



76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)
Third Committee
Interactive dialogue on Agenda Item 28 titled "Advancement of Women"

**Intervention by H.E. Ambassador Mohan Pieris,
Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations
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Mme. Chair,

Sri Lanka has always been committed to pro-equality and pro-empowerment policies and as a result the country is making progress in achieving equality for women in all aspects including their empowerment, equal participation in the labour force and increased engagement in decision making processes. Sri Lanka's achievements in the health and education sectors have allowed women to secure a higher status in society and in the workplace. As such, women enjoy equal opportunities and choices, and their voices are heard at the highest level. The world's first women Prime Minister hailed from Sri Lanka and we elected a women President in 2005.

The required steps are being taken to increase sustained investment targeted at gender equality and social protection in the country. This includes the establishment of anti-harassment committees in government ministries with guidelines being prepared to further enhance their operation. Private companies including factories in free-trade zones have also established sexual harassment committees and a code of conduct was introduced in 2013 to prevent and address any sexual harassment in the private sector by the Employers' Federation of Ceylon. With regard to domestic violence, the

"Domestic Violence Act" has been in force since 2005 and is addressing complaints. Sri Lanka Police has taken steps to increase the women cadre and Tamil speaking prosecutors have been appointed to all the high courts in the North & East of the country allowing Tamil speaking women to claim their rights.

In 2021, the Parliament Women Caucus has proposed to the Parliament Select Committee on Electoral Reforms to identify appropriate reforms of the election laws and the electoral system and to recommend necessary amendments that 50% of the national list should be for women and that the representation of women in Parliament, Provincial Councils and Local Government authorities should be increased to 30%.

As a country that has a sex ratio favourable to women, we are cognizant that the advancement of the country will ultimately depend on our ability to enable women and young people to be active participants in the country's development agenda and we will continue to advocate for women's empowerment and rights.

Thank you.