



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

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**STATEMENT BY HON. UMMY ALLY MWALIMU (MP), DEPUTY MINISTER
FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, GENDER AND CHILDREN OF THE
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA AT THE 55TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION
ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN: "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"**

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Chairperson,

My delegation congratulates you and other members of the Bureau on your election and assures you of our full cooperation and support.

We thank the Secretary-General for the reports submitted to this session. We are certain that the reports will serve as a useful guide for our deliberations.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered earlier by the distinguished representatives of Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and by Namibia on behalf of SADC member states.

Chairperson,

The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has made access and participation of women to education, full employment and decent work one of its priority agenda. This includes equal access for women and girls to science and technology. We believe that science education for women and girls will provide them with the tools they need to make sense of the world and empower them to make informed decisions on critical aspects of their lives.

Chairperson,

Strong political commitment from the President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete himself and the entire government has ensured mainstreaming of gender equality objectives in all government policies programmes, including national strategies for growth and poverty reduction.

We recognize that women's limited participation in decision making is a major problem. That is why we reviewed the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania to provide for affirmative action to increase women's participation in the national Parliament as well as in Local Government Councils.

Currently, women account for 35 per cent of all seats in Parliament and the current Speaker is a woman. The number of women members of Parliament has risen from 63 in 2004 to 125 currently. In the Zanzibar House of Representatives, the ratio of women is 30 per cent.

Gender parity has been attained in basic education and the gap has narrowed substantially in higher levels of education. The Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) for female pupils in primary schools has increased from 93.9 percent in 2005 to 97 percent in 2008. In 2008, the Government reviewed its Education and Training Policy (1995) to incorporate gender issues. Among the issues that were addressed include the improvement of the school environment to make it girl-friendly through, among other things, urging communities to provide school meals, boarding and sanitary facilities for girls and recruitment of more teachers.

Laws have been enacted to prohibit violence against women and all gender based abuses. Discriminatory laws have been amended. We have strived to meet our international obligations related to the advancement,

protection and equality of women. The Government has acceded, signed, or ratified several conventions and international declarations or instruments that provide a commitment to uphold gender equity, human, and women rights. Tanzania will continue to do all in its power to eliminate all remaining forms of discrimination against women, and will strive to live up to all its commitments under all relevant international instruments and declarations.

Chairperson,

Tanzania introduced specific institutional policies to address gender imbalances in science and higher education. These include the Female Education in Mathematics and Science in Africa (FEMSA) Tanzania Project (1996-2001) and the University of Dar es Salaam Pre-Entry remedial programme for girls (on-going since 1997). These affirmative actions have yielded some positive results as noted in the Secretary-General's report. For example, the University of Dar es Salaam increased women's enrolment in engineering from 7 per cent in 2003-2004 to 27 per cent in 2007-2008 by modifying its admission criteria and offering borderline female applicants a six-week remedial course followed by an entrance examination. As a result female students in higher education have increased from 32.2% in 2005/2006 to 35.5% in 2009/2010.

Chairperson,

The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has made progress in mainstreaming gender policies, strategies, programmes and plans. We are however faced with a challenge of translating policy into practice. Many obstacles including capacity building on gender analysis, insufficient gender disaggregated data to influence policy and planning, weak capacities of gender machineries and changing the mind-sets of the people is a continuous challenge and ought to be a continuous process. Despite these constraints, the foundation has been laid and there is commitment and determination to advance this cause.

Chairperson,

Tanzania has great hopes and significant expectations from UN-Women, the new United Nations Gender Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. We are pleased and honoured to be members of the first Executive Board, and have been encouraged by the energy, focus and commitment shown by the Executive Director, Mme. Michelle Bachelet, and welcome her introductory statement to this session. UN-Women has to be our important partner as we implement our national agenda for gender equality and the empowerment of women, including through capacity building and strengthening the National Gender Machinery in all aspects.

Chairperson,

In closing, I wish to once again reaffirm the commitment of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to the promotion of access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including women's equal access to full employment and decent work.

I thank you.

