

# GHANA



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## STATEMENT

BY

**HON. ALIMAH MAHAMA**  
**MINISTER FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S AFFAIRS**

AT THE

52<sup>ND</sup> SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

ON

AGENDA ITEM 3:

"FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN AND THE TWENTY-FOURTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ENTITLED "WOMEN 2000: GENDER EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Mr. Chairman,

It is an honour for me to address the 52<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. I wish to warmly congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election to steer the affairs of the Commission. We are confident that under your able leadership, we will achieve great progress in addressing current challenges by implementing strategies towards the achievement of the goal of financing for gender equality for development and peace. The Ghana delegation congratulates the Secretary-General for launching the Campaign on '*Unite to End Violence against Women*'. This generates further momentum for us to establish effective collaborative mechanisms with partners to sustain our efforts towards stopping violence against women and girls. I wish to indicate that for this session the Ghanaian delegation includes the Minister of Lands and Forestry, Deputy Minister of Trade and the Head of Budget from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.

Ghana fully aligns itself with the statement by Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and would like to add the following remarks on a national basis.

Mr. Chairman,

Ghana continues to finance various programmes and projects for women's empowerment and gender equality (GE). This has been done through various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). Funding for various women's empowerment and gender equality programmes in various sectors have included the following;

- In the health sector an emphasis on reproductive health, family planning and safe motherhood programmes. More recently there has been a focus on the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) and free antenatal and delivery services for women.
- With respect to education a great deal of emphasis has been placed on achieving gender parity in primary and secondary education through promoting girl child education and our GPI has moved from under 0.90 in the last 3 years to 0.96.
- In the area of economic empowerment, a Government initiative, the Micro Finance and Small Loans Centre (MASLOC) scheme has been established. Funds are earmarked for the Women Development Fund of the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC) to be disbursed specifically to women, while women also continue to access the funding support through MASLOC regional offices.
- Funding is provided to protect women's rights through the provision of social welfare services, legal aid services and to the domestic violence and victims support units (DVSSU)
- In the 2006 district assembly elections, resources were secured and provided for capacity building programmes to support and sustain the campaigns of women
- Advocacy and lobbying to influence development cooperation through the Multi-donor Budget Support (MDBS) and Consultative Group (CG) negotiations to ensure resources are provided within the national budget and in support of the GPRS II for financing

We would like to acknowledge the contribution of Civil Society including NGOs to the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda in Ghana. These include advocacy and sensitization of communities on the Domestic Violence Act as well as the development and implementation of the Action Plan of the law. They have raised awareness, lobbied for and contributed to building capacities in many related areas including gender responsive budgeting and aid effectiveness.

Touching on collaboration with our development partners our ministry co-chairs the Gender Equality Sector Group (GEST) one of the sector groups in our aid architecture, made up of MOWAC and development partners, including the UN system which champions gender equality and women's empowerment in development co-operation negotiations. They have managed to influence the Ghana Joint Assistance Strategy (G-JAS) in which development partners have harmonized and committed in 2007 to support gender equality and women's empowerment.

Mr. Chairman, in spite of these achievements challenges still exist,

- There remains considerable lack of understanding among key stakeholders about the need to finance GE and women's empowerment for development and peace
- Several MDAs and other gender advocates have attempted to introduce GRB however a lack of synchronization due to a lack of alliances between partners has rendered these efforts ineffective
- There are still concerns about the lack of an effective monitoring mechanism to track gender specific expenditures of Government Agencies (MDAs and Municipal, Metropolitan and District Assemblies (MMDAs)
- In view of the global discourse around the Paris Declaration which focuses on the new aid modalities and aid effectiveness, issues arise as to how to forge partnerships within our country with development partners (DPs) to increase financing for gender equality and women's empowerment within the new aid architecture without appearing to be competing for the same resources.
- Inadequate budgetary allocation to the MOWACs to facilitate the GRB process among key stakeholders
- There also remain concerns about sustaining the intended GRB initiative within the country.

Mr. Chairman,

We are taking the necessary steps to address the challenges elucidated above. In addition as one of the twelve beneficiary countries of EC/UN Partnership on Gender Equality for Development and Peace programme, we have just completed our mapping study on aid effectiveness and gender equality in Ghana. It is our firm conviction that the findings from the study coupled with our GRB initiatives will strengthen our efforts at increasing financing for gender equality and women's empowerment in Ghana.

I wish to conclude by emphasizing the importance that my delegation attaches to this 52<sup>nd</sup> session. We are aware that in spite of the significant progress made many challenges still exist. It is gratifying to note that the work of the Commission continues to be invaluable in raising and maintaining awareness of issues pertaining to financing for gender equality and women's empowerment. We hope that the outcome of this session will see innovative strategies that will accelerate efforts at increasing financing for gender equality women empowerment for development and peace.

I thank you.