

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador HAN TAE SONG
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Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva &
Head of the DPRK Delegation to the 68th session of the Committee on
the Elimination of Discrimination against Women**

**During the consideration of the combined second to fourth periodic
reports of the DPRK on the implementation of the Convention on the
Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women
(68th session of the CEDAW Committee, 8 November 2017, Geneva)**

Madame Chair,

Members of the Committee,

I am pleased today that we are able to elaborate our efforts for the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and have meaningful dialogue here at the 68th session of the Committee on Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

The Delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) believes that the consideration of the combined second to fourth reports on the implementation of the CEDAW will provide the international community with an understanding of the real situation of women in my country and contribute to the international efforts for protection and promotion of the women's rights.

Madame Chair,

The present combined periodic report on the implementation of the CEDAW covers the period of 2002-2015.

As stated in the report, during the period under review, the Government of the DPRK took a number of legislative and administrative measures for the advancement of women and the protection and promotion of their rights in all fields of state activities and social life, thereby achieving considerable successes.

Several laws including the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women, the Law on the Protection of the Rights of the Child and the Law on Labour Protection were adopted and the Cabinet directives were issued to promote the activities of women, with the result that the rights and roles of women were further enhanced and the public awareness of the women's rights raised.

Meanwhile, we have established an orderly work system to protect and promote the women's rights and to address the slightest tendency of discriminating women in time as well as the atmosphere of respecting women in general public.

Women's status is enhanced as they exercise equal rights with men in the process of national policy-making and adoption of decisions and work in important positions of the State.

Preferential treatment measures taken by the State particularly for women are thoroughly implemented such as the maternity leave, exemption of women from arduous and harmful work, prohibition of their night shift and overtime work.

The miracles and developments taking place in all fields of social life of the country including science and technology, culture and sports are unthinkable apart from the active roles of the talented and industrious women of DPRK.

Madame Chair,

The DPRK is the people-centered socialist State with its guiding principle of the Juche idea which is, in essence, the idea of giving first priority to the popular masses.

The measures taken and successes achieved by the DPRK in the field of women's rights are the result of the correct policy of the Government of the DPRK which has given prominence to women as the subjects of history and true masters of the socialist construction by holding fast to the Juche idea as the unshakable guiding ideology of the State.

With the promulgation of the Decree on Gender Equality in my country on July 30, 1946 right after the liberation, women who had been suffering from the centuries-old shackles of feudalism and subjected to the fate of colonial slaves could proudly take part in the state activities and social life with equal freedoms and rights with men for the first time.

Women who account for half of the population became a powerful driving force that vigorously pushes forward one side wheel of the socialist construction of the DPRK, and thus achieved wonderful successes in all fields of politics, economy and culture, to say nothing of the happiness of the families and sound unity of the society and the collective.

Thanks to the policy of attaching importance to, respecting and loving the people unfolded by the respected Supreme Leader Comrade **KIM JONG UN**, the national measures and social efforts for the protection and promotion of women's rights are further strengthened in the DPRK today.

Several years ago, Mothers' Day was newly instituted in the DPRK, thereby crowding the whole society with the atmosphere of respecting women.

The upcoming November 16 is the Mothers' Day that is observed meaningfully in the DPRK.

Now women in the DPRK are turning out as one in their struggle for growth in power and prosperity of the motherland with absolute trust in the gracious socialist system.

Madame Chair,

The DPRK remains consistent in its stand to adhere to the protection and promotion of women's rights as one of its overriding principles and to do its utmost for its realization.

The efforts to implement the CEDAW in good faith and place the status of women in highest standing are now confronted with tremendous challenges in the DPRK.

The United States and other hostile forces impede the enjoyment by our people of their human rights in every possible way, resorting to the vicious ways and means of all kinds in their attempt to stifle the ideas and system of the DPRK.

They manipulated “sanctions resolutions” against the DPRK on several occasions by abusing the UN Security Council, which violate the sovereignty, the right to existence and even the right to development of the DPRK.

Due to these inhumane economic sanctions, vulnerable peoples like women and children are becoming the subjects of victims.

Such sanctions against humanity which block even the delivery of the medical equipment and medicines for maternal and child health and the basic goods for daily life including even children’s bicycles threaten the protection and promotion of our women’s rights and even the right to survival of the children.

The vicious economic sanctions that run counter to the ideal of humanitarianism and human rights can never be justified with anything and should be lifted immediately.

During the period under review, there continued despicable plots to defame the image of the DPRK by kidnapping our women.

Typical example is the incident in which the south Korean authorities instigated the gangsters of the Intelligence Service to lure and kidnap our 12 women in group in April 2016 who had been working in a foreign country to take them to south Korea, and still refuse to confirm their life or death.

The south Korean authorities should immediately admit and make apology for the unprecedented extra-large crime against humanity and return our women citizens to their parents and brothers and sisters without any delay.

The DPRK will, in the future, too, resolutely brave the challenges and difficulties of all sorts to achieve epoch-making advance in the work for protection and promotion of women's rights.

Madame Chair,

We still have a lot to do in our efforts to implement the CEDAW in good faith and protect and promote the women's rights at the highest level.

In order to fully implement the Convention, we need to ensure quality education and health, favorable working and living conditions for women as well as cooperation with international organizations.

We resolutely oppose politicization, selectivity and double standards in human rights and other attempts to abuse human rights for politically motivated ulterior purposes.

In other words, we categorically reject the extremely politicized human rights dialogue based on false testimonies of the "defectors", but we are willing to engage in dialogue and cooperation for protection and promotion of genuine human rights including women's rights. This is our position.

Our willingness to engage in international cooperation is reflected in our invitation in May this year of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the UN Human Rights Council and my delegation's attendance and dialogue in this meeting with all sincerity.

As a state party to the CEDAW my country will, in the future, too make active efforts to fulfill its obligations to the international community.

In conclusion, I would like to express my hope that today's meeting for consideration of the combined second to fourth periodic reports of the DPRK on the implementation of the CEDAW will round off with success through open-hearted dialogue and mutual cooperation between my delegation and members of this Committee.

Thank you.