

## **63<sup>rd</sup> Commission on the Status of Women**

General Discussion:

“Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly”

### **INDIA STATEMENT**

By Ms. Paulomi Tripathi, First Secretary

March 14, 2019

Madam Chairperson,

1. Thank you for giving the floor. We express our deepest condolences for loss of innocent lives in the terrorist attack in Christchurch. Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of New Zealand at this difficult time.

2. We thank the Secretary-General for reports under different agenda items. My delegation aligns with the statement made on behalf of the G-77.

3. We welcome breaking new ground this year with the priority theme. We look forward to an action oriented outcome.

4. India is moving from ‘women development’ to ‘women-led development’. Women are agents of change rather than beneficiaries of welfare programmes. With progressive mainstreaming of gender perspective in our development priorities, women’s empowerment is at the core of our SDG implementation action.

5. Reservation of seats for women in local governance institutions, has ensured that more than 1.3 million elected women representatives provide leadership in formulating and implementing gender sensitive public policies.

6. Adoption of Gender Budgeting has ensured that a gender perspective is incorporated from the stage of policy formulation to the impact assessment.

7. More than 185 million women, who previously did not qualify to open bank accounts now have bank accounts through government’s Financial Inclusion Initiative. This has increased their access to

insurance, loans, and social assistance. Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) has ensured efficient delivery of cash benefits to their bank accounts.

8. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) provides a minimum of 100 days of wage employment per household every year in rural areas. More than 50 per cent of jobs created are taken by women.

9. Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency (MUDRA) provides collateral free loans. 75% of its beneficiaries are women-owned and operated enterprises. Women also benefit from old-age pension scheme for workers in informal sector.

10. As a step towards Universal Health Coverage, the world's largest healthcare programme "Ayushman Bharat – National Health Protection Scheme" has been launched to provide medical treatment to nearly 100 million families. This increases women's access to affordable and quality healthcare and reduce care-burden. Nutritional and healthcare needs of pregnant and lactating mothers and adolescent girls are addressed through different programmes.

11. Innovative measures such as ensuring provision of cooking gas connections to more than 70 million women has had a positive impact on their health and reduced the environmental impact and drudgery associated with use of firewood.

12. Measures are being taken to estimate unpaid household work. The findings would help policy makers to better target welfare programs for women.

13. The period of mandatory paid maternity leave has been extended from 12 to 26 weeks. The National Crèche Scheme provides day care facilities to children of working women.

14. 'Celebrating Girl Child and Enabling her Education' is a multi-sectoral package of interventions and awareness campaigns that challenge gender stereotypes.

15. Building toilets for girls in schools have created an enabling environment for their retention. Government provides scholarships to incentivize the education of the girl child.

16. Under The Affordable Housing for All scheme, the title of each home is under the lady of the house.

17. The Equal Remuneration Act provides for equal remuneration to men and women for equal work of similar nature without discrimination.

18. Laws and initiatives such as The Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, Working Women Hostels, New Taxi Policy Guidelines, 24x7 women helplines, CCTVs at strategic locations, the Safe Cities Project and increasing the number of women in the police force, are all aimed to provide a safe work and public space for women.

Madam Chairperson,

19. It is time that we break silos and integrate social protection, public services and infrastructure with broader development priorities.

20. Measures such as income guarantee programmes, cash benefit transfers, improved access to healthcare and education for women and girls can improve living conditions in short term. However, it is important that these actions are linked with increased productivity and better access to labour markets for women, to derive sustainable, long term benefits.

21. An integrated approach is also necessary to develop climate resilient and environmentally sustainable infrastructure, as women are disproportionately affected by climate change. Attention needs to be paid to impacts of rapid technological change on women's participation in workforce.

22. We must redouble our efforts to provide equal opportunities for women and girls in all spheres, close the gender gap in access to public services, and transform equality in opportunity into equitable outcomes for the whole society.

I thank you.

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