

**Our society, without being perfect, is an example of women's inclusion.**

**Remarks by Teresa María Amarelle Boué, general secretary of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) at the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women. BEIJNG +25.**

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Mr. President,

On behalf of the Cuban government and women, I would like to express our satisfaction at the holding of this meeting, even under different conditions, marked by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which calls for solidarity with the peoples and women of the world.

Twenty-five years after the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, we, the Cuban women, can show advances in our empowerment. They have been the result of the political will of the Cuban State and Government, expressed through the implementation of laws, policies and programs.

The blockade imposed by the government of the United States against the Island, fiercely intensified in times of pandemic, due to its negative impact on all aspects of the life of the Cuban people, and particularly, their women, constitutes the major obstacle to the realization of their human rights and the most pernicious form of violence against them.

Our society, without being perfect, is an example of women's inclusion. The new Constitution of the Republic of Cuba endorses its commitment to the principle of equality and non-discrimination.

Cuban women receive equal pay for work of equal value. Advanced labor legislation guarantees our rights in the state and non-state sectors, including the paid maternity leave, a benefit available to the father and other family members.

We have access to social security programs and enjoy free and quality education and health services, including sexual and reproductive services.

In Parliament, we hold 53.22 percent of the seats; and we account for 50.3 percent of the leaders of the State and the Government.

Regarding employment, we account for 49 percent of workers in the state public sector; more than 80 percent hold the upper middle level or higher level of education. Cuban women account for 70 percent of professional judges and prosecutors; 53.5 percent in the Science, Technology and Innovation System; 69.6 percent in the public health sector.

They make up the majority in the medical brigades rendering services in various regions of the world, those same women that the U.S. government insists on unjustly link to human trafficking, which we strongly denounce and reject.

In the battle against the novel Coronavirus, Cuban women have been essential in the red zones, in the design of the treatment protocols and in the research and development process of vaccine candidates against the SARS-COV2.

Mr. President,

We are not satisfied with what has been achieved, and we need to continue to move forward, to close the gender gaps that still survive.

The Economic and Social Development Plan until 2030 and the process of updating the country's legislation reinforce Cuba's willingness to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence that persist, to achieve full equality of rights and opportunities, in line with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Thank you.

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