

73rd UNGA
Third Committee
Agenda Item: 29
Advancement of Women

INDIA STATEMENT

By

Smt. Sushmita Dev, Hon'ble Member of the Parliament

8 October 2018

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation thanks the Secretary General for the informative reports submitted under this agenda item.

Despite continuing improvement in realization of their rights, women across the world continue to face discrimination and exclusion.

While more women are now engaged in paid employment outside home, feminization of poverty remains a reality.

Ensuring equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes and ending violence and harmful practices against women have catalytic effects on overall social and economic progress.

Mr. Chairman,

India attaches utmost importance to representation of women in decision making positions. We are proud that the first President of the General Assembly was Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit from India.

India is moving from women development to women-led development.

Reservation of seats for women in local government has enabled more than 1.3 million directly elected women representatives to participate in formulating and implementing gender sensitive public policies in India.

Empowerment of women and girls is at the core of India's efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda.

Women are the largest direct beneficiaries of government programmes that provide income security, health insurance and financial inclusion for poor families. 164 million more women in India now have bank accounts which provide them and their family access to loans, social security benefits and insurance.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao programme addresses empowerment of women over a life-cycle continuum through awareness generation and by encouraging education for girls.

Mandatory paid Maternity Leave in India has been extended from 12 weeks to 26 weeks recently, making it the third longest in the world. Crèche facility at organizations having 50 or more employees is now mandatory.

Innovative measures such free cooking gas connections to 50 million women and toilets for girls in schools, have created enabling environment for women to participate more actively in economic pursuits.

Mr. Chairman,

India is committed to stop all forms of violence and abusive behavior against women and girls.

Provisions in our Criminal Law provides for stringent punishment for offences including all forms of violence, sexual harassment, voyeurism, stalking and cybercrimes against women. One Stop Centres (OSC) and help-lines have been set up to support vulnerable women and victims of abuse.

There are legal safeguards to protect all women from child marriage, domestic violence and sexual harassment at their place of work. To ensure concerns of women are addressed adequately in law enforcement establishments, steps are under way to achieve a 33% reservation for women in police forces.

Mr. Chairman,

India was the first country to deploy an all-women formed police unit as part of the UN Peacekeeping mission UNMIL more than a decade ago. Their influence as role models in Liberia has been widely recognized.

The gender parity achieved in senior management at the United Nations Secretariat is commendable. We also fully support UN Secretary General's zero-tolerance approach to sexual exploitation and abuse in the organization.

Mr. Chairman,

As one of the early signatories to the Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, India is at the forefront of multilateral action in effective implementation the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Plan of Action and the 2030 Agenda with empowerment and equal rights for women as the core strategy.

India remains committed to strengthening international cooperation to promote equal rights and opportunities for all women and girls.

I thank you.