

52nd Session of the
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

**“Financing for gender equality and the
empowerment of women”**

Statement by H.E. Maurits HASSANKHAN

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Please check against delivery!

Mr. Chair,

My delegation is honoured to address the Commission on this important priority theme of “Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women”. First of all I would like to congratulate you Mr. Chair and the other members of the Bureau on your election to guide the discussions during this session of the Commission and we pledge our full support and cooperation.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for providing us with information on the priority theme. Furthermore, I would like to associate myself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (G-77&China).

Mr. Chair,

On previous occasions the international community has repeatedly committed itself to allocate resources for gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Secretary General rightly observes in his report to this Commission that notwithstanding our acknowledgement that gender equality makes good economic sense, we are still facing the challenge that adequate resources have not been allocated.

Many women in the world have yet to reap the benefits of improved access to education and health care, including sexual and reproductive health, access to micro credit and finance, employment generation and representation of women in decision-making.

The Government of Suriname, in close cooperation with civil society organizations, is implementing its second Integral Gender Action Plan which identifies several policy interventions in the areas of poverty eradication, voice and decision-making, human rights, education and training and health. An essential part of the estimated budget will be financed by the Government as to express its responsibility to mobilize domestic resources for gender equality.

Mr. Chair,

Last year a United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) was launched. This programme is guided by our own development priorities and constitutes a strategic framework for United Nations sponsored development assistance to Suriname. We do hope that sufficient resources will be made available through coordinated actions from the United Nations system and our development partners towards accelerated progress of the millennium development goals, and in particular MDG3.

Recently the Ministry of Home Affairs, in charge of the coordination of gender policy in my country, organized a workshop on gender and aid effectiveness in cooperation with the UNIFEM. An important recommendation of the workshop is to develop a methodology on gender responsive budgeting and to initiate a pilot-project in one or two Ministries.

The Ministry of Agriculture, which has included gender mainstreaming in its sector plan, is likely to be the first Ministry of this pilot-project, mainly because many women, especially rural women, are involved in small scale agriculture.

Mr. Chair,

In adopting a critical self evaluation approach, the Ministry of Home Affairs acknowledges that many challenges remain in the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women in Suriname. Besides insufficient financial resources, we also face challenges in lack of capacity within government and civil society, including ngo's. The lack of sex-disaggregated data and analysis constraints the formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies geared towards improving the situation and rights of women. In this regard I would like to note that we are participating in a CARICOM regional statistical program aimed at integrating statistical data from different sources, which could guide us in the analysis of social, including gender statistics.

In closing Mr. Chair,

Women all over the world remain hopeful that the international community will heed the call to allocate increased and adequate resources for gender equality and the empowerment of women.

If we all agree that investing in women is investing in development, we will have to redouble our efforts in attaining the goals of gender equality and empowerment of women.

Some developed countries have demonstrated their commitments towards allocating resources for official development assistance, and we would like to express our appreciation for those efforts. We nevertheless call on other developed countries to honour their commitments, made in particular in Monterrey at the International Conference on Financing for Development. It is therefore important that the follow-up meeting in Doha to review implementation of the Monterrey Consensus fully incorporates gender perspectives.

We cannot keep talking only about an issue of which the international community has already acknowledged its importance. We have to demonstrate our political will; it is time to act.

Thank you Mr. Chair.