



*Permanent Observer Mission
Of the AFRICAN UNION to the
United Nations*



*Permanent Mission of
EQUATORIAL GUINEA to the
United Nations*

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP

BY

AMBASSADOR PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

OF EQUATORIAL GUINEA

MR. ANATOLIO NDONG MBA

BEFORE

THE 54TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

NEW YORK, MARCH 2nd 2010

**Statement on behalf of the African Group by H.E. Ambassador Anatolio Ndong Mba, Permanent Representative of Equatorial Guinea to the United Nations, at the 54th session of the Commission on the Status of Women
New York, 2 March 2010**

Chairperson,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the African Group. At the outset, allow me, on behalf of the African Group, to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your election to the 54th and 55th sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women. The African Group assures you of its full support and cooperation in your work.

2. The African Group also thanks the Secretary-General for the reports submitted under agenda item 3: Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

3. The African Group aligns itself with the statement read by the distinguished Ambassador of Yemen to the United Nations on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Chairperson,

4. The reviews of the fifteen years of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and that of the outcome of the Twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly affords us yet another opportunity to reaffirm our resolve to build a society that is firmly grounded on the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, development and peace. In this regard we eagerly look forward to the political declaration that we will be



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adopting at this session. It is also our hope that our deliberations during this important session of the Commission on the Status of Women will provide an avenue for taking stock of our achievements and charting the way forward for furthering the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda.

5. Fifteen years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action Africa has made progress in its implementation. Significant progress has been made in the area of advancing gender equality in politics and decision-making with Rwanda at the top of the global ranking. Gender parity in primary education has been attained in a number of African member states and there has been significant improvement in the participation in the formal economy and in human rights. Political leadership commitment to gender equality and empowerment of women is very high as evidenced in provisions on the promotion of gender equality in the African Union Constitutive Act which in its article 4, mandated AU, as an institution, to mainstream gender in all its programmes and activities. The African Union had also at its 12th Ordinary Assembly declared that 2010-2020 would be the Women's decade. We invite the United Nations family and the international community to work together with African member States and the Africa Union Secretariat to make the African Union Women's decade a success.

6. Since Beijing we have also developed regional and sub regional declarations, and protocols which aim to promote and strengthen women's empowerment and accelerate the attainment of gender equality as part of the overall human rights agenda.

Chairperson,

7. Despite the progress made, the implementation of the 12 critical areas of concern has been uneven. African Member states face many challenges to fully realize the objectives of the Beijing declaration and platform for action as well as the outcome of the 23rd special session of the General assembly. Poverty remains

a key challenge as we witness the increasing feminization of poverty in many African member states. Other challenges including, girls school dropout, high maternal mortality rates, violence against women, discriminatory practices, and weak social protection of vulnerable women, still impeded progress at national level. The African Group values peace and security, which are important in facilitating gender equality and women's empowerment and is deeply concerned that these are elusive in some parts of the Africa. **-We wish at this juncture to recognize the efforts of the government of Sudan and welcome the signing of the peace accord in Sudan. We urge the other factions to join in the peace accord**

8. Global challenges such as food insecurity, the energy, financial and economic crises and climate change further exacerbate the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and threatens to erode the gains already made. We thus urge for concerted efforts to address these crises.

Chairperson

9. Africa Member States are committed to the full implementation of the Beijing Platform for action. At its meeting in Banjul, Gambia from 19 – 20 November 2009, African ministers responsible for gender and women's affairs adopted the Banjul Declaration on Strategies for Accelerating the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platform for Action. In this declaration seven priority areas of focus were agreed upon. These are

- i. Economic Empowerment of Women through Poverty Reduction, Employment Creation, Social Protection and ICTs;
- ii. Peace, Security and Development;
- iii. Violence against Women;
- iv. Representation and Participation of Women in all Areas of Decision-Making;
- v. Sexual and Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS;
- vi. Climate change and food insecurity, and

vii. Financing for Gender Equality.

10. We welcome the General Assembly resolution A/RES/63/311 including the establishment of a new gender entity. We believe that a strong gender architecture is needed to enable countries to receive the necessary technical and financial support to complement national efforts in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women.

11. In conclusion, the African Group reiterates its commitment to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and looks forward to a productive and successful session.

I thank you.