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STATEMENT

BY

HON. DOREEN SIOKA, MP

**MINISTER OF GENDER EQUALITY
AND CHILD WELFARE OF
THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

AT THE

**2010 HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (ECOSOC)**

**NEW YORK,
01 JULY 2010**

Your Excellency, Ambassador Hamidon Ali, President of the Economic and Social Council

Your Excellencies, Ministers and Head of Delegations,

Your Excellencies Heads of UN Agencies

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by H.E. Ambassador Abdullah M. Alsaïdi, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Yemen to the United Nations on behalf of G77 and China.

I am sure you will all agree with me when I say that quality basic education enhances lives and better equips girls and boys with the knowledge and skills necessary to take an active role in social, economic and political decision-making as they transit to adulthood.

Namibia has achieved its goals in eliminating gender disparity in secondary education. Primary education and tertiary education will be most likely achieved by 2015. Statistics are available in our National Voluntary Presentation available on the Ecosoc website.

In addition access to education has been improved by the adoption of the Education Sector Policy for the Prevention and Management of Learner' Pregnancy and the introduction of the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) and Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL). In this respect, our target for 2012 is likely to be met.

Despite the progress made thus far, challenges and obstacles remain in the implementation of the internationally agreed goals and commitments on gender equality and empowerment of women.

Women are still most likely to be unemployed or engaged in vulnerable jobs in the informal sector and they are also the least paid. Women do not have access to credit facilities and starting their own business is therefore difficult. They also are most likely to be affected by the HIV pandemic and gender based violence.

Opportunities for women to enter public life and politics still remain a challenge. There are few of them in top positions in the public and private sectors.

In conclusion, Namibia recognizes that gender equality is one of the major challenges that impede the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals globally. My Government reaffirms its commitment to the effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and other internationally agreed goals and commitments on gender equality and empowerment of women.

I thank you.