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ADDRESS

BY

H.E. MS. AŞKIN ASAN

DEPUTY MINISTER OF FAMILY AND SOCIAL POLICIES
OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

TO THE

56th SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

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Thank you, Ms. Chairwoman,
Distinguished Delegates,

“The empowerment of rural women with their role in the economic, cultural and social development and current challenges” is one of the priority topics in Turkey.

Engaging women in the development process and the enhancement of women’s status in professional life

Awarding women their rightful place in society and gender equality between women and men is one of the founding values of the Republic of Turkey. In Turkey, equality, representation, and significant progress has been achieved on gender equality issues over the last decades.

Institutionalization of gender equality at the state level has been enforced with various regulatory bodies that are established at the parliamentary level, which has been accomplished through various ensuring equal access of the girl child and women to education and health services.

As a result of socio-cultural factors, gender division of labor is felt more intensely in rural areas. Working women in rural areas are less educated, weaker civil organization, constraint of paid work opportunities, lack of income over the household income and deprivation of social security, to name a few.

Turkey acknowledges the severity of the problems of rural women, most of whom work as unpaid family workers. Relevant strategies are developed and implemented for the rural areas. The National Rural Development Strategy for 2011-2013 targets to create rural employment opportunities, social security schemes for rural women who are informally employed. In this context, we have enacted legislation that enables rural women to work without any social security schemes. The strategy also aims at enhancing access to education. Women will also be supported in terms of social and legal rights.

Moreover, strategies aimed at improving the economic status of rural women are also set out in the “National Action Plan for Gender Equality”.

Ms. Chairwoman,

Momentous activities are carried out in Turkey in order to bring sustainable solutions to problems confronting rural women. I would like to briefly present some of these activities. The activities to award the signing of a protocol concerning the status of rural women in our country and promoting their economic participation are carried out in cooperation with the Ministry and other

The “Action Plan for the Empowerment of Rural Women” covering a period of 3 years is being prepared in cooperation with municipal bodies and civil society.

The Ministry of Agriculture is implementing the Southeastern Anatolia Project, recognized as a major endeavor, worldwide. The purpose of this project is to reduce the gap between regions and raise the level of prosperity in Southeastern Anatolia. Within the scope of this project, the Multi-Targeted Community Centers Project (MCC) is being carried out so that women can avail themselves of the public services more efficiently, their participation in the social and economic life is promoted and women's employment and entrepreneurship is boosted.

These centers have been able to reach out to the most disadvantaged and poorest groups in society. This model has also been extended to several other countries. Over 15 thousand women participate in these programs each year and approximately 60 thousand people indirectly benefit from their activities and services.

The Agricultural Extension for Women Farmers Project is another activity which pursues the objective of educating rural women on agricultural matters and empowering them. Within the project, the support and assistance for working women is provided to the labor force.

Additional incentives to women who have key active roles at all levels of agricultural life, on a variety of agricultural subjects. 95 all women Agricultural Development Cooperatives have been founded.

It is vital that government administrators who serve in rural areas and are in direct contact with women have a gender perspective. Gender Equality Training programs were delivered in 2009 by my Ministry to the civil servants at the Provincial/District Directorates of Agriculture and Rural Extension with a view to promoting the empowerment of women in rural areas. 771 trainees attended these programs.

It is noted that the cooperation between all of the relevant parties is continued with increasing enthusiasm.

Before concluding, let me share information on Turkey's two most recent efforts for the global promotion and protection of women rights.

The first resolution on 10 October by the UN General Assembly which seeks to designate October 11 as the International Day of the Girl Child was adopted by consensus on 15 December 2011 in the General Assembly. Turkey believes that the International Day of the Girl Child could help raise awareness on the struggles that girls across the world face every day, including discrimination, violence, and barriers in access to health, education, and the challenges of everyday life.

Second, in the hope of good news, I wish to share with you that the European Union has ratified in its Parliament 'The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence' – "The Istanbul Convention". The Istanbul Convention is this first international instrument on violence against women. We should promote the universal ratification of this Convention. The side-event we have co-organized with UN Women and the Council of Europe yesterday was a successful step towards this objective.

In concluding, I would like to extend my greetings to all the delegations with the hope that the national practices to be shared and exchanged during the 56th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women contribute favorably to promotion and protection of women rights and in particular to empowerment of women in the rural areas.

Thank you.

Second a general fund from 1990 to 1992 and from 1993 to 1995. The Department of Health (Division of Health and Community Services) and the Department of Health (Division of Health and Community Services) are the two main funding sources for the program. The program is the first national program on violence against women. It provides the national network of the Department of Health. The program is the first national program on violence against women. It provides the national network of the Department of Health. The program is the first national program on violence against women. It provides the national network of the Department of Health.

In addition, the Department of Health is providing to all the departments, with the hope that the program will be able to provide to the state during the 1990s. The program is the first national program on violence against women. It provides the national network of the Department of Health. The program is the first national program on violence against women. It provides the national network of the Department of Health.

Thank you