

Women's Participation in Politics in Mongolia

- Female Parliamentarians' Promotion -

Turmunkh ODONTUYA (Mongolia)

In Mongolia, there are data about percentages of women in the following areas: 70% of university students, 64% of university graduates, 66% of degree recipients, 95.7% of teachers of day cares or kindergartens and 80.3% of teachers of elementary or secondary schools. Also, Mongolia ranks high, such as the 7th out of 165 countries in Gender Equality Index and the 36th in Gender Equality Index of World Economic Forum. Women's social activities have been expanding, however, their advancement is still behind in decision making process in governmental and private sector organizations, especially in politics. Let us focus on women parliamentarians in Mongolian congress in order to describe Mongolian women's participation in politics.

During socialist era in Mongolia, the People's Grand Conference used to be the highest legislative body based on the constitution stipulated in 1924. But after the democratization, the constitution revised in 1992 has stipulated the unicameral congress, where the term of service is four years and number of seats are 76. Since 1992, the national elections have been held six times and 19 women have been elected to become parliamentarians out of whom two have served four times.

Fiscal Year(FY)	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012
Number of female members	3	8	9	5	3	11
Rate	3.9%	10.5%	11.8%	6.6%	3.9%	14.5%

Table 1. Number and rate of female parliamentarians in Mongolian congress

Table 1 shows the number and the rate of female parliamentarians in Mongolian congress. It describes the followings: in FY1992 and 2008 female members were the least, namely three among 76 seats, while the largest number of eleven female have been serving in the current congress since FY2012. Regarding the rate of female members in the congress, it was lower than 10% in fiscal years of 1992(3.9%), 2004(6.6%) and 2008(3.9%), while higher than 10% in 1996(10.5%), 2000(11.8%) and 2012(14.5%). Nevertheless, the rate has not yet achieved 30% of MDG.

Women's participation in politics is very limited in Mongolia although their social participation has been in progress. One of the reasons is that the public stereotyped perception of gender role division still remain, including the idea that politics is men's world. Furthermore, each political party puts low priority on women and there is a gap between male and female candidates in securing campaign fund and other resources as well as in getting internal support from their party. After the last election, a number of measures have been taken in order to improve this situation, for example, to promote a legal provision as well as to encourage women to develop leadership and to raise public awareness about it. Hopefully, the positive result would be seen in the next election in 2016.