



ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT
THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR WOMEN

1st Statement of

Minister - Ambassador/ Mervat Tallawy

President of the NCW Egypt

On Sunday 18th August at 16:30 – 18:00h

Plenary Session on

IFUW Advocacy and the United Nations

ISTANBUL 31st Conference 2013
Women's Role in Achieving a Sustainable
Future: Education, Urbanization, Violence
and Human Rights
16-21 August 2013



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Ladies & Gentlemen,

With great regret I couldn't join due to the situation in Cairo.

In 2012, the CSW56 failed to adopt agreed conclusions on Rural Women. It is not comprehensible that the international community would fail to agree on measures to empower rural women who are the poorest of the poor, moreover according to the UN development goals, poverty and illiteracy eradication are major challenges to be attained which rural women are most suffering.

This year the Commission on the Status of Women discussed one of the most widespread human rights violations of our times. It is "Violence against Women and Girls" as a phenomenon affecting all societies worldwide. Therefore our main goal this year was to avoid the failure of 2012.

During CSW57, I, as the head of the Egyptian delegation, faced several challenges including an attempt by the presidency to change the composition of the delegation that would represent Egypt in the session.

Another challenge was the "like-minded group" established in New York by several missions. They unfortunately used a new dictionary of taboos against any action related to the rights of women such as family planning, using contraceptives, etc. under the claim that it is against culture and religion.

The council delegation started first to lobby very hard with different delegations in order to protect women's previous gains and not to impose more challenges against women's rights considering that these ideas are misinterpretation of religion and culture. The Egyptian delegation finally succeeded to dismantle this group.

Some of the like-minded group started to disengage from the group, meanwhile on the other hand the council delegation tried to convince the Western group and other countries not to insist on certain debatable issues that would be taken as an excuse not to reach a final document. We succeeded in convincing these countries to reach a compromise and find way to issue a final document that would constitute an international obligation to stop VAW.



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The draft conclusion of the 57th session was seriously attacked by certain religious group including Mr. Qaradawi in Qatar and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. These attacks came at a very early stage of the session even before the beginning of the official opening of the 57th session. The aim of this attack was to threaten the Arab and Islamic countries not to work in favor of such a statement. The Egyptian delegation answered these attacks by issuing a statement that would clarify the situation and demonstrate the allegation of these religious groups.

Now that we have an international document to combat VAW, it is the duty of all international agencies, NGO's and donor community as well as national governments to take appropriate procedures at the national and international level to enforce the measures that would protect women from violence including the new interpretation and definition of violence which consider poverty, lack of education, and lack of health services as forms of violence.

These require education, public awareness including the role of religious leaders, new legislations, and law enforcement mechanisms.

Thanks