

REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

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**AT THE 54TH SESSION ON THE COMMISSION ON
THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

New York

March 3, 2010

Mr. Chairman, allow me to commend you on your able leadership and expertise in guiding our deliberations for the 54TH Session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

2. We align ourselves with the statements made by Equatorial Guinea on behalf of the Africa Group and Yemen on behalf of the G77 and China.

3. We welcome the report of the Secretary General on the Review of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective towards the full realization of the Millennium Development Goals contained in document E/2010/4-E/CN.6/2010/2.

4. As noted in the report, the review will provide an opportunity for Member States to reaffirm their commitment to the gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

5. I applaud the visionary leadership of the Commission on the Status of Women to have once again availed the UN Member States the opportunity to come together to celebrate the achievements made in the area of gender and development, women's empowerment and human rights, 15 years after Beijing. I am convinced that this 'stock taking' is important for us to collectively evaluate the progress we have made and share experiences and lessons learnt at national, regional and international levels. I am hopeful that the 54th CSW will come out with forward looking strategies to accelerate the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.

6. I am happy to share with the Commission that Botswana has recorded considerable progress with regard to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. By adopting national strategies, policies and programmes aligned to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the related Conventions and Protocol my government fundamental priorities were the promotion of human rights of women and girls, gender equality and improved quality of life for all citizens. This has led to some positive indicators on progress made on gender equality and challenges relating to the need to integrate gender into policy and planning processes. Progress has also been made in areas of, legislative reforms, enhancement of the National machinery, increased participation of women in the economy, gender parity in the enrolment for primary and secondary education, as well as greater awareness and interventions against the HIV and AIDS scourge, including universal access to treatment and ARVs by including women and girls.

7. Regarding women in decision making positions in the public service and political forum, mixed results have been recorded. For example, in the public service the statistics show that women occupy 45% of decision making positions; National Assembly 8.1%; Ministerial positions 16.7%; Councillors 19.7%; Ntlo ya Dikgosi 8.6%. There is a need to intensify political education with a view to increase women

members in political leadership positions including within Political Party structures as well as in Parliament, District and Urban Councils

8. The elimination of violence against women and girls remains as much a challenge for Botswana as it is for the global community. This calls for governments and civil society to continue to work together on the problem including introducing reforms and incident management for dealing with domestic violence. The major challenge is to unpack the underlying psychosocial factors, including alcohol and substance abuse that act as triggers to gender based violence. While women make the greater numbers of victims and survivors of gender based violence, there is a growing trend of men and boys becoming victims and survivors of domestic violence. My delegation would like to add our support to the proposed study by the Assistant Secretary General on this phenomenon. Humanity has advanced and so should our values and attitude towards human life and individual dignity primarily in the home and society at large. For us in Botswana, this matter formed part of our report when we appeared before the CEDAW Committee a month ago, and it remains a major challenge. We appreciate the lessons and good practices that Botswana as a country has learnt from other members of this Commission and I should add humbly that my Government will need expert and financial support in the drafting of relevant regulations to the Domestic Violence Act of 2006, and its implementation as well as the development of education programmes.

9. Chairperson, while recognising our achievements, we still have much work to do in the implementation of the gender equality and main streaming. The key challenges remaining are largely the inadequacy of resources, the absence of disaggregated data on gender equality and equity in the public, private sector and within the civil society. Effective and efficient implementation and monitoring of the national gender programme with specific indicators to monitor actual progress and inform policy development are also relevant. I am happy to recognize while here that the newly adopted United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2010- 2015 in Botswana will go a long way in assisting us in our national efforts, including initiatives of gender based planning and budgeting.

10. The promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment is a matter not only of justice, but crucial for our country to achieve economic growth, sustainable development, good governance, peace and security.

11. Botswana recognises the vital role of the United Nations agencies in advancing gender equality. We are therefore keen to hear about progress made in the implementation of reforms in establishing a strengthened single UN agency dedicated to the advancement of women led by the Under Secretary General.

12. In conclusion, I am impressed that the Commission has generated discussions and consensus on new methodologies for the advancement of gender equality and the elimination of discrimination against women. The Botswana delegation therefore fully commits to the global initiatives on the gender equality and renewed impetus to the

Beijing Platform for Action as clearly articulated by the Deputy Secretary General Mme Rose Migiro and her leadership team.

13. Last but not least my delegation and the entire people of Botswana would like to convey sympathy and support to people of Haiti and Chile during their most difficult and trying times.

I thank you.

