



# **THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

**PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**Statement by H.E. Ambassador SHIN Dong-ik**

**Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea**

**On the agenda item 28(Advancement of Women) of the 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly**

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Over the last few decades, there have been some tremendous strides taken in bringing women's rights to the forefront of the international agenda. In particular, following the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the international normative framework to ensure equality for women has been further strengthened through various legal and policy instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

Yet, despite these considerable achievements, for far too many women, gender equality remains largely rhetorical. Many women and girls around the world are still falling victim to numerous forms of discrimination and do not have equal opportunities to fulfill their potential. Sharing this concern, my delegation firmly believes that it is high time to strive to translate these normative frameworks into a daily reality in the lives of all women.

Mr. Chairman,

In this regard, the situation of underprivileged women who are exposed to considerable social discrimination, such as rural women, women migrant workers, and women with disabilities is particularly worthy of our attention. As the Secretary-General's reports on rural women and women migrant workers point out, gender-based discrimination intersects with other forms of discrimination

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based on non-national status, race, ethnicity and economic status, thus placing those disadvantaged women in situations of multiple forms of discrimination.

Given their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse, the need for more systemic and coordinated efforts within the international community is ever more compelling. In this regard, my delegation would like to express its deep appreciation to Ms. Rashida Manjoo, Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, for taking a more proactive and holistic approach to protecting disadvantaged women who suffer multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

Taking this opportunity, the Republic of Korea would like to highlight some of the efforts made and progress achieved by my Government in this area. With a dramatic increase in migrant workers and international marriages, the Korean Government is actively seeking to embrace community members of different cultural backgrounds, with a special attention to the rights of women migrants. As part of these efforts, we launched "Multi-Cultural Family Support Centers" which provide married immigrants with basic information and arrange education for social adjustment as well as vocational training. The emergency support center with a hotline number is also one of the innovative policies aimed to provide with emergency assistance services, as well as ordinary counseling for women migrants.

Mr. Chairman,

Another issue that warrants serious consideration is putting an end to sexual violence against women in armed conflict. Wartime sexual violence is one of history's greatest silences as well as one of today's most egregious forms of human rights violations. The Republic of Korea is deeply concerned with increasing sexual violence against women in armed conflicts, with particular reference to systematic rape and sexual slavery, including the so-called "comfort women," the victims who were forced into military sexual slavery during the Second World War. These systematic rape and sexual slavery constitute war crimes and also, under defined circumstances, crimes against humanity.

In light of this, the Government of the Republic of Korea would like to urge the UN system and all member states to make the utmost efforts to end such crimes, not only taking all measures to protect women and girls in armed conflict, but also providing effective remedies and reparations for victims and also ending impunity, by bringing the offender to justice.

Mr. Chairman,

We wish to emphasize the importance of telling the truth about these matters and thereby raising public awareness. Promoting human rights education on the issue of systematic rape and sexual slavery during wartime and ensuring the accuracy of accounts of historical events in the educational curricular, are key means to preventing the recurrence of such violation.

Thank you.