



PERMANENT MISSION OF SOLOMON ISLANDS TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Statement by

Mrs. Helen Beck

Counsellor

Permanent Mission of Solomon Islands to the United Nations

Fifty-Fifth Session of the Commission on Status of Women

On the Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the Twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the 21st Century": Implementation of strategic objectives and actions in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: Access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work

New York, 28th February 2011

Please Check Against Delivery

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation congratulates you and the Bureau on your election and assures you of our cooperation. We thank the Secretary General for his reports that contribute to our discussion.

We welcome the UN Women and congratulate Madam Michelle Bachelet as head of the Entity and assured her of our support.

We associate with statements by G77, Pacific Forum and Pacific SIDS.

Mr. Chairman,

The Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the 23rd Special Session of the UNGA must be linked to the overall development agenda of UN and the wider international community in addressing the theme of this session: "Access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology and equal access to full employment and decent work".

Our collective objective must end the worsening of social and economic conditions experienced by all women especially among the most disadvantaged communities and societies, which has become more complex with the impact of global crisis from financial, food, energy and climate change crisis. The impact has not made the ride any smoother in addressing access to education, food, water, health, appropriate technology to make the necessary economic, social and technological transformation in the lives of women, children and many of the disadvantaged communities.

Addressing empowerment of women through access to education is the beginning and the gateway to decent livelihood. The problems are old but need new solutions with a new honest and genuine partnership.

Solomon Islands still face the challenges of providing education infrastructure and services to enable access to education for girls and boys. The provision of education remains a particular challenge for remote and rural communities due to higher costs and budget consolidation among competing national priorities. 28% of rural women and girls still do not have access to any form of formal education. The gender-gap in retention of girls in schools has increased.

As a country emerging from conflict, the diversity of cultures provides a range of gender roles in conflict resolutions and peace initiatives. Our women had played a critical role in the initial peace process.

The reason for sharing our experience is to underscore the two worlds women operate in many developing states, the modern world and traditional world. Solomon Islands since its political independence, has adopted a political system that does not recognized the

traditional decision making role of women in tribal societies. Women's traditional role gets subsume which further weakens the power base of women in their traditional setting.

On Governance much attention has been paid to the gender parliamentary representation. We have an ambitious plan for temporary measures to advance women's participation launched in 2009, however will need more consultation.

Mr. Chairman,

On funding arrangements, work on mainstreaming gender within the wider government system is work in progress. A base line data has been established allowing for development of strategies to enhance gender capacity within the national system, and amend national old laws to address the gender gap system-wide.

Climate change and natural disasters is another challenge for my country. Natural disasters have displaced communities and caused issues of food security, tension over land resources, access to land and increased violence against women. Moreover it increased challenges for women's rights to land and property. We urge for a reduction of GHG emission by those responsible to protect our women and their land.

To address many of the disadvantaged women, and children and their right to life need a collective approach to provide an enabling environment to access basic education. This includes investment in education infrastructures and services, productive capacity building and economic activities to enhance women participation in the economic sector.

We hope our discussions on development initiatives will broaden the global cooperation to facilitate women access to basic services of education including agriculture to support women in addressing food security. Investment in small holder women farmers is a key factor in providing food security for the rural poor including women and children. Agriculture remains the largest employment sector for women in many of the least developed countries.

Mr. Chairman,

For the Least developed countries the UN Fourth LDC Conference in May must deliver. The outcome must be responsive and substantive to address the impoverish conditions of women and girls in these countries who live on less than one US dollar a day.

At all levels, genuinely address the poverty gap of women, rests on quality partnership, to include, targeted development investments on programs to support women entrepreneurship.

Overcoming these challenges is difficult and we hope to work with our development partners to assist us in our national efforts.

We call for a balanced role of all stakeholders including the state and the market to provide social justice for all, in ensuring access and participation of women and girls in education, and decent work.

Balance focus on state institutions and investment in the informal sector, must be given global attention to ensure access to, tested, relevant, rural focused and community based technologies are included in programs for women and girls.

Future initiatives of CSW must be comprehensive, results oriented and trigger structural transformation to enhance investment in the productive sector to target education, access to clean energy, agriculture, trade, human and social development, and build resilience against climate change in mainstreaming gender in development at all levels.

We reaffirm our commitment to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. As part of our effort to promote our women participation, Solomon Islands intends to submit our candidacy for the Board of UN Women for the next election.

I thank You Mr. chairman.