural sciences has reached 31.5% for health 22%, and for engineering 11.8%.

The enrollment of females in the agricultural training has come close parity with that of males. At vocational training centres women's participation exceeds that of men, in areas such as building technology and business management. Training in information technology is regularly organized to increase women's access to remote and flexible employment opportunities and to increase their participation in rural extension programmes. These types of training are useful in creating opportunities for gainful employment of women, although the majority of women still remain employed in the agricultural sector due to the fact that the country largely depends on agriculture. As the economy of the country expands, more women are expected to enjoy better access to better employment opportunities.

Mr. Chairman,

Eritrea supports the areas of focus identified by UN Women in particular in enhancing cooperation with members states in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Eritrea is one of the four African countries that is on track in achieving some of the region's MDGs and it remains committed in accelerating its efforts to further improve the status of girls and women to enable them to reach their full potential.

Thank you.