



**THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**General discussion on item 26: Advancement of women
7 October 2019**

Mr. Chair,

Azerbaijan aligns itself with the statement delivered by Palestine on behalf of G-77 and China. In my national capacity, I would like to add the following.

We thank the Secretary-General and the Special Rapporteur Ms. Dubravka Šimonović for the reports submitted under this agenda item. It is encouraging to see the consistent progress the United Nations is making in increasing the representation of women within its system and we look forward to the full implementation of the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity in the next decade.

Regrettably, women in many parts of the world continue to face disadvantages, struggle against prejudices and discrimination, and experience different forms of violence. Their vulnerability is often exacerbated by climate impacts, armed conflicts, migration and forced displacement.

We are particularly concerned about the fate of women and girls taken hostage or reported missing in connection with armed conflict. Such situations put women and girls at high risk of exploitation, abuse, trafficking, slavery, prostitution and other forms of criminal activities. Azerbaijan continues its efforts to raise awareness on the problem at the international level, including through the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Commission on the Status of Women, of which my country is a main sponsor.

Mr. Chair,

The Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action has created important dynamics, which need to be invigorated and sustained. The adoption of the Sustainable Development Agenda, especially SDG 5, added significant momentum to our efforts to leave no woman and girl behind.

According to this year's population census, women constitute 50% of the total population of Azerbaijan. Labor force participation rate for women is 48.2%.

My country attaches utmost importance to the empowerment of women. By identifying barriers through improved data collection in recent years, we have been able to implement policies and programmes tailored to the specific needs of women and girls.

Within the framework of the joint project of the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan and UNDP on "Promoting Rural Women's Participation in Economic and Social Life", women resource centers have been established in eight regions. They offer rural women and girls free access to library resources, computers and the Internet, and have helped to create a network of over 3,000 rural women. As has been pointed out in the report of the Secretary-General on the "Improvement of the situation of women and girls in rural areas", "such networks are important for disseminating the information that rural women and girls and women farmers, in particular, need to confront climate challenges".

Another project jointly carried out with FAO supports capacity development for rural women to meet employment and sustainable development targets. Rural women farmers and producers are provided with training and extension services to increase their roles in agricultural decision-making and farm management, improve their productivity, ensure food security and enhance their livelihoods.

Promotion of female entrepreneurship is another area where there has been recent progress. Through relevant State programmes and various projects, the number of female entrepreneurs has increased from 4% to 29%. Over 172,000 women are currently engaged in entrepreneurial activity in the country.

Azerbaijan has taken extensive measures and activities to improve the situation of women refugees and IDPs. 156,000 of the latter have been provided with new housing in 2018 alone. The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, together with UNHCR, has carried out two projects to prevent and eliminate gender-based violence among refugees and IDPs in the past 5 years.

Mr. Chair,

Next year will mark the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action and the 20th anniversary of the groundbreaking UN Security Council resolution 1325. A five-year milestone will be reached towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We believe that these important milestones must only strengthen our resolve and trigger more action to empower women for a stronger, safer and more inclusive world.

I thank you.