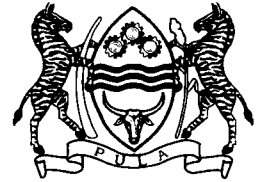


REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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BOTSWANA COUNTRY STATEMENT

**AT THE 53RD SESSION OF THE COMMISSION
ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (CSW)**

**PRESENTED BY
MRS. SEGAKWENG TSIANE
PERMANENT SECRETARY
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND HOME AFFAIRS**

2-13 MARCH 2009, NEW YORK

Chairperson,

1. Allow me to join other delegations that have taken the floor before me in warmly congratulating you and other Members of the Bureau on your well-deserved election to preside over the proceedings of the 53rd Session of this Commission.
2. We are confident that under your wise leadership and guidance, our deliberations will result in the adoption of action-oriented conclusions aimed at advancing the cause of gender equality.
3. I therefore assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation in the discharge of your mandate.
4. My delegation fully associates itself with the statement eloquently delivered by the Minister in the Presidency of the Republic of South Africa, Dr. Manto Tshabalala-Msimang on behalf of SADC.
5. As we deliberate in this session, Chairperson, I wish to recall this Commission's clarion call made during its first session in February 1947, and I quote, "to raise the status of women, irrespective of nationality, race, language or religion" and to ensure that women play an equal role "in the building of a free, healthy, prosperous and moral society."
6. Botswana's commitment to issues concerning the disadvantage of women continues to be guided by, among others, accession to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1996 and the Optional Protocol to the CEDAW in 2006.
7. My Government remains fully cognizant of the need to accelerate the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of 1995 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of 2000. To this end, Botswana created a mutually beneficial collaboration with Development Partners (including UN Agencies, SADC, DFID and the Commonwealth), Civil Society and the Parastatals and Private sectors.
8. Regionally, Botswana is a signatory to the 1997 SADC Declaration on Gender and Development and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). Taking a multi-faced approach, Botswana developed a number of gender responsive national instruments to guide its efforts. These include adoption of the Policy on Women in Development, the National Gender Programme Framework, an Advocacy and Social Mobilisation Strategy of the National Gender Programme Framework (NGPF) and Vision 2016.
9. Since Botswana acceded to CEDAW in 1996, a continuous process of amending the laws that had a negative impact on the status of women intensified so as to achieve gender equality. These include the Citizenship (Amendment) Act 1995, the Mines and Quarries (Amendment) Act 1996, the Deeds Registry (Amendment) Act 1996, the Criminal Procedure and Evidence (Amendment) Act 1997, the Penal Code (Amendment)

Act 1998, the Affiliation Proceedings (Amendment) Act 1999, the Public Service (Amendment) Act 2000, the Marriages Act (Amendment) Act 2000, the Abolition of Marital Power (Amendment) Act 2004, the Statute Law (Miscellaneous (Amendment) Act 2008, the Domestic Violence (Amendment) Act 2008.

10. Chairperson, with particular reference to the theme of this year's session, I wish to report that in 1996 Botswana developed operational guidelines for Community Home Based Care for People living with HIV and AIDS. In 2005, we developed guidelines and tools that defined models for family care in home-based and orphan care. In 2006, we conducted a base line study on Community Home Based Care Programme for Terminally Ill HIV/AIDS Patients in Botswana. In order to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of our policies and programmes, in 2007, we mapped and created a directory for Community Home Based Care Service Providers in the country. All these efforts were aimed at creating a better understanding and appreciation of our systems and to chart the way forward.

11. Chairperson, in Botswana, just as in other countries, women and girls bear the extra burden of care in HIV/AIDS, often, as voluntary care givers. Needless to say, time spent doing unpaid work is generally unrewarded and limits women's ability to take-up productive or income generating activities, which further perpetuate gender inequality. For instance, out of the 292 known Home Based Care groups with information on the composition of their members (Male and Female), 98 are made up of 100% female membership as against just four groups with 100% male membership. And generally, 60 – 96% of group members are mostly female.

12. Chairperson, with regard to gender relations, the Botswana Government has initiated reviews of national legislation with a view to enhancing responsibility sharing between men and women. One such effort is: The Abolition of Marital Power Act, 2004 which makes spouses equal partners in marriage and hence jointly liable for household necessities. My Government's efforts in the areas of male involvement in Health Care and promotion of gender equality have seen men and boys enrolled in care work. We have also supported the creation of support groups for People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA) and created an institutional structure to facilitate their work. All of the groups, institutions and leaderships in Care Giving compose of men, women, boys and girls; but most of the tasks in Care Giving are performed by women. However, my Government still has the challenge of ensuring that the burdens of care are shared proportionately amongst women, men, boys and girls. As we seek to address the imbalance in the share of burden of work in care giving, my government will continue to develop strategies and programmes to facilitate the participation of men and boys in these tasks.

13. Chairperson, all these we have been able to achieve through the benefit of gender analysis as a precursor to understanding and defining our lines of intervention; allocation of resources and supporting the institutional structures for action. As we deliberate, I urge that we borrow a leaf from this experience.

Thank you.