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**Statement by H.E. Jane Chigiyal
Permanent Representative**

at the High-level meeting on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women

New York, 1 October 2020

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President of the General Assembly, Excellencies,

I associate my delegation's statement with the statement made by the Prime Minister of Tuvalu and Chair of the Pacific Island Forum and make these few points in my national capacity.

The year 2020, marks many milestones in the work of the UN system. We commemorate 75 years of our organization's founding. We are happy to participate in today's event - assessing our 25 years journey since the 4th World Conference on Women was held in Beijing.

For my country, through the recent human rights treaty body reviews on CEDAW and CRC, and our first Voluntary National Review presentation held in July this year, it is evident that our work has been slow and not even. We have also learned that women and girls are most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We believe that the 2030 Sustainable Development agenda is our best plan to meet the 17 inter-linked SDGs, specifically SDG5, to help us build back better from the pandemic.

Mr. President,

We have identified the following areas of the Beijing Declaration and Program for Work to focus on to help accelerate generational equality in the next five years:

1. Eliminate violence against women and girls– the passage of important Family protection laws in two of the four States in the Government has given impetus to work toward passing the same laws in the remaining two states.

The Government created a new Division of Anti Human Trafficking in the Department of Justice last year to focus on criminalizing this activity, and provide shelter and assistance to victims.

2. Economic empowerment and political participation and representation– women are more engaged and more visible and active in the private sector. Funding support from our regional partners and technical assistance from our regional organizations and the UN country team have

made it possible to train more women entrepreneurs and in the process empowered them.

We have seen in the last two Constitutional Conventions, the interest of women to successfully run. Their engagement in the constitutional process has brought the gender lens and has helped focus the need to look at some provisions of the Constitution that affect women, like reserved seats for women in the national Congress.

3. Institution strengthening – As a federation, the Government is cognizant of the need for inclusive, and effective coordination, and has revived and incorporated the National Women Council where all the states and stakeholders have representation on the Council to ensure that the Government national machineries live up to and implement national, regional and international commitments. Work is also being explored to establish a national human rights institution to help harmonize national policies and laws to international standards.
4. Gender responsive social protection – training women about the importance of their work in formal and non-formal sectors and equal earnings. Workshops have also been held to educate women about their rights as employees and dependents and their benefits and pensions.
5. The Importance of statistics and data – training more statisticians and training to collect disaggregated data on women and girls. We see the importance of statistics and data to help inform policy and lawmakers identify and allocate support and resources where it is most needed.

Mr. President,

Much work remains ahead as we move towards the year 2030. On going public awareness is needed to change old cultural perceptions and stereo types about women and girls. It is important to highlight the value of women and girls' engagement in all spheres of their life and place in society. We recognize that some areas of our work, we - will have to do for ourselves and make the investment in a whole of nation approach, others, we will need the assistance of the international community to learn lessons and best practices. We also welcome the means to implement our plans. As we start the Decade of Action – through SDG 17 - we are confident that we will realize many of our goals.

I thank you.