STATEMENT BY TAREQ MD. ARIFUL ISLAM, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BANGLADESH ON AGENDA ITEM 26: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN, 07 OCTOBER 2019, UNHQs, NEW YORK

Mr. Chair,

Our delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by State of Palestine on behalf of G77 and China.

Bangladesh’s Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had laid the foundation of advancement of women in the country by establishing constitutionally equal rights of women with men in all spheres. His daughter, Sheikh Hasina, the present Prime Minister, is following her father’s footsteps and putting women at the heart of all our development endeavours.

Currently in Bangladesh, Hon’ble Prime Minister, Speaker, Deputy Leader of the House and Deputy Leader of the Opposition are all women. This is unique in the world. There are 50 reserved seats for women in our parliament. In addition, 23 female members were directly elected in the last parliamentary election. Women are serving as Cabinet Ministers and other high-ranking government officials, in police, armed forces, UN peacekeeping missions and are elected representatives in local government. For the last three years, Bangladesh has topped the South Asian countries in gender equality.

Our home grown, targeted financial inclusion measures, have been very effective for women’s financial empowerment and progress across all dimensions of economic opportunity and participation. Gender perspective is a thrust area of our budgeting and development planning. All these are the main factor behind the “development miracle” that Bangladesh has presented before the world.

In fact, our endeavours over the last decade have been all round empowerment--political, financial and executive, of our womenfolk. We are now poised to take it to the next level. We are investing more on building women-friendly sustainable infrastructures, providing skill-based education and training, and facilitating their access to internet, ICT and job market. While doing so we are also addressing social taboos and challenges like child marriage, violence against women, trafficking and other crimes through enacting appropriate laws and their stringent implementation. These efforts are incentivizing participation of our women and girls in mainstream economic activities.

As a climate vulnerable country, our Government is taking measures in adaptation and building resilience of its people especially women and girls in rural areas who are more prone to climate induced displacement. We prioritize them in our DRR plans and strategies accordingly. Last year, under the CSW62 we particularly highlighted this issue. The SG’s report on improvement of the situation of women and girls in rural areas recognizes the effective role played by Bangladesh in having developed climate change gender action plans and implementing it. Here we recognize the efforts of UN-Women and UNEP who are jointly implementing a project in Bangladesh on empowering women to secure climate-resilient
societies for 2018–2022.

Drawing on our national achievements, we are also working for mainstreaming women issues in multilateral arena particularly at UN. We are an ardent proponent of women participation in the entire spectrum of conflict and peace architecture under the Women, Peace and Security agenda of the Security Council. Advancement of women underpins our efforts in building a Culture of Peace. We also work with Member States in promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education for women and girls by observing International Day of Women and Girls in Science Forum at the UN.

Mr. Chair,

Since the historic Beijing Conference, Bangladesh has been making relentless strides in translating the Beijing promises into action. The spirit of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action resonates in our National Women Development Policy and our National Plan of Action. Last year Bangladesh as the Vice-Chair of the 62nd CSW had the privilege of facilitating a resolution on the observance of the 25th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women. We are happy to be elected again at the CSW for the term 2019-2023 to work with the international community to make this celebration more meaningful.

Next year, as we are going to celebrate Beijing 25+, we should be prepared to look back and identify the remaining gaps and challenges and take concrete, measurable and time-bound actions towards the accelerated implementation of the pledges.

I thank you.