



*PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM  
OF LESOTHO TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
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**STATEMENT**

**BY**

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**On AGENDA ITEM 28: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN**

**IN THE**

**THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE  
SIXTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**13 OCTOBER 2010, NEW YORK**

**Please check against delivery**

**Chairperson,**

I take this opportunity to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau for your election, to guide the work of this Committee. I assure you of my delegation's full support.

We thank the Secretary General for the informative reports presented under this agenda item.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the delegations of Yemen, Malawi and Tanzania on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the African Group and the SADC, respectively.

**Chairperson,**

The Fifty-Fourth Session of the Commission on the Status of Women provided Member States with an opportunity, to review progress on the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Outcomes of the Twenty-Third Special Session of the General Assembly as well as all other legislations aimed at promoting gender equality, and the empowerment of women. The Fifty-Fourth Session of the Commission also commemorated the Fifteenth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. During the review process, it was noted that Member States had made significant progress on some issues, though there were some challenges in some other areas. Most progress was noted in women's accessibility to education and the significant increase in their participation in decision making processes. Some of the highlighted challenges included the continuing instances of violence against women and the hardships caused by the effects of the global economic and, financial crises, particularly on women.

**Chairperson,**

The just ended High-level Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals highlighted the achievements made and the challenges that remain in attaining the MDGs by the target date of 2015. Despite the progress made, it is unfortunate that least progress is evident in meeting Goal 5 on reducing maternal mortality, which remains at an alarming high rate, particularly in Developing Countries. HIV and AIDS and its disproportionate impact on women is another challenge facing the world today. These challenges

continue to be the main concerns for the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho. To address these challenges, the Government has put in place reproductive health policies and programmes focusing on safe motherhood, family planning services and the prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV and AIDS. These include the National HIV and AIDS Policy and Strategic Plan (2006-2011); the National Action Plan on Women, Girls and HIV and AIDS (2007-2010); and the Safe Motherhood Programme aimed at reducing the number of deaths and illnesses associated with pregnancy and childbirth.

**Chairperson,**

I would like to expound on some of the activities of the Government of Lesotho in implementing the commitments aimed at the advancement of women. The Government has enacted legislations aimed at empowering women, putting in place safeguards for protecting women against all forms of discrimination and violence and bridging gender disparity gaps between women and men. To address the instances of gender based violence, the Government of Lesotho has put in place preventative and protective measures such as the enactment of the Sexual Offences Act of 2003, the establishment of the Child and Gender Protection Unit within the Police Service, and a One Stop Centre aimed at providing integrated support for survivors of gender based violence (GBV).

**Chairperson,**

Human trafficking is an issue of concern for my delegation. Women and children are susceptible to trafficking. To address this issue, the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho ratified the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children. In addition, the Government continues to be actively involved in sub-regional, regional and international efforts aimed at combating trafficking against Persons. To that end, my delegation is proud to be part of the consensus in the adoption of the United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons (**A/RES/64/293**) adopted by the General Assembly on July 30, 2010.

**Chairperson,**

It is also worth mentioning that it is the Government's top priority to increase women's participation in decision making. To that end, the 2004 Local Government Election Amendment Act stipulates that 30% of the Local Government Councilors have to be women. This led to an overwhelming increase in women's participation in politics. In addition, the Government developed the Gender and Development Policy (2003) to empower women in politics and decision making positions.

**Chairperson,**

My delegation welcomes the establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women entitled "UN Women". We pledge our commitment to fully support the Entity and abide by its principles. We congratulate Ms. Michelle Bachelet, the former President of Chile for her appointment as the Head of this Entity. We assure her of our full support in the execution of her duties.

As we prepare for the election of the members of the Executive Board of UN Women, we call on Member States who will be elected to ensure that they serve the Board with the goal of promoting and protecting the rights of women and girls worldwide.

In conclusion, the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho remains committed to the full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcomes of the Twenty-Third Special Session of the General Assembly.

**I thank you.**