



*Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zimbabwe
to the United Nations*

STATEMENT

BY

H.E. AMBASSADOR C. CHIPAZIWA

TO THE

THIRD COMMITTEE

OF THE 65TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ON

AGENDA ITEM 28: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

NEW YORK

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Chairperson,

Zimbabwe aligns herself with statements made by Yemen on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, Malawi on behalf of the African Group and by the United Republic of Tanzania on behalf of Southern African Development Community.

Chairperson,

My country has placed the implementation of gender equality and empowerment of women policies at the centre of its development strategies. This is shown by our national prioritization of MDG 3 as part of the top three that we viewed as critical for the achievement of all the other Goals. The other two are MDGs 1 - Eradicate Extreme Poverty and 6 - Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, TB and other diseases.

Under difficult conditions, Zimbabwe has continued to deploy and direct much of her own resources towards the targets we set for ourselves. Indeed progress has been made in implementing our numerous national legal instruments as well as the international instruments that we are Party to. As a way of domesticating the provisions of international instruments and synchronizing them with our own national initiatives, my Government has adopted a National Gender Policy, which has continued to provide the requisite institutional framework for gender mainstreaming. As evidence of its commitment to fulfill its obligations, Zimbabwe has submitted its combined report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) to the CEDAW Committee in October 2009.

Chairperson,

Like most countries and despite all our efforts, Zimbabwe is still recording gender inequalities throughout the society. It is a fact that gender stereotypes, violence against women, under representation of women in decision making processes; the lack of involvement in progressive discourses by men and boys; and the unequal distribution of unpaid work between women and men has negative impacts on women's employment opportunities and involvement in public life.

Chairperson,

My Government in collaboration with its partners has consequently established various initiatives aimed at reducing the impact of these areas of concern but the efforts still need massive scaling up so as to realize more positive change. Nevertheless, Zimbabwe believes that for our women to enjoy the highest

standards of health and human rights, their economic empowerment is of critical importance. My delegation believes that once our women are economically independent, most of the difficulties they face will fall by the wayside and they will be better positioned to challenge their difficulties and advance without hindrance from men.

Chairperson,

Zimbabwe is committed to do all it can in cooperating with all countries and other stakeholders in combating trafficking in women and girls. Indeed human trafficking is a contemporary form of slavery hence our call to end it resonates with those that have labelled it a serious scourge facing humanity today. To that end, Zimbabwe has been actively engaged in strengthening our national and sub-regional responses to trafficking in persons. My delegation thereby welcomes the adoption of the new UN Global Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons in July 2010. My delegation stands ready to work with the UN and other partners in raising awareness in all people about this scourge.

Chairperson,

Zimbabwe is facing challenges in improving maternal and reproductive health services. Maternal and child mortality in the world remains high and Zimbabwe is no exception. We agree with those who have asserted that no woman should die or be disabled in the process of giving birth to life. My delegation appeals for the international community's cooperation in combating maternal mortality and morbidity, obstetrics fistula included. The improvement of health systems, ending child marriages and discouraging adolescent pregnancies will go a long way in eliminating obstetric fistula and most maternal deaths and morbidities.

Chairperson,

Allow me to laud the creation of UN Women, the new gender entity, which resulted from rigorous deliberations under the UN System Wide Coherence agenda. My Government stands ready to work with the new gender entity as well as its newly appointed Executive Director, Ms. Michelle Bachelet. Zimbabwe hopes that mainstreaming gender equality and empowerment of women will remain a central focii of UN Women. My country hopes that all the necessary resources, financial and technical, will timeously be availed to the entity so as to ensure the implementation of programmes at the country level that change the situation of women for the better. In addition, my delegation encourages UN Women to also prioritize strengthening capacities in the collection, analysis and use of data disaggregated by sex, age and geographical area. It has since been proven that improved data capturing and use by all stakeholders contributes to better policy planning, and programming, across all thematic sectors. This vital

aspect in programme planning is urgently needed in my country.

Chairperson,

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to reaffirm its commitment to eradicating all forms of social, cultural, economic and political factors that perpetuate gender inequalities and impede the advancement and empowerment of women. We call on the international community to join hands in the fulfillment of commitments we made in Beijing in 1995 and the objectives we set in New York in 2000.

I thank you.