



SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM

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**Statement by
H.E. Ambassador Le Luong Minh,
Permanent Representative of Viet Nam
at the Open Debate of the Security Council on Women, Peace and Security
29 October 2008**

Mr. President,

I thank you for convening this open debate of the Security Council on women, peace and security, with a focus on the participation of women in all stages of the peace process. I thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325, to which Viet Nam attaches great importance.

Mr. President,

Women account for more than half of the world's population. Families cannot be homes without women playing a key role in maintaining and nurturing them. Societies cannot be peaceful communities without the vital participation of women. My Delegation commends the measures the United Nations has undertaken over the past years in promoting the role of women in peace and security in many parts of the world, particularly in conflict areas. Most notable among them have been the adoption by the DPKO of directives and plans on gender equality in peacekeeping operations, the integration of gender equality in planning, monitoring and collecting data by humanitarian entities and the development by many United Nations agencies of strategies to further mainstream gender into the mandates for conflict prevention and peace building. My Delegation is encouraged to see United Nations agencies and especially peacekeeping missions playing a more active role in promoting, through technical as well as financial assistance, women's participation in all stages of the peace process in many countries. As the Secretary-General notes in his report, there has emerged "*a culture of gender equality and women's empowerment in peace and security areas*". We consider this trend as encouraging.

Mr. President,

My Delegation, however, remains preoccupied by the fact that we are still far from able to ensure full and equal participation of women in conflict prevention, peace negotiations, peacemaking and post-conflict building. In many societies, women are left inactive and with little chance to take part in decision-making processes, and often excluded from peace and security areas. Women's representation in security institutions, law enforcement bodies as well as peace negotiation delegations has had little improvement since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325.

Mr. President,

To enhance the participation of women in peace processes, the most effective way, we believe, is to empower women, both politically and economically. To this end, it is important to ensure their equal access to education and information, since this helps raise their awareness of their own rights and equip them with necessary knowledge and skills to actively participate in governance and economic activities and in the peace processes. Gender mainstreaming needs to be strengthened in peace and security areas with gender incorporated into all legislations, strategies and policies on conflict prevention and resolution, and reconstruction. This in turn will build foundations to back women's equal representation and leadership in peace and security institutions while enlarging space for their participation in peace talks. The implementation of these can and should be assisted by the United Nations, through a wide range of measures, from legal and technical assistance to negotiation and leadership skills training programs.

Mr. President,

With women having served in the war time as generals and peace negotiators, Viet Nam now ranks 3rd in Asia-Pacific in terms of the female ratio in the Parliament membership, and has always had, for over two decades, a female Vice-President of State and several female Ministers. In every State or public institution there is a women affairs committee that oversees and promotes implementation of gender equality policies. Ensuring gender equality and empowering women has been and continues to be a major policy of the Vietnamese State and Government. We support and continue to implement resolution 1325

I thank you, Mr. President!