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Statement by Mr. Rudra Kumar Nepal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Nepal at the Third Committee of the Sixty-Sixth Session of the UN General Assembly, Agenda Item 29, Advancement of Women

(11 October 2011, New York)

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to begin by extending my congratulations to the Chair and the Bureau on your respective elections. I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the support and cooperation in the works of the Committee.

My delegation would like to extend sincere thanks to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive reports on this agenda item.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made yesterday by the representative of Argentina on behalf of G-77 and China.

Mr. Ghairman,

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly provide a most comprehensive global policy framework for gender equality and empowerment of women. In this context, we welcome the operationalization of UN Women as a focal entity in this area since the beginning of this year.

Advancement of women continues to remain on top of our national agenda for socio-economic development. Advancement is not possible without empowerment. And empowerment is inseparable from our democratic and strategic social attitude. Therefore, we have adopted a multi-pronged approach through good governance, administrative as well as legal measures for the advancement of women in our country. We have also adopted a rights-based approach to social, economic and political empowerment of women.

Women have played, and continue to play, an important role in the transformation of the Nepalese society with a forward-looking approach. An effective and constructive gradual role as an effective change-agent has been well documented.

The Constituent Assembly, elected in the year 2008, which also functions as the Legislative-Parliament of Nepal, consists of almost a third of its 601 members women including the Deputy Speaker of the parliament. This has given a boost to women, further encouraged gender-focused initiatives and completely changed the development landscape in the field.

Through affirmative actions, capacity building and empowerment, women's presence in the national civil service and other state institutions has significantly grown in every years.

The national Legislative-Parliament has enacted a number of new and important legislations which affirm gender equality as well as prohibiting violence and discrimination against women. In addition, the National Commission on Women Act, 2006, the Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Women Act, 2007 and the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Punishment) Act, 2019 Legislative moves are aimed to amend all discriminatory provisions in the existing laws, to outlaw harmful social practices and to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. Nepal's independent judiciary has been playing an important role in safeguarding and promoting women's rights through judicial interventions. An independent National Human Rights Commission works as an important national institution.

Mr. Chairman,

AS A STATE PARTY TO THE AMERICAN Declaration of the Principles of Democracy, Nepal presented its combined 4th and 5th report to the CEDAW Committee in July this year.

At the regional level, Nepal has also ratified the SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution, 2002.

Human trafficking is emerging as a global problem. We are making our best efforts to grapple with this problem and its various faces. In various ways, by recognizing the constructive efforts being made by the civil society organizations, we are determined to make further efforts in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders. There is also a growing concern for the safety of women in some cases in foreign employment, which we are making off-shore and in-country efforts to coordinate and concerted efforts at the national, regional and international levels to combat violence against women migrant workers and to protect their rights.

Mr. Chairman,

Nepal is undergoing a political transition of a far-reaching nature, and towards realizing the strong commitment to equality, freedom and justice. In this process, promoting gender equality and empowerment of women in reducing child mortality and maternal health with particular emphasis on women in the rural areas of the country.

Access to education, health, entrepreneurial skills, resources, entitlements to land and property would greatly strengthen the empowerment of our rural women. Accordingly, we have introduced various targeted programs in the field of women's empowerment, gender equality, health care, and allocation of resources.

Given the multi-dimensional nature of this issue, it is our view that the international community should invest more in the form of additional financial and technical assistance to least developed countries, especially those emerging from conflicts, for complementing their national endeavors in this regard.

The international community should chart out its collective course towards further eradication of gender discrimination and elimination of gender discrimination of gender discrimination with comprehensive strategy with concerted and coordinated efforts of all stakeholders.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.