



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



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STATEMENT BY

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COUNSELLOR
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

AT THE

**65TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

IN THE

THIRD COMMITTEE

ON

AGENDA ITEM: 28

**(a)ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN;
(b)IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE
FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN
AND OF THE TWENTY-THIRD SPECIAL
SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

New York
October 11, 2010

Chairperson,

Allow me to congratulate you and other members of the bureau on your election and assure you of my delegations support throughout this session. We are confident that you will steer our deliberations to a successful conclusion.

My delegation aligns itself to the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of Yemen on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, Malawi on behalf of the African Group and the United Republic of Tanzania on behalf of SADC. I wish to thank the Secretary General for his informative reports which form a good basis for our discussions.

Chairperson,

This year 2010 has provided an opportunity for not only strengthening political commitments towards the achievement of internationally agreed goals and commitments on gender equality and the empowerment of women but also to take stock of where we stand and what we need to do to address the gaps and challenges that hamper our implementation efforts.

The various high-level meetings that have been held through the organization's various bodies have indeed set the stage for member states to remain effectively engaged in identifying further action to accelerate progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women. It is our hope that this will not be a missed opportunity but will further galvanize our efforts to ensure that we achieve all these important goals.

Chairperson,

Zambia recognizes that gender equality and the empowerment of women is critical to achieving sustainable development and to combating hunger poverty and disease. Further, the empowerment of women and their inclusion in the decision making process has enhanced their role in development. It is for this reason that Zambia has integrated women in all sectors in decision-making positions.

The promotion of gender equality is an important part of Zambia's development strategy as it seeks to improve people's standard of living. Through the national development plans which is a framework for formulating and implementing government policies, plans, projects and programmes, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women has been prioritized and systematically mainstreamed in all sectors of development. Furthermore the government has established the Citizens Economic Empowerment Fund with a specific mandate of ensuring that women are given preference to accessing these funds. In addition the government in its national budget for 2010 has allocated additional funds to the National Gender Machinery and the Ministry responsible for community development and social welfare for the economic empowerment of women.

Chairperson,

The financial sector has also joined government efforts in addressing the challenges faced by women in accessing credit and related services. With the leadership from the central bank, the financial institutions are increasingly engaging with women entrepreneurs in order to tackle some of the bottlenecks women continue to face particularly in relation to access to banking and financial services.

In addition, in the implementation of the land reform programme in which 30 percent of the titled land is being allocated to women, represents another measure to empower them. This measure has contributed to an increase in the number of women accessing titled land. It is the government's considered views that providing women with security to land will enable them utilize title as collateral.

With regard to education, Zambia has continued with the implementation of affirmative action measures which include reserving 25 per cent of bursary schemes for girls at tertiary educational level and the re-entry policy for girls who fall pregnant whilst in school.

Although progress has been made in the areas highlighted, much more remains to be done to accelerate the advancement of women.

Chairperson,

Zambia realizes that women's human rights are essential to advance development and ensure peace and security. Zambia condemns violence against women in all its manifestations as it is a violation against their fundamental human rights. The government therefore remains committed to the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against women. Zambia having ratified The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, (CEDAW) and other regional instruments is committed to their implementation. Zambia also supports all efforts to end this scourge including the initiative of the Secretary General, "UNiTE to end violence against Women". In its efforts to address the high incidence of gender base violence in Zambia, the government has initiated the development of specific legislation, namely the Anti-Gender Based Violence Bill, currently before parliament whose provisions including protection orders as well as compensation for victims to ensure that their rights are protected. Furthermore in collaboration with the civil society and with the cooperating partners the Government has developed a national action Plan on Gender Based violence to address these issues. We are confident that this partnership will make progress in tackling this scourge.

Chairperson,

Allow me to turn to the crime of trafficking in persons. This crime which is gaining momentum has been described as modern day slavery and requires the cooperation of the international community in order to eradicate it. Zambia welcomes the adoption of the Global Plan of Action by the General Assembly to deal with trafficking in persons. Zambia will continue to support the effort of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, (UNODC), and regional initiatives to stamp out this crime. In an effort to address this at

national level, Zambia has enacted the Anti-Human Trafficking Act which enables the prosecution of human traffickers and commits the government to providing protection services to victims of the crime. The enactment of this law has proven to be a deterrent to trafficking in persons.

Chairperson,

With the target date for the Millennium Development goals fast approaching. The MDG Summit provided us an opportunity to reconsider and modify policies and strategies to ensure sustainable development. The MDG's relating to reduction of child mortality; improvement of maternal health; and combating HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases

still require our concerted efforts if we are to achieve these goals. In our pursuance to the attainment of MDG's, Zambia has made steady progress. However the issue of gender based violence and the feminization of HIV and AIDS still remains a major challenge. The prevalence of HIV and AIDS stands at 16 per cent for females and 12 percent for males while maternal health ratios are also high at 449 per 100,000 live births. Further measures including increased resources are needed to ensure affordable accessible quality health services for women and children including primary health care and reproductive health services. Accordingly, we look forward to further discussions on the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health as it is our expectation that it will go a long way in addressing these challenges.

Chairperson,

Zambia recognizes the important role that women play in the attainment of development and their efforts can only be further enhanced by a well co-ordinated gender architecture. It is in this regard that we welcome the establishment of the UN women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. It is our hope that the new entity will have a strong and effective presence at the country level and help member states implement standards, and provide them with the much needed technical and financial assistance required to achieve women empowerment, equality and equity.

Chairperson,

The need for enhanced international cooperation and partnership to achieve gender equality and the advancement of women cannot be over stated. We therefore urge the international community to continue to meet its development commitments so as to ensure that the goals we have set ourselves can be fully realized.

I wish to conclude by reiterating Zambia's commitment to the goals of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the MDG's and other internationally agreed development goals, particularly those related to women. We will continue to forge ahead in the realization of these goals to ensure gender equality and the empowerment of women is achieved.

I thank you.