

SWEDEN



STATEMENT

by

H.E. Ms. Signe Burgstaller
Chargé d'Affaires

at the

66th 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

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STATEMENT

by

H.E. Mr. Åke Bergström
Chairman of the

of the

the 47th Session of the General Assembly
under agenda item 23
Advancement of Women
of the Third Committee

United Nations
New York

13 October 1991

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Chair,

The topic before us, advancement of women, will address it clearly. Women have distinguished themselves by distinguishing their colleagues. It is clear that the United Nations comprises a wide range of issues. But at the core of them all lies one matter that all women are entitled to full and equal participation in all spheres of life. Women are still being discriminated against.

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 30 years, 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 before 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; the right to a decent job; the right to health, including access to maternal services; the right of women to control their own bodies and sexuality, including their effective access to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

In his address to the Council of Ministers, the Secretary-General stressed that the unmet human political, economic, social and cultural needs of women are the most important human rights failure of all.

Gender equality is not only politically and morally, but also economically right. No society that ignores the rights of half of its population can be called democratic. No society that oppresses and discriminates against women can be called just. And no society that squanders 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 participation 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 women's capabilities must be challenged, and into question. We must change mindsets, and abolish the "raging harpies" or "nymphs" or "because she is a woman" or "because he is a boy" or "because he is a man".

