Statement
by
Youth Delegates of Thailand
at the Third Committee
of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

Agenda Item 28: Advancement of Women

11 October 2013, New York

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Mr. Chair,
Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of the youth delegation from Thailand, I deem it a privilege to be given the opportunity to be the voice of youth during the 68th United Nations General Assembly. Coincidentally, all four of us are women. As women, we are especially grateful for the opportunity to address the 3rd Committee under Agenda Item 28: Advancement of Women. However, bearing in mind the number of women and girls whose voice remains unheard and continue to be exposed to violence, poverty and lack of opportunity, we, therefore, on behalf of women and girls, call for strong commitment of Member States to concrete actions to take concrete actions to tackle these numerous particular challenges at their root causes and in areas where the problem are most acute.

Mr. Chair,

Women and girls in many parts of the world, especially those who live in remote areas and those with disabilities, still faces challenges in many aspects of their lives. Stigmatization in society remains a crucial factor holding women back from being fully empowered. Those misconceptions hinder the access to education which is the key to strengthening women potential.

We are encouraged that people across the globe are taking innovative steps to strengthen the ability of women and girls to overcome these difficulties. Thanks to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly since 1979, issues concerning the rights of women are being brought to the fore. The Convention has been instrumental in promoting women's rights and continues to help raise the need for respect to equal rights for women.

As women, we cannot stress enough the importance of quality education. It is the key to advancing true empowerment of women. It is true that we have made much progress. Nevertheless, while many female students, especially in rural areas, have been provided with basic education, many more still face much difficulties.

Mr. Chair,

For Thailand, this third goal of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has been reached by the accomplishment in eliminating the educational inequality in primary and lower secondary schools, 10 years earlier than the deadline of 2015.
Thailand is now aiming at the more challenging goal of providing equal access to secondary education for both female and male students by 2015. Moreover, Thailand is in the process of drafting a development strategy on empowering girls in educational institute (2013-2016). This strategy aims to empower girls through enhancing and strengthening the lives and vocational skills in formal, non-formal and alternative education.

Mr. Chair,

The Thai Government is committed to securing jobs and increase the income of women with our vision of life cycle development. The Thai Women Empowerment Fund is a policy aimed at providing Thai women with sufficient funds that would enable them to increase their capacities and expand their opportunities. The fund focuses on decreasing women unemployment, improving opportunities to underprivileged women. Building leadership in women is also vital to prepare them for the ASEAN Community and the global community.

As Thailand is moving towards the ASEAN Community in 2015, the Office of the Basic Education Commission has as its goal to ensure that every student receives primary education. Girls will continue to be equipped with 15 years of free education which helps strengthen their basic knowledge and prevent them from being exploited. This policy would prepare Thai women and girls for the ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs' Network which focuses on improving the capacity of ASEAN women entrepreneurs and boost the women entrepreneurs' development and networking. Again education acts as the key ingredient in preparing girls to be empowered at the professional level.

Mr. Chair,

We, the youth, believe that aside from such policies at the national level, women must be empowered at the individual and community levels. We pledge ourselves to play our part as drivers of change by encouraging women and girls toward greater independence of thoughts and actions. The change must be shaped from within. We hope that our voices would be able to create a ripple effect to the wider security.

Social inclusion is also a key. The focus should be on the most underprivileged women and girls. There must be a forum for them to voice their needs and concerns on political, economic, as well as social issues. We should no longer turn a blind eye to the difficulties they face. Despite the concrete actions and successes that have already been achieved, we are calling for more. There should never be a finish line for advancement of women. This agenda should, instead, be constantly advanced in order for us to achieve a brighter future where inequalities no longer exist. We thank you.

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