

REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

154 EAST 46TH STREET • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017
TEL. (212) 889-2277



STATEMENT

BY

MS. TAPIWA S. MONGWA

DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

ON AGENDA ITEM 62: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

THIRD COMMITTEE

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Mr. Chairperson

Allow me to join other delegations that have taken the floor before me in warmly congratulating you, and Members of the Bureau on your election to preside over the work of this Committee.

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 and empowerment of women. Let me assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by Sudan on behalf of G77 and China and Malawi on behalf of SADC.

We would also like to thank the Secretary General for the comprehensive reports submitted under this agenda item and take note of the conclusions and recommendations contained therein.

Mr. Chairperson,

The 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) offers an opportunity to reaffirm our commitments, and highlight strategic goals and actions in order to achieve gender equality, as well as the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of women.

In this regard, my delegation would like to reaffirm its support for the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly as the guiding policy frameworks for gender equality and in empowerment for all.

Mr. Chairperson,

Botswana's commitment to issues concerning empowerment of women continues to be guided by, among others, the accession to the Convention

on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol.

Since Botswana acceded to the Convention in 1996, there has been a continuous process of amending our statutes in order to make various provisions in the law agenda neutral. These include:

- the Citizenship (Amendment)
- Act 1995, the Public Service (Amendment)
- Act 2000, the Marriages Act (Amendment)
- Act 2000, Abolition of Marital Power (Amendment)
- Act 2004, and most recently the Statute Law (Miscellaneous (Amendment))
- Act 2008, and enactment of the Domestic Violence Act 2008.

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.

In addition, Botswana benefits from mutual collaboration Botswana is a signatory to the 1997 SADC Declaration on Gender and Development

Regionally Botswana benefits from mutually collaboration with Development Partners (including UN Agencies, SADC, DFID and the Commonwealth), Civil Society, Parastatals and Private sectors, especially the pillars dealing specifically with maternal health empowerment of women and their contribution to development as a whole.

Mr. Chairperson,

Participation of women is critical to the economic and social development of all societies. However, the current financial and economic crisis coupled

with food and energy crises and climate change continue to undermine our efforts to empower women. In addition, we are faced with a serious challenge of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In this regard, it is essential that concerted efforts must be taken to assist developing countries to build capacity in response to the crises taking into account the needs and priorities of women .

Mr. Chairperson,

We note with appreciation the achievements of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in monitoring the implementation of the Convention, while recognizing the continuing existence of discriminatory laws and practices against women throughout the world. In the same vein, we acknowledge and commend the work that UNIFEM continues to undertake in a broad array of areas of women empowerment including poverty eradication, violence against women as well as the advancing gender in engendering democratic governance.

Mr. Chairperson,

Of particular concern to my delegation is the less prominence given to the present challenges of the international discourse and the impact of such challenges in relation to women including HIV and AIDS, Malaria and TB my delegation also believes that Combating violence against women and girls also remain a challenge. In this connection, we fully to support the Secretary General's campaign "Unite to end violence against women" which was launched in 2008.

Mr. Chairperson,

We recognize the importance of a strengthened United Nations gender architecture in advancing women's rights. In this regard, we welcome the strong and unanimous support by the General Assembly in its the adoption of a resolution that established a new gender entity. It is our believe that

new entity will bring an important shift to the work of the UN in the area of gender equality and the empowerment of women. In this connection, my delegation stands ready to work with other Member States to finalize the remaining details of the new entity.

Mr. Chairperson,

In conclusion Chairperson, I wish to reiterate my delegation's unwavering commitment to the promotion and protection for equal right for all. We remain convinced that we must all do our part in taking the actions needed, as set forth in our common agreements, to meet our universal goals.

Thank you.