

ISRAEL

66th SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Check Against Delivery

Statement by
Ms. Marina Assor
Israel's Delegate to the Fifth Committee

Agenda Item 28
"Advancement of Women"

United Nations, New York
10 October 2011

PERMANENT MISSION OF ISRAEL
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
800 Second Avenue, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10017

Tel: 212-499-5510
Fax: 212-499-5535
info@un.org
<http://israel.un.org.il>

ISRAEL

68th SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Check Against Delivery

Presented by
The General Assembly
Special Representative of the Secretary-General

Agenda Item 15
The Situation in the Middle East

15.10.68
15.10.68

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to congratulate you and all other members of the Bureau on your election. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate UN WOMEN, which in its short history as a UN body has managed to raise the profile of gender equality and the important role of women on the international agenda.

Israel strongly supports UN WOMEN'S recently adopted Strategic Plan and as a sign of confidence in the organization, Israel has committed to substantially increasing its contribution for the next three years.

Mr. Chairman,

Gender equality is a fundamental principle enshrined in our 1948 Declaration of Independence. And just five years later, Israel enacted the 1951 *Equal Rights for Women Law*, a testimony to the principles on which the State was founded from the inception.

Women have always enjoyed full rights and equality in Israel, breaking many preconceived "glass ceilings" long ago. As far back as 1969, Israel was the third country in the world to be led by a female prime minister, Golda Meir. Today, more women hold leadership roles, including the president of the Supreme Court, the leader of the main opposition party, and the newly elected leader of the Labor party, the same party that Golda Meir once led. Women also represent more than 30% of Israel's judiciary, more than 40% of university students and more than 50% of university staff.

Israel is rapidly becoming a leader among countries in the strategic "women's equality" area, with many programs to increase awareness and consciousness, and numerous institutional mechanisms to promote equality, supported by vibrant NGOs and an active civil society.

Israel's parliament, the Knesset, has enacted a range of legislation to promote gender equality, such as the recent amendments to the Equal Rights Law and a key gender equality law which stipulates that all bills that come through the Knesset must be analyzed in terms of gender before they are passed.

Mr. Chairman,

Israel is deeply committed to the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 adopted in 2000 and its subsequent resolutions including resolution 1960 which we co-sponsored last December. We support the inclusion of a gender perspective in peacekeeping operations and peace processes. In this regard, we welcome the increased deployment of women advisors and the inclusion of provisions in peacekeeping mandates that protect women and girls from sexual violence.

Despite such efforts, we are deeply concerned over the slow progress on the issue of sexual violence in situations of armed conflict, particularly against women and children, and we were especially alarmed by the involvement of UN peacekeepers in sexual misconduct and sexual abuse in Haiti. We appreciate the Secretary General's commitment to investigate and to ensure that the UN's zero-tolerance policy on misconduct by its personnel is enforced.

Mr. Chairman,

Israel recognizes the informal link between empowering women and advancing global development goals such as poverty reduction and higher education. We believe the focus on these issues in the main agenda sessions of the HLPF and the recommendations contained in the Secretary General's report A/66/191 "Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas."

Gender equality is a key priority of MASHAV, Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation, which has been dedicated to the cause of empowering women around the world for several years. In 2006, MASHAV launched in rural Senegal the TIPA project, which empowers small-holder women farmers, enabling them to optimize agricultural production through the use of drip irrigation technology. The project has helped triple the agricultural income of 60 families in less than two years. Similar projects are being implemented in several West African countries.

Israel is keen to share our advanced agricultural technology with others around the world. This year, in partnership with the International Association of Agricultural Technology for Development, which this year will have an added focus on women, we can call on all states to co-sponsor this year's resolution, which will be tabled in the Second Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

Education remains another key component in improving the position of women. The Bush MASHAV conducts numerous education programs for women. The Mount Carmel International Training Center is recognized as one of the world's finest training centers for women.

In addition to organizing training programs, the Carmel Center hosts biennial international conferences on development issues for women leaders. In May this year the Center hosted the 27th international conference, focusing on "Science, Technology and Innovation: Education and Training for Women and Girls" in line with the theme of the 55th session of the CSW. We were honored that the UN Deputy Secretary General, Dr. Dina Nouri Rwigyema, and Mrs. Anna Borova, the Director-General of UNESCO, opened the conference, joining dozens of other leaders from around the world.

Israel also supports the Secretary General's UNITE to End Violence Against Women Campaign. Just last month, the Carmel Center concluded a 4th international workshop on violence against women and children, in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration.

Mr. Chairman

Allow me to conclude by reiterating Israel's commitment to advancing the status of women. We look forward to working with others in the international community to accomplish this critical goal.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman,

Education remains another key component of advancing the empowerment of women. As such, MASHAV conducts numerous education programs for women, including at the Golda Meir Mount Carmel International Training Center, which is celebrating this year its 20th anniversary as one of the world's first development training centers dedicated to the empowerment of women.

In addition to organizing training programs, the Carmel Center hosts biennial international conferences on development topics. The 2008 conference, "Women, Education and Technology: Investing in the Future," was held in line with the theme of the 25th session of the CSW. We were honored that the UN Deputy Secretary-General, Dr. Asha-Rose Mookia Gertzel, and other leaders from the Director-General of UNESCO, opened the conference, joining dozens of other leaders from around the world.

Israel also supports the Secretary-General's UNITE to End Violence Against Women Campaign. Just last month, the Carmel Center concluded an international workshop on violence against women and children, in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to conclude by reiterating Israel's commitment to advancing the status of women. We look forward to working with others in the international community to promote this critical goal.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.