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STATEMENT

BY

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AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**AT THE
GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE
57th SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

UNDER PRIORITY THEME

**"THE ELIMINATION AND PREVENTION OF ALL
FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS"**

NEW YORK, 04-15 MARCH, 2013

Madam Chair,

Since I am taking the floor for the first time in this session, allow me, to join the previous speakers in congratulating you and the members of the Bureau for the commendable stewardship of the 57th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women and assure you the full cooperation of my entire delegation for the success of our deliberations.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his insightful reports concerning the priority theme of this session "The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls".

Mozambique aligns itself with the statements delivered by Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, Chad on behalf of the African Group, and Malawi on behalf of SADC member States.

Mozambique express its full support:

- to the Addis Ababa Declaration of the African Union Ministers Responsible for Gender and Social Affairs, adopted on January 16, 2013
- the outcome document of the SADC Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Women and Gender Affairs, held in Maputo, from 11 to 14 February 2013.

Madam Chair,

Mozambique would like to seize this opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to the international instruments, namely:

- the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,
- the Programme of Action of the ICPD
- the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women,
- the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights and on Women's Rights in Africa

- the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

Mozambique has been guided by these instruments to develop and adopt relevant national and setoral policies, legislation and programmes concerning the advancement and empowerment of women and the promotion of gender equality and gender equity.

We are pleased to report that Mozambique is making progress in many areas of women's empowerment. The country has met and surpassed the target set under the auspices of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development of reaching 30 per cent women parliamentarians by 2010. Women represent 40% of all seats in Parliament whose Speaker is also a woman and we are working towards reaching 50% by 2015.

Remarkable progress has also been recorded in relation to the participation of women in the Government at central, provincial and district levels. High profile portfolios such as mineral resources, justice, local administration, environment coordination apart from women's affairs are held by women.

Specific programmes are also being undertaken by the Ministry of Education aimed at providing free school materials and meals, particularly to girls in rural primary schools as an incentive to increase the retention and completion rates of girls in the education system. We are convinced that these and other steps are important ways to empower women and reduce gender-based inequalities and thus limit some of the factors that exacerbate the vulnerability of women in the long term.

Madam Chair,

Despite the fact that women represent 52% of our population and play a key role in the maintenance and development of the family and society, studies have found that most of women are victims of violence in its multifaceted forms and manifestations.

In addition to domestic violence, usually perpetrated by their male counterparts, women are also victims of many other economic, social and cultural ills that place them in situations of poverty and illiteracy.

Additionally, Mozambique is facing a heavy burden of the HIV and AIDS pandemic, which affects women and girls disproportionately because of their socially engendered status. This HIV/AIDS pandemic, associated with tuberculosis and malaria, constitute major threats for the social and economic development in our country.

The Government is putting in place broad-based institutional and legal mechanisms to address these social ills. Under the National Plan for prevention and combating violence against women, support services at the relevant sectors, with emphasis on justice, home affairs, health and social affairs, were developed and resources deployed for the protection of women victims of gender-related violence.

In 2012, the Council of Ministers adopted a Multi-sectoral Mechanism for Integrated Service for Women Victims of Violence, which seeks to operationalize international commitments ratified or undertaken by Mozambique and which consolidate the experiences learned over time.

In order to address the nefarious impact of HIV/AIDS, Mozambique has adopted a National Multi-sectoral Plan of Action on Gender and HIV and AIDS for the period of 2011-2015, which is under implementation. This plan puts emphasis in two main areas:

- (i) the prevention and actions aimed to combat discrimination and stigma and
- (ii) financial assistance to projects designed to mitigate the burden on those women who are already HIV positive.

The Government of Mozambique has also been working in partnership with media and community and religious leaders in the implementation of all instruments already adopted as well as ensuring their domestication into relevant legislation while raising the awareness of society on the issues of violence against women and girls.

Madam Chair,

Let me conclude by reiterating the commitment of Mozambique to implement the existing instruments adopted at national, regional, continental and global levels on the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women as a complement to the proactive steps being taken at national level for the empowerment of women.

I thank you!