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STATEMENT

by

**H. E. Mr. Miloš Koterec
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of Slovakia**

54th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

**Achievements and challenges in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action
in the Slovak Republic**

**8 March 2010
New York**

Mr. Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour to address the 54th session of the Commission on the status of women. Slovakia aligns itself with the statement made by Spain on behalf of the European Union.

Celebrating the 15 years anniversary of adoption of the Declaration is a great occasion for not only evaluation of accomplished goals but also for highlighting shortcomings and challenges we have been facing.

In my brief presentation I would like to point out main achievements Slovakia has accomplished in 15 years after the adoption of Beijing Action Plan and Platform of Action.

Mr Chair,

We do believe that progress and adequate implementation of gender equality very much depends on political environment and attention paid to particular issue. Therefore we do consider as an important progress that The Manifesto of the Government from 2006 for the first time emphasized and declared gender equality as one of the main priorities of the Government of Slovakia. The Government undertook an obligation of promoting gender equality as an important factor for the development of democracy and the realization of human rights.

As a follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action, in 1997 the Government of the Slovak Republic adopted *The National Action Plan for Women in Slovakia*. This document was one of the main programme documents of the Government for the improvement of the status of women in the Slovak Republic and after its expiration in 2007 was replaced by the *National Gender Equality Strategy for the Period 2009 – 2013*, which defines the equality of women and men as a horizontal and universal social and political priority. The goal of the Strategy is to incorporate the gender aspect in the design and implementation of policies on all levels and stages of management.

The fourth critical area of the Beijing Platform for Action deals with the issue of violence against women. In this regard I would like to note that Slovakia has made a number of significant progressive changes in the field of prevention and elimination of violence against women. The Government started the systematic work on resolving the issues of violence against women in 2004 by adopting the *National Strategy for Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and in Families*.

Regarding to legislative framework, one of the main achievements in the field of gender equality and equal opportunities was adoption of the *Anti-discrimination Act*. It comprehensively regulates the implementation of the principle of equal treatment and stipulates the legal instruments of the protection for the victims of discrimination.

Mr. Chairperson,

Despite all the progress, there are still many areas of concern such as unequal share of the unpaid labour between women and men, gender imbalances in decision-making, strong gender stereotypes, which lead to gender segregation in education and consequently also in the labour market. All of this demonstrates that progress in the field of gender equality requires a long lasting process.

In this context, Slovakia welcomes the UN system for enhanced system-wide coherence, particularly the creation of a new composite entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women. We believe that consolidation of four existing UN bodies into one composite entity will strongly contribute to unify the control and overall operation of the gender equality architecture of the UN system. We hope that this significant structural reform will provide the real universal support to women and girls across the world. Slovakia is also convinced that the new gender entity will represent a strong UN support to national efforts to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women, thus leading also to the rise of the effectiveness of national mechanisms dealing with gender issues.

Thank you.