

# REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



Permanent Mission of Zambia to the United Nations, 237 East 52nd Street, New York, NY 10022  
Tex: (212) 888-5770 Fax: (212) 888-5213 E-mail: zambia@un.int

*Check Against Delivery*

## STATEMENT BY

**HONOURABLE PATRICIA MULASIKWANDA, MP  
MINISTER OF GENDER AND WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT**

**ON**

**FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN  
AND TO THE TWENTY-THIRD SPECIAL SESSION OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ENTITLED: "WOMEN 2000:  
GENDER EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND  
PEACE FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY"**

**AT THE**

**FIFTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE  
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

February 27 , 2008  
New York

**Chairperson,  
Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates.**

My delegation wishes to commend you for the manner in which you are conducting the affairs of this meeting and we pledge our full support for a successful outcome to our deliberations. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the Statement I have just delivered on behalf of SADC. I would also like to thank the Secretary General for his informative reports which form a good basis for our discussions and follow-up action.

**Chairperson,**

The Government of the Republic of Zambia attaches great importance to issues of gender equality and the empowerment of women. To this effect, Zambia has undertaken a number of measures to realize this goal.

For instance, we have developed and are implementing the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP) in which promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women is a priority. In this regard, gender is an integral part of the all the sectors of the FNDP. I wish to mention here that the Plan provides the basis for resource allocation to national development programmes. Through this process, Government has continued to allocate resources for gender and development.

In addition Chairperson, in order to effectively provide for coordinated resource mobilization and effective implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy, the Government in collaboration with the stakeholders, has developed a National Gender Support Programme (NGSP) for the period 2008 to 2011 in line with the principles of the Paris Declaration. It is our firm belief that this approach will contribute to addressing the critical issue of financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women in Zambia.

Government has also put in place an enabling environment for gender equity and equality through policy directives urging all government line ministries to ensure that they allocate 30

percent of their sector budgets to gender related activities. Already, this policy directive is being implemented in three sectors namely: land; education; and science and technology. In the education sector for example, Government has reserved 30 percent of bursaries for female students, over and above the general bursaries scheme which is provided to all vulnerable students. With the implementation of this affirmative action in the education sector, Zambia has almost achieved gender parity at primary level.

Zambia has also recorded some progress in women's representation in decision-making positions in Cabinet; the legislature; and the Judiciary. In the current Cabinet, there are six female Ministers out of 24. In addition, the offices of the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly; Auditor General; Investigator General; Clerk of the National Assembly; and Bank of Zambia Deputy Governor are occupied by women. The Private Sector and Faith-based Organisations are other areas in which further progress has been achieved.

With regard to the economic empowerment of the Zambian citizens, Government has enacted the Citizens Economic Empowerment Act which has established an economic empowerment fund to ensure that resources are availed to its citizens for economic empowerment. As a deliberate measure, the Act provides for special measures to economically empower women and youths.

### **Chairperson,**

In recognition of the continued existence of gender based violence, Government has initiated measures to facilitate the development of a Bill on Gender Based Violence to be presented for consideration by the current Parliament. To supplement this effort, Government is in the process of conducting an audit to determine which provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) have been incorporated into national legislation. We believe that this exercise will facilitate effective and accelerated domestication of the CEDAW. Zambia also wishes take this opportunity to inform this meeting that we have finalised the Combined 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> periodic report on the CEDAW and we will soon present the report to the CEDAW Committee for its consideration.

**Chairperson,**

While Zambia has recorded progress, we continue to face challenges in meeting the internationally agreed goals including the Millennium Development Goals. In the health sector, Zambia's attainment of the Millennium Development Goal on Maternal Mortality may not be achieved due to the limited availability of qualified medical personnel in the public health institutions especially in rural areas. In order to address this particular constraint, government has, in this year's budget, allocated resources to recruit and retain qualified medical personnel.

Other challenges include:

- The feminisation of poverty and the HIV/AIDS pandemic;
- Limited appreciation and realisation that gender-based violence constitutes a violation of human rights;
- Limited institutionalisation of gender in sector ministries and other implementing agencies; and
- Weak accountability mechanisms for gender mainstreaming at all levels.

**Chairperson,**

I wish to reiterate Zambia's commitment to the attainment of gender equity and empowerment of women. However, this goal will only be attained if adequate resources are mobilised and allocated for implementation. We, therefore, urge the international community to re-double its efforts in honouring its commitments towards the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals.

I wish to conclude by endorsing the position expressed by our leaders at the 2005 World Summit that "progress for women is progress for all"

I thank you.