

**STATEMENT BY
HON. DR. ASHA ROSE MTENGETI MIGIRO (MP)
MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
GENDER AND CHILDREN
OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**

**AT THE HIGH LEVEL PLENARY SEGMENT OF THE 49TH
SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
ON THE THEMES:**

**REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING
PLATFORM FOR ACTION AND THE OUTCOME DOCUMENT OF
THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ENTITLED "WOMEN 2000: GENDER EQUALITY,
DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY:**

AND

**CURRENT CHALLENGES AND FORWARD LOOKING
STRATEGIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT
OF WOMEN AND GIRLS**

**STATEMENT BY HON. DR. ASHA-ROSE MIGIRO (MP), MINISTER
FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, GENDER AND CHILDREN AT
THE 49TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF
WOMEN 28TH FEBRUARY -11TH MARCH 2005**

Madame Chairperson,

Allow me to begin by thanking you and all members of the Bureau for leading us efficiently for the second year consecutively. Permit me also to take this opportunity to congratulate Ms. Rachel Mayanja on her appointment as Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. My delegation wishes to assure both of you of our full support in the execution of your duties.

Madame Chairperson,

My delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made by Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We welcome the reports of the Secretary-General laid before the Commission. We are certain that they will serve as useful guides for our deliberations.

Madame Chairperson,

For Tanzania, the National Gender Machinery had already been established shortly after the Nairobi Women's Conference on Equality, Peace and Development. Therefore, after the Beijing conference the major task was to charge the National Machinery with the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and later the Outcome Document and the Millennium Development Goals.

Madame Chairperson,

As we look ten years back Tanzania is satisfied that we are on the right track although a lot more remains to be done.

Immediately after Beijing, the Government started working on the critical areas by initially focusing on four of the twelve areas of concern. These were:

- Enhancement of women's legal capacity;
- Access to education;
- Economic empowerment of women and poverty eradication;
- Empowerment of women in political and decision-making positions

As we embark upon the review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, a number of pieces of legislation have been put in place for purposes of ensuring gender equity, equality and the dignity of women.

Madame Chairperson,

The Constitution which is the grund norm, has provided a solid foundation to enable women's representation in Parliament to reach at least 30% by the end of 2005. In fact, this critical mass will be attained by October this year when our country shall hold general elections.

The Constitution also provides that out of the ten members of Parliament to be nominated by the President, at least five of them shall be women. At the Local Government level, we have already attained a 33.3% threshold.

In the area of education, gender parity in the primary schools is 50/50. At the secondary level, similar efforts are being made to achieve the same, while at the tertiary levels, the Government has instituted special programs to increase the intake of girls to match that of boys.

Madame Chairperson,

In the economic empowerment of women, the Government has enacted two critical pieces of legislation. These are the Land Act of 1999 and the Village Land Act also of 1999. These laws have now given women equal access to land use and ownership, thus making

it possible for them to dispose of it without reference to the male partners or relatives, and to use it commercially as they so wish.

On the other hand, women's groups have been facilitated with credit and trained in entrepreneurial skills. Furthermore, they have been enabled to take part in national and international trade fairs for experience gain and improvement of the quality of their products.

In the area of law, Tanzanian women have, since independence, been enjoying the right to sue and to be sued in their own name. Similarly, women's rights and dignity have been adequately protected through the enactment of the 1998 Sexual Offences (Special Provisions) Act. This Act, among others, outlaws female genital mutilation, trafficking in women, all forms of sexual harassment and imposes stiff punishment for these offences.

The challenge before us now is to stay the course to ensure that the remaining eight areas of the Beijing Platform for Action are tackled at a quicker pace. In order to do so, the Government has established Gender Focal Points in all Ministries and Departments to oversee effective gender mainstreaming.

We are also happy to report that political will is high in our country as top national leaders and political parties support the Beijing Platform for Action.

Madame Chairperson,

In commemorating the International Women's Day this year, the tenth anniversary of the BPA will be marked country wide. At the national level, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania will not only grace the occasion but renew his personal commitment and that of the Government, to hold fast to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

Madame Chairperson,

In this endeavour we shall continue to count on the support of your esteemed Committee, other bodies of the United Nations and the International Community in general.

Together we stand, divided we fall.

I thank you very much for your attention.