



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

828 SECOND AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017 • TEL. (212) 953-9130 • FAX (212) 697-1970

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STATEMENT

BY

HAJIYA ZAINAB MAINA

**HONOURABLE MINISTER
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AFFAIRS AND SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT,**

AT THE

**THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE 67TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**ON AGENDA ITEM 28: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN
SUB ITEMS (a - b)**

NEW YORK, 15 October, 2012

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of my delegation, I would like to congratulate the Secretary-General H.E. Ban Ki-Moon, for his insightful and useful reports on the advancement of women. I would like to thank the Executive Director of UN Women, Madame Michelle Bachelet, for her comprehensive report. I would also like to commend the President of the Executive Board of UN Women, H.E. Kim Sook, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea, for steering this body towards the global realization of the advancement of women.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Algeria on behalf of the G77 and China.

Nigeria over the years has been consistent in its commitment to the achievement of women empowerment and gender equality. Gender equity and equality has gained a high degree of prominence in Nigeria's national development agenda. My country is committed to the passage of Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill as a means to further enhance women's equal access to social and economic activities and resources including land, credit, education, vocational training, and all other opportunities open to our citizens. The Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill would seek to domesticate the provisions of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa which is now before our National Assembly for consideration. The National Assembly is also considering the inclusion of the proposition of CEDAW's provisions in the on-going review of our Constitution.

In compliance with these principles and the provisions of the various gender frameworks, and as a means to confront the challenges of meeting gender equality and women empowerment, Nigeria, under the leadership of President, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, has for the first time attained 33% women representation in Executive decision-making positions and 50% in the Judiciary with the Chief Justice of the Federation as a woman. There are 13 women on the Federal Cabinet with Ministerial ranks. There are also numerous women in the top hierarchy of the Federal and States Civil Service, the Armed Forces and the Police, other Federal and State Agencies and in the private sector as well. In our National Assembly also, women are fairly represented and hold key positions in our decision-making process. Efforts will continue to ensure that women representation in the National Assembly is increased.

The second edition of the "Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YouWiN) Women Programme" was launched on 3rd September, 2012. This programme is targeted at young women between the ages of 18-45 years as part of the present Administration's

Transformation Agenda designed to curb youth unemployment and increase entrepreneurial activities.

Mr. Chairman,

In view of the need to achieve economic growth and sustained human development, women and men must participate fully and equally in the formulation of macroeconomic and social policies. Efforts to eradicate poverty cannot be accomplished through anti-poverty programs alone but with application of gender analysis, democratic participation and changes in economic structures in order to ensure that women have access to resources, credits and other opportunities and public services regardless of their status.

My Government has consequently introduced the Subsidy Re-investment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P), with the view to provide such opportunities by engaging unskilled youths and women in all the States of the Federation, in order to reduce unemployment rate and social vices in our country. We realize that investing in women and girls has multiplier effects on the family unit, on productivity, on efficiency as well as on sustained economic growth.

My Government has also intensified efforts towards advocacy, engagement and sensitization in order to achieve mobilization of women to participate in nationwide civic responsibility programmes. This strategy is aimed at overcoming stereotypes, mind-sets and harmful traditional practices affecting women's health. It is also aimed at educating policy-makers as well as the general public, to address issues on eradication of all forms of discrimination against women and ensure proper development, protection and survival for the Nigerian child.

Mr. Chairman,

The social inter-linkages between education, malnutrition, limited access to health services, early marriage of the girl child, female genital mutilation, other forms of violence against women and poverty remains the main social risk factors. To enhance reproductive health rights in the country, the Government embarked on Conditional Grants Scheme (CGS), an innovative and successful mechanism that ensures partnership between and among all levels of governments.

My delegation commends the achievements of the United Nations system in the field of gender equality and empowerment of women especially with the creation of UN Women and the Secretary-General's advocacy and efforts at ending gender based violence.

Nigeria will continue to advocate for social security system and safety nets that can guarantee better future for the vulnerable members of the society. We pledge to intensify efforts to mainstream the issue of gender in accordance with extant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, and we call upon the United Nations to continue to support Member States by providing support and capacity development to national machineries for the advancement of women.

I thank you.