



**Permanent Mission of  
The Republic of Angola to the United Nations**

**STATEMENT BY**

**SADC CHAIR**

**HER EXCELLENCY MINISTER GENOVEVA DA CONCEIÇÃO LINO  
MINISTER OF FAMILY AND THE PROMOTION OF WOMEN  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA**

**ON BEHALF OF THE SADC GROUP**

**AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE**

**56<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE COMMISSION  
ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

**NEW YORK, 27 FEBRUARY 2012**

**Check Against Delivery**

**Chairperson,  
Honorable Ministers,  
Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). At the outset allow me to extend, on behalf of the Group, our warmest congratulations to you and other members of the bureau on your unanimous election to preside over this session, and pledge the full support of the SADC Group in the accomplishment of your task of steering the proceedings of the 56<sup>th</sup> Session of the CSW to a successful conclusion. SADC aligns itself with the statement made by Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the statement made by Tunisia on behalf of the African Group.

We would also like to thank the Secretary General for the reports submitted under the priority theme; 'The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges.'

**Chairperson,**

SADC reaffirms the Beijing Platform for Action, Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and its Optional Protocol as well as Millennium Development Goals and the relevant Conventions of the International Labor Organization that provide a clear framework for the promotion of gender equality in rural development and agriculture. SADC Protocol on Gender and Development which provides for a clear framework for the empowerment of women, elimination of discrimination and the achievement of gender equality and equity through the development and implementation of gender responsive legislation, policies, programs and projects in our region.

SADC recommits to the recommendations of the International Consultative Conference on Poverty and Development organized by SADC in April 2008 and in particular the outcomes of the conference namely the SADC Regional Poverty Reduction Framework (RPRF) and the SADC Poverty Observatory. The SADC agenda is articulated in the 1992 SADC Treaty which says that regional integration will be pursued as the vehicle for accelerating economic growth, eradicating poverty and achieving a sustainable pattern of development.



## **Chairperson,**

Just like other parts of the world, Southern Africa is still grappling with the challenges on HIV and AIDS. There is evidence that the HIV and AIDS epidemic is a critical problem for rural development especially for women and girls. It is in this regard that SADC will once again present the UN Resolution on Women, the Girl Child, and HIV and AIDS. The main points that our regions advocates for include the need for taking all measures to reduce Gender Based Violence(GBV) and new HIV infections among women, in particular, young women and girls, by 50% by 2015. It calls for the engagement of men and boys in scaling up Voluntary, Counseling and Testing(VCT), Anti-Retroviral Treatment(ART), Male Circumcision and comprehensive PMTCT; achieving virtual elimination of MTCT, scaling up paediatric treatment and care and taking all necessary measures to “keep mothers alive” removing HIV-related stigma and discrimination and ensuring high-impact, cost-effective, sustainable and accountable gender responsive investments in HIV and Health for women and girls.

As SADC we reiterate the importance of ensuring full integration of rural women’s perspective in all strategies for combatting HIV and AIDS and giving priority to multi –dimensional strategies directly addressing the impact of HIV and AIDS on rural women. In that regard, SADC reaffirms its commitment to the full implementation of the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS.

## **Chairperson,**

SADC Member States have put in place laws, policies and programmes necessary for facilitating the right to ownership, access and control over productive resources by women. There is need for urgent measures to promote and protect women’s equal rights to property and inheritance through legislation, promotion of legal literacy and legal assistance to rural women, including awareness raising among others. SADC States have over the years developed programmes towards increasing women’s access to finance and especially credit necessary for their empowerment. We as a regional block, subscribe to the importance of mobilizing resources, including at national and local levels for increasing women’s access to existing savings and credit schemes. It is also important develop targeted programmes that provide women with capital, knowledge and tools that enhance their economic capacities.

**Chairperson,**

SADC has created an enabling environment for the implementation of environment and sustainable development through laws, policies and project. Furthermore, a SADC common strategy for Climate Change that prioritizes adaptation, mitigation; capacity building, finance and technology transfer as key measures for dealing with climate change has been developed. However, measures to integrate gender and women's empowerment more effectively into these programmes must be emphasized. There is need for comprehensive and integrated programmes for rural women in order to deal with the impacts of climate change.

**Chairperson,**

Although most SADC Member States have reached the gender parity in education, the gender gap continues to widen at high school due to teenage pregnancies, HIV and AIDS related work, economic constraints and gender stereotypes among other challenges. The need to intensify women's access to the formal education system is urgent especially for rural women. There is also a need to provide women with access to training, including on marketing, rural entrepreneurship, farm and household management and financing.

**Chairperson,**

Within this context, there is no doubt that the urgent need for increased gender capacities for gender analysis, including through training programmes and development dissemination of methodologies and tools, to ensure women's full integration of rural women's perspectives in policies and programmes for rural development, cannot be underplayed. More male involvement is also required to deal with attitudes and cultural stereotypes.

As a region, we place great importance to women's full participation in decision making. This principle must be applied strongly in rural development, especially in budget allocation, resource distribution and provision of tools including technology. There is also a need to increase timely, reliable and sex disaggregated

data, including through intensifying efforts to include unpaid work in official statistics, and developing systematic and comparative research base on rural women that will inform policy and programme decisions.

**Chairperson,**

In conclusion, while progressive and positive strides have been realized in improving the lives of women in rural areas in our region, we are still concerned that the impact of poverty still affects more women than men and that poverty mostly affects the people who live in rural areas. Concrete recommendations provided in this statement are important for making a difference in the lives of women and girls. SADC looks forward to a successful session and productive outcome that contributes to achieving the goal of achieving better standard of living for women and girls, especially boys and girls.

I thank you for your attention.