STATEMENT BY BRAZIL

Item 28: Advancement of women

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Third Committee

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(Please, check against delivery)
Madam Chair,

Brazil associates it with the statements made by Fiji, on behalf of G-77 and China, and by Cuba, on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and would like to add the following comments in its national capacity.

In this year's General Debate, President Dilma Rousseff underscored that “Democracy generates the desire for more democracy. Social inclusion demands further social inclusion. Quality of life awakens the yearning for more quality of life.” As a matter of fact, combating inequalities and advancing inclusion lie at the core of the Brazilian Government’s policies.

A little more than half of Brazilians in a situation of extreme poverty are women. They are more cruelly affected by the lack of resources and access to public services.

But this is changing. Women are now the main beneficiaries of cash transfer programs and housing credit. In rural areas, women are also beneficiaries of Technical Assistance and Rural Extension Programmes. Indeed, one of the reasons such programmes have been so successful is that they have been centered in the role of women in Brazilian society.

Gender issues in Brazil are a policy of State. We are proud to have established more then a decade ago a Secretariat of Policies for Women, directly linked to the Presidency and that has Ministerial level.

Madam Chair,

The current administration has improved income distribution, giving priority to children, pregnant women and women in the breast-feeding stage.

Brazil has also implemented policies aimed at raising awareness and reducing teenage pregnancy. To that end, access to information and to the free distribution of contraceptive methods have been widened. The efforts to prevent, diagnose and treat cervical and breast cancer have been increased and the measures already in place to halt the march of HIV/AIDS among women have been strengthened.

Moreover, Brazil has for long been advocating for and implementing firm policies aimed at fighting violence against women and girls. We also work with our neighbors, and bilaterally in the context of MERCOSUR and European Countries, for the improvement of the assistance to women victims of violence, including in the context of trafficking in women.

Brazil will soon host major events - the World Cup (2014) and Olympic and Paralympic Games (2016). Our Government has prepared measures to address any possible increase in violence against women, especially sexual exploitation and abuse.
Despite all the efforts, there are still many challenges before us. We are convinced that there will be no effective and sustainable responses to those challenges that do not take into account the following aspects:

- The establishment of a network of security and protection for women in situations of violence, to be composed of Member-States and civil society, including women in all their diversity;

- The improvement of data collection regarding national and international violence against women;

- The strengthening of national and international legislation to combat against women and the development of specific policies to tackle trafficking in women;

- The international acknowledgment of the intrinsic relationship between violence against women and the spread of HIV, and the need to provide for health services based on the respect for the sexual rights and reproductive rights of women;

- Finally, the need to create multilateral mechanisms for the Internet that are capable of ensuring principles of freedom of speech, privacy of all individuals, including women, and respect for all human rights.

Madam Chair,

Brazil was actively involved in the International Conference on Women, held in Cairo in 1994. As we prepare for the review of its Programme of Action, let me assure Brazil's firm position to oppose any regression regarding the achievements made almost twenty years ago. Brazil is strongly involved in the full implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and will therefore seek to secure and further advance in respect to the rights of women and girls, in particular their reproductive and sexual health and rights.

Madam Chair,

Women continue to be largely underrepresented in decision-making positions in all areas. In Brazil, President Rousseff has made it a priority to enhance the participation of women in top decision-making levels, including in core governmental positions. Currently, women head a quarter of our Ministries.

In conclusion, Brazil strongly believes that the strengthening of international cooperation is key to the assertion of good practices in the field of advancement of women. Thus, international cooperation, including its South-South dimension, should promote opportunities in that respect.

Thank you.