

On 19-21 November 2024, the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+30 Review was held in Bangkok (Thailand). The Forum was organized under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) together with UN Women in preparation for the 30th anniversary of the 4th World Conference on Women, which will be celebrated in 2025.

The event brought together over 1,200 delegates from governments, civil society and youth groups, the private sector and academia to discuss progress and priority actions to support gender equality and women's empowerment.

Turkmenistan was represented at the conference by a delegation consisting of:

- Oguljennet Berdiliyeva, Chairman of the Central Council of the Union of Women of Turkmenistan
- Shemshat Atajanova, Head of the Department of Democracy and International Relations at the Institute of State, Law and Democracy of Turkmenistan
- Shemshat Setdarova, Chief Specialist of the Central Council of the Union of Women of Turkmenistan
- Islam Sakhedov, Second Secretary of the Embassy of Turkmenistan in Malaysia

During the conference, reviews of 140 Member States and regional associations on the successes and challenges achieved in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action were presented.

Turkmenistan shared its experience and plans in the field of gender equality.

Oguljennet Berdiliyeva stressed that Turkmenistan attaches great importance to ensuring genuine equality of women and enhancing their role in all spheres of life. She noted the high level of representation of women in government structures: 32 women out of 125 deputies of the Parliament of Turkmenistan (26%)

Women hold significant positions in government, including the Speaker of Parliament, Deputy Chairmen of the Cabinet of Ministers, Ombudsman, Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the National Commission of Turkmenistan for UNESCO.

The "National Action Plan for Gender Equality in 2021-2025" outlines strategic goals for advancing women's rights and opportunities. Turkmenistan's commitment to gender equality has been recognized internationally, as the country was elected to the UN's

Executive Board for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

Shemshat Atajanova took part in a round table on the topic: "Sustainable strategies for responding to and preventing violence against women and girls in an era of uncertainty"

She noted that Turkmenistan had conducted a first-ever national sample survey, entitled "Health and Status of a Woman in the Family in Turkmenistan," which represented the first national experience in collecting data and analyzing the problem of domestic violence against women.

Based on the results of the survey, a Roadmap with specific actions has been developed. At the moment the following actions have been already taken:

- Standard operating procedures have been developed for the medical, social and law enforcement sectors to support women affected by domestic violence
- Work is underway to further improve the interagency response system with the ultimate goal of ensuring a well-established practice of providing high-quality and comprehensive services to women who have been subjected to gender-based violence.
- A Family support service has been launched in five regions and the city of Ashgabat, providing hotline services, psychological counseling and social support.
- The international experience of using programs to work with men who use domestic violence is being studied
- In cooperation with public organizations, specialized social services have been piloted to support women affected by domestic violence.

Shemshat Setdarova shared examples of the implementation of the objectives of the Beijing Declaration in the field of women's economic rights and opportunities at a round table on the topic: "Advancing women's economic empowerment through employment, decent work, social protection and entrepreneurship."

The Union of Women of Turkmenistan is working to empower women by providing them with the skills and resources they need to succeed. Through courses and training in management, financial planning, and marketing, women are gaining the knowledge and confidence to start and run their own businesses.

A new initiative will support rural businesswomen by offering business advice and microcredit programs. This will help women in rural areas to create sustainable livelihoods and contribute to their communities.

Turkmenistan is also developing an agrotourism program to create sustainable jobs for women in rural areas. By supporting women in agrotourism, the country aims to empower women to organize tours, host visitors, and share Turkmenistan's rich cultural heritage.

Within the framework of the expanded program, the Union of Women of Turkmenistan is preparing to launch training centers that will help women receive education in the field of management, accounting, marketing and other in-demand skills.

Setdarova also stressed the importance of social protection and working conditions for women. Turkmenistan has adopted a number of legislative measures aimed at improving working conditions and ensuring equal pay for women and men.

At the conference, ESCAP and UN Women also launched a new report *Charting New Paths for Gender Equality and Empowerment: Asia-Pacific Regional Report on Beijing+30 Review*. The report highlights the challenges ahead, but also forward-looking strategies and solutions under six thematic areas: poverty reduction and human capital development; shared prosperity and decent work; freedom from gender-based violence; meaningful participation and gender-responsive governance; peaceful and just societies; and gender and the environment.

The report further emphasizes three pivotal actions to strengthen the foundation for accelerating progress in gender equality across all sectors, including transforming gender norms; strengthening the collection and use of gender data; and fostering gender-smart investments and cross-sectoral partnerships.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action were adopted at the 4th World Conference on Women and approved by the UN General Assembly (resolution 50/42) in 1995.

The 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is a strategic program for the empowerment of women. To date, it remains the most comprehensive global framework and conceptual action plan, serving as a guideline and source of inspiration for the effective implementation of gender equality and human rights for women and girls around the world.