



**Statement by
H.E. Mme. HA THI KHIET**

**Chairperson of National Committee
for the Advancement of Women in Vietnam**

at the East Asia Gender Equality Ministerial Meeting

Tokyo, 30 June – 1 July, 2006

H.E Dr. Kuniko INOUCHI, Minister of State for Gender Equality and Social Affairs,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very happy and honored to be attended the East Asia Gender Equality Ministerial Meeting initiated by the Japanese Government, especially the Ministry of Gender Equality and Social Affairs, taking place in Japan - the country of sunrise and beautiful sakura blossom. We sincerely thank for your warmly welcome and rich hospitality. We do hope and believe that with our determination "*Towards Gender Equality for East Asia*", we will together discuss to propose effective cooperation proposals for the region in the coming time.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As far as you know, Vietnam had been under the feudal ideology of man preference to women for a long time. As early as the State foundation, the President Ho Chi Minh included "equality of men and women" as one of the key State's duties in our first 1946 Constitution and become a consistent guidance integrated into the legal system and existing in life. Vietnam has also made its commitment to promote gender equality with the international community by signing and implementing the United Nation Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

To translate our will into concrete activities, the Vietnamese Government has approved the National Strategy and Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women for different periods. Currently, we are implementing the National Strategy for the Advancement of Women by 2010 with 5 objectives, 21 targets and 66 specific actions to be taken in order to promote gender equality and create favorable conditions for women to fully and equally participate in all fields of

social life. At the same time, Vietnam has completed the combined 5th and 6th National Report on the implementation of CEDAW, which is expected to be represented at the 37th session of CEDAW Committee in the early year of 2007. Furthermore, to improve gender equality legislation, Gender Equality Law and Anti-Domestic Violence Law have been in the process of drafting and presenting to the National Assembly. CEDAW principles and international treaties have also been considered and integrated into these 2 important draft laws.

To achieve gender equality, we consider gender mainstreaming as a comprehensive approach to ensure substantive equality between women and men. Gender mainstreaming is defined as one of seven principles of planning process. For the first time, the National Social-Economic Development Plan (SEDP) 2006-2010 has clearly reflected objectives and targets on gender equality. Simultaneously, a Monitoring Indicators Framework is being formulated to ensure the gender-responsive implementation. Gender perspectives were integrated into the set of National System of Development Indicators approved by the Government in 2005.

We strongly believe that increasing women's participation in leadership and decision making position is a crucial factor to effectively promote gender mainstreaming. At present, the ratio of female National Assembly deputies is 27,31 % and the percentage of women in leadership and management has been increased in comparison with pervious periods. For over 11 years, we always have a female Vice-President of the State. Gender equality in different sectors has been significantly improved. The gap between men and women in education and income has been gradually narrowed.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Based on our vivid reality, our lesson learnt is the linkage between political will and the responsibilities of State management at all levels, of which the national machinery for gender equality and advancement of women plays a key

role. Up to now, almost ministries, central agencies and provinces in Vietnam established Committees for the Advancement of Women (CFAWs) with the duties of advisory, directing and monitoring the implementation of laws and policies on gender equality and women's advancement. We published National Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines in Policy Formulation and Implementation and Gender Mainstreaming Manual, trained for the core training of trainers (TOT) and conducted training courses for CFAWs staff at all levels. Monitoring has become regular and most useful task of NCFAW and CFAWs.

However, like other countries, we are facing a lot of difficulties in the work of gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming has been done well only at central level. We lack of expertise and sex disaggregated database. Awareness on gender mainstreaming is still limited. At the same time, the negative impacts of globalization, trafficking in children and women, violence against women, HIV/AIDS pandemic, other human and animal diseases have also negatively affected on the cause of gender equality.

To overcome these difficulties and promote gender equality in our region, we recommend strengthening experiences sharing and cooperation in the region, especially amongst national machineries. Vietnam does hope to receive supports of all sides from the countries in the region as well as international organizations.

Wish our friendship and cooperation among national machineries in East Asia develop substantially.

Wish our meeting successful.

Thank you very much.