



*Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations*

866 U.N. Plaza, Rm 304, New York, NY 10017

STATEMENT

BY

**HON. ESTHER MURUGI MATHENGE, EGH, MP**  
MINISTER FOR GENDER, CHILDREN AND  
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
AND HEAD OF KENYA DELEGATION

TO

THE

**54<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE  
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (CSW)**

TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2010  
UN HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK

Please check against delivery



**Chairperson,  
Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election as Chairperson of the 54<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. My delegation wishes to convey our confidence in your able leadership during this Session.

My delegation associates itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of G-77 and China and the African Group.

**Chairperson,**

Since the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) and the Millennium Development Goals, Kenya has remained focused on the ideals of these commitments. The Key policy document that has been instrumental in this process is Kenya Vision 2030, the development blue print for the country. In addition Kenya has developed a new Draft Constitution whose provisions have been hailed as gender responsive.

**Chairperson,**

Since the last review in 2005, the government of Kenya has made significant efforts in accelerating the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

**1. Women, the Economy and Poverty**

In Kenya, absolute poverty has declined over the years but income inequalities remain high at 45.9 %. The government has addressed these through; **the establishment of the Women's Enterprise Fund in 2007, the Social Protection Fund was set up in 2009** targeting men and women in ultra poor households and the **Youth Enterprise Fund**, which targets youth between 18 – 35 years.

**Chairperson,**

**2. Education, Training and the Girl Child**

In 2007, the Government of Kenya developed a Gender Policy in education to ensure the implementation of gender equality measures in the

education sector. Free primary education has significantly boosted the enrollment of girls at the primary school level where gender parity has been achieved. Additionally, removal of tuition fees at secondary school level has made education affordable. As a result, the transition rate from primary to secondary school steadily rose from 40.2 % in 2005 to 50 % in 2008. The proportion of female to male students in private accredited universities stood at 51.9 % in 2008/9 as compared to 43.7% in 2006/7.

### **3. Women and Health**

Due to interventions in the health sector, life expectancy increased from 46.8 % in 2003 to 57.8% in 2008. Births attended by skilled personnel slightly improved from 40% in 2003 to 43 % in 2008.

Through the National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan II and III, of 2005 -2013, the government aims to scale up Anti retroviral services in the country and ensure that 50% of the beneficiaries are women.

Under the Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission Initiative there is an increase in the number of women tested from 50.4 % in 2003 to 78. 5% in 2008 and an increase in the facilities providing the services from 40 % to 64.9 % respectively.

### **Chairperson,**

### **4. Violence Against Women and Human Rights**

The government has redrafted and refined gender responsive laws, namely: **Family Protection Bill of 2009, Marriage Bill of 2009,** and the **Matrimonial Property Bill of 2009.**

The Government of Kenya has also developed a National Framework Towards Response and Prevention of Gender-Based Violence. This and other measures have contributed to the reduction of GBV Cases by 11.1% between 2005 and 2009. The national Female Genital Mutilation prevalence has declined from 32.5% in 2003 to 27.1% in 2008/9. A Gender Violence Recovery Centre has been established and a Gender Based Violence Information System put in place.

The enforcement of the Sexual Offences Act, 2006 has ensured that sexual offenders are dealt with, in accordance with the law.

Additionally, all labour laws have been reviewed and brought into

conformity with International Labour Organizations Conventions and Recommendations. The Employment Act, 2007 has granted women three months maternity leave with full pay and men Paternity leave for two weeks.

**Chairperson,**

#### **5. Armed Conflict**

In conformity with resolution 1325/2000, the Government has ensured the involvement of women in various peace committees and fora. We have also ensured that women form an integral part of peacekeeping Missions. Currently, the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission has three women appointed in leadership positions.

#### **6. Women in Power and Decision Making**

Women ministers increased from 3 in 2003 to 6 and a similar increase in 2009. In addition, 6 women MP's head parliamentary committees. Further, the Kenya National Assembly has a woman MP as a member of the speaker's panel who is entitled to exercise all powers vested in the chairperson of committees including powers as deputy speaker.

The number of Kenyan women ambassadors and high commissioners increased from 3% in 2003 to 11% in 2009.

In October 2006, a Presidential Directive was issued on the implementation of 30% affirmative action for women in appointments, recruitments and promotion in the Public Service.

**Chairperson,**

#### **7. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women**

The institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming have been enhanced through the appointment of Gender Officers at senior management in all government ministries and state corporations. Gender mainstreaming has also been made a requirement in performance contracts of all Chief Executive Officers of the government of Kenya.

The National Commission on Gender and Development has also been strengthened through increased budget allocation and secondment of professionals.

## **8. Women and the Media**

The media industry in Kenya has grown tremendously and currently there are 100 community media houses employing a large number of women.

## **9. Women and the Environment**

The Government has introduced quotas for women in the water management boards and increased the budget for water and sanitation.

**Chairperson,**

Before I conclude, allow me to share my government views on some of the issues we would wish addressed during this Session of the CSW. We wish to propose that the CSW dates be changed so that future sessions are held after International Women's Day. This will allow delegates to celebrate this day in their respective countries and give it the significance and visibility it deserves.

**Chairperson,** we further urge member states to swiftly conclude negotiations on the establishment of the new Gender Entity and ensure it is adequately resourced.

**Chairperson,**

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm my government's commitment to the goals of the Beijing Platform for Action. In this regard we would like to appreciate the support and partnership of UNIFEM, UNFPA, UNICEF and GTZ and others in their assistance to realize these goals.

**Thank you.**