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Meeting of Women Parliamentarians
Item 3(d)

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Item 3(d) of the provisional agenda

Questions relating to the panel discussion on

The Role of Parliaments in Fulfilling the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Panel organized in cooperation with UNICEF

(Tuesday, 30 March, 9.30-12.30, *World Ballroom A & B (level 23)*)

Background

2010 marks the twentieth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989 and entered into force in 1990, the Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most comprehensive legal instrument for the protection of the rights of the child and has been ratified more quickly and widely than any other human rights instrument.

Over the past 20 years, the Convention on the Rights of the Child has:

- **Transformed the status of children and childhood.** The articles of the Convention reinforce a common understanding among societies that children are holders of rights, and that childhood must be a period that is separate from adulthood – a time when children can grow, learn, play and develop.
- **Strengthened our common understanding of human rights.** The Convention reaffirms many of the core principles of seminal human rights treaties, such as universality, and non-discrimination and enriches our understanding of human rights by interpreting them specifically for children.
- **Profoundly influenced the legislative framework for the care and protection of children.** Since its adoption by the UN General Assembly in 1989, the Convention has been ratified by 193 countries, and its principles have taken root in regional, national and local legislatures. Since 1990, more than 70 countries have incorporated children's codes into national legislation as part of law reform efforts based on the Convention's provisions.
- **Supported substantial and measurable advances in child survival and development.** Notable achievements include the sharp reduction in the annual no. of under- five deaths since 1990, stronger disease control, lower rates of under-nutrition, strong gains in accessing improved drinking water sources, and expanded efforts to combat HIV and AIDS.
- **Raised awareness of and expanded solutions to child protection risks.** The Convention paved the way for consolidation of child protection as a holistic concept, offering children the right to be safeguarded against a broad spectrum of violence, abuse and exploitation. Over the past 20 years advocacy and data on child protection issues have increased markedly.

- **Articulated child participation as a fundamental right of children.** Child participation has steadily gained wider acceptance and application during the past two decades. Highlights include the 2002 UN Special Session, numerous child-friendly cities initiatives across the world, and child participation in budgetary processes and regional fora on child protection issues.
- **Been a catalyst for human rights advocacy and development partnerships.** The Convention has inspired profound changes in development programming for children and partnerships that span the media, religious leaders, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, advocates and individuals.

The panel will discuss the impact the Convention has made to the lives of children over the past decades and the critical role parliaments and their members can play through their law-making, budgeting, enforcement, and representative roles to ensure the Convention's full implementation.

Draft Agenda

Introduction

9.30 – 9.40 Welcoming Remarks by Chair,
Dr. Pusadee Tamthai, Member of Parliament, Thailand

9.40 – 9.45 Video on the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Overview

9.45 - 10.00 20 Years of the Convention on the Rights of the Child- Major Accomplishments, Challenges, and Opportunities
Ms. Marta Santos País- Special Representative on Violence against Children for the United Nations Secretary-General

Key Issues

10.10 – 10.20 Best interests of the child- the primary test of governance
Prof. Vithit Muntabhorn, former UN Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography

10.20 - 10.30 Non-discrimination- Rights for all children without exception
Dr. Syada Greiss, Member of Parliament, Egypt

10.40 – 10.50 Respect for the views of the child- Participation by all children
Ms. Nanu Adhikari, Youth representative from Nepal

10.50 – 12.15 Discussion

12.15 – 12.30 Final Remarks from Panelists and Chair