Statement
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The Mission of Egypt
to the United Nations in New York

Agenda Item 28: “Advancement of Women”

Third Committee

New York, October 14, 2013

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Mr. Chairman,

I would like to express my appreciation for the valuable briefings and statements delivered under this agenda item. I associate my statement with the statements delivered by Fiji on behalf of the G77 and China, and Ethiopia on behalf of the African Group.

The reports of the Secretary-General show that despite of the progress achieved to advance the status of women, they continue to be relatively excluded from political participation and underrepresented in top positions in some countries. Violence against women continues to be among the major challenges that need to be addressed comprehensively, while we are approaching 2015 where we commemorate Beijing+20.

The year 2013 undoubtedly deserves to be the year of combating violence against women, in particular sexual violence in armed conflicts. Many events have been organized for that cause at national, regional and international levels, in addition to the launch of significant international initiatives such as “COMMIT” by UN Women, the adoption of the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2013 as well as the endorsement by many countries of an International Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict last month. The momentum created this year reflects the international community’s firm position against all forms and manifestations of violence against women and girls in all contexts, settings, and circumstances. In this regard, I would like to highlight the following points:

First: Egypt welcomes the strong focus on ending violence against women in the Report of the High-Level Panel on Post-2015 Development Agenda along with the inclusion of gender equality and the empowerment of women as a stand-alone goal among other pressing issues.

Second: We also welcome UN Women’s leadership of the UN System’s efforts to combat violence against women in all its forms and manifestations.

Third: Education and Economic empowerment of women and girls are indispensable tools that should be placed as a priority, while addressing gender equality and empowerment of women.

Fourth: Member states should use the international momentum created for combating violence against women to strengthen their national mechanisms for a better response, in consistency with their international obligations.

I would like to congratulate Mrs. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka on the assumption of her responsibilities as the new Executive Director of UN Women, wishing her every
success, and pledging Egypt’s support to her work. I would like also to commend Mrs. Michele Bachelet, the former executive director for her tremendous work and strong leadership of the entity and Mrs. Lakshmi Puri who assumed the responsibilities of the Acting Executive Director until the appointment of Mrs. Mlambo-Ngcuka.

Egypt and UN-Women signed the final agreement on the establishment of the UN Women Regional Office for the Arab States in Cairo in May 2013. We are in the final stage of its pending ratification, and we have encouraged the regional office to start performing its functions. We are satisfied that the regional director has already moved to Cairo. Egypt counts on its strong partnership with UN-Women to contribute to the national efforts aiming at gender equality and the empowerment of women in Egypt and all other Arab countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Women issues are still on top of the Egyptian Government’s priorities. Allow me to highlight the most recent developments in this regard:

First: Three female ministers, and a female advisor to the President, were appointed among those who have a long professional expertise. This is a step forward to increase women representation in higher administrative and political positions.

Second: The Egyptian National Council for Women is a very well-represented in Egypt’s 50-member committee that has been tasked to amend the constitution. It has contributed actively with many proposals aimed at empowering women and ensuring their political and economic participation in the Egyptian society.

Third: A draft legislation has been prepared to address violence against women. The draft is ready for consideration by the new Parliament as soon as elected. Last month, Egypt has also joined the International Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict that was launched during the high level segment of the 68th session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

I conclude by reiterating Egypt’s commitment to all international conventions for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of women, to which it acceded. Egypt remains committed to cooperate with the United Nations system, including the UN Special mandate-holders in this regard. Egypt is very much committed to the implementation of UN Women new strategic plan that was adopted last month in order to make this century a century for women and gender equality.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman