

ISRAEL

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Commission on the Status of Women

Check Against Delivery

Statement by:

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“Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work”

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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on your able stewardship of the Commission on the Status of Women, and thank you for your work.

Mr. Chairman,

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action continues to shape Israel's approach to promoting the advancement of women. In particular, Israel shares the belief that resources must come from many sources and sectors to meet our collective commitments in pursuit of these critical goals.

Over the last decade, we have significantly enhanced public awareness initiatives and expanded public budgets to address these issues. We have also developed numerous frameworks for mainstreaming gender. Advancing the status of women is viewed in Israel as a universal human rights issue. As such, it receives significant attention and widespread support.

In this regard, Israel's civil society is actively engaged in promoting gender equity, and building capacity for women's development and empowerment. Many of these organizations work closely with Arab Israeli women and other minorities.

Allow me to mention a few of the most prominent mechanisms that the Government of Israel supports to promote gender equality.

Israel's Authority for the Advancement of the Status of Women focuses on many of the issues that are discussed in the Secretary General's report on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Situated within the Prime Minister's office, this authority publishes a comprehensive guide for women's rights, conducts research, leads an inter-ministerial committee to monitor the implementation of the law, and oversees the appointment of a gender advisor for every ministry in Israel.

A second example is the Parliamentary Committee on the Status of Women, which offers a platform for discussing, drafting and promoting gender-oriented legislation in the national legislative body.

Israeli legislation on women's equality is based on the principle of equal conditions. This requirement is based on the rationale that every policy has different implications for men and women, as they have unequal access to power and resources.

In the area of employment, the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission acts as an ombudsman in cases of workplace discrimination against women and minority groups. I am honored to serve as the first female Commissioner of this body, which has the authority to investigate complaints of discrimination on the grounds of gender.

pregnancy, fertility treatments, and parenthood and to bring legislation against employers who violate anti-discrimination laws.

Mr. Chairman,

Access to education is another area where we continue to see major progress. In 2010, the majority of students studying for a university degree were women. Last year, Israeli professor Ada Yonath of the Weizmann Institute became one of four women to win a Nobel Prize in Chemistry for her groundbreaking work, which advances human understanding of how cells build proteins.

Mr. Chairman,

At the end of negotiations from the 1990s, Israel's Women's Equal Rights law was amended in the spirit of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 to mandate that Palestinian and Israeli women are actively involved in peace-building negotiations and conflict resolution. It is our hope that this law be fully implemented in the near future.

Mr. Chairman,

Opportunities for women in Israel have steadily improved over the years. However, we recognize that women and men will share responsibilities equally only when society as a whole addresses structural, cultural, and attitudinal issues of inequality. Thus, ensuring equal access to education, full employment, and decent work remain integral parts of our agenda. Ultimate success in Israel and around the world will also depend on engaging men in all programs dealing with social change and economic development.

Changes associated with true equality between the sexes remain considerable. Israel looks forward to partnering with others to take advantage of the real opportunities to make significant progress at both the national and international levels.

Thank you.