



Statement

by

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of the
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**to the
Third Committee
of the 67th session of the United Nations General Assembly
agenda item 128
on the
Advancement of Women**

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Check Against Delivery

Mr. Chairman,

As this is the first time I am taking the floor, let me first congratulate you and your Bureau on your election, and assure you of Timor-Leste's full support and commitment to the work of this important committee.

Timor-Leste notes with appreciation the various reports introduced under this agenda item. They provide a useful basis for the Committee's deliberations on the issue of the advancement of women.

Mr. Chairman,

Timor-Leste has long recognized the valuable role and contributions of women. The Constitution enshrines the principle of equality between men and women, and notes the role women played in the restoration of independence ten years ago.

In promoting women's rights it is important to stress the transformative impact women have in politics and in peace efforts.

Timor-Leste understands the important role women have in sustaining peace, first hand. It is for this reason that a quota system was made part of the Election Laws, to ensure women's political participation.

Following the elections earlier this year the number of women in parliament has risen from 29% to 38%, exceeding our MDG target of 35%. In the lead up to the elections efforts to increase participation at every level of Government took place, with the support of UN Women and our partners.

These efforts bore fruit in that voter participation almost reached parity at 49% women, 51% men in both the Presidential and Parliamentary elections. At the suco or village level women's representation also increased and is guaranteed through a quota system ensuring 2 women, and 1 female youth in every Suco Council.

Mr. Chairman,

Timor-Leste understands the advancement of women to mean not only equal opportunities in education, and development, but also the promise of a safe environment free from violence.

As such the Government adopted the National Action Plan on Gender Based Violence earlier this year. It is aimed to address the pervasive problem of domestic violence. Tackling this issue requires increasing preventative measures along with providing better services to current victims. In this regard the Government has made efforts to engage with young men and boys to stop domestic violence as well as to promote the Law Against Domestic Violence.

Raising awareness of the laws is one aspect of how Timor-Leste is tackling this problem. As our institutions grow and are strengthened and consolidated they are better able to deliver to the people. This includes in the delivery of and access to justice, as well as in the policing sector and in healthcare.

Timor-Leste is committed to promoting the advancement of women, and efforts are underway according to the National Strategic Development Plan for 2011-2030, and through the newly adopted 5 year plan, that has a focus on women and aims to greatly reduce maternal and child mortality.

Mr. Chairman,

Timor-Leste would also like to welcome the Secretary General's commitment to the advancement of women, and for making this an area of priority during his second term. In this regard, we welcome the progress made thus far to integrate a gender perspective in the work of the United Nations system.

While progress has been made more needs to be done to mainstream gender perspectives into all areas of the work of intergovernmental bodies.

The advancement of women is critical to the achievement of the MDGs, though accelerated efforts are required to fulfill this goal. Moving forward Timor-Leste feels strongly that the post-2015 development framework should strongly feature a goal relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The link between economic development and the empowerment of women has been clearly established and yet many women and girls lack access and opportunity to both education and economic prospects.

Mr. Chairman,

This year also marks the 30th anniversary of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, and we take this opportunity to commend the Committee for its work.

Timor-Leste ratified all the core human rights instruments in 2002 following the restoration of independence. Having a Timorese expert serve on the CEDAW since 2011 has been a mutually beneficial opportunity for the country, with the knowledge gained influencing domestic policy, and strengthening our reporting capacities.

However, we note the serious resource situation faced by the Committee and are concerned by the decision to move CEDAW's annual New York session to Geneva. This poses a challenge to many developing countries that are not represented in Geneva, in their ability to interact effectively with the Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion let me reaffirm Timor-Leste's steadfast commitment to improving and advancing the situation of women and girls.