

# REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



Permanent Mission of Zambia to the United Nations, 237 East 52nd Street, New York, NY 10022  
Tex: (212) 888-5770 Fax: (212) 888-5213 E-mail: zambia@un.int

*Check Against Delivery*

## STATEMENT BY

**HONOURABLE SARAH SAYIFWANDA, MP  
MINISTER OF GENDER AND WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT**

**AT THE**

**FIFTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE  
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

**ON**

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

March 4, 2009  
New York

Chairperson,

It is an honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Zambian delegation. I am particularly happy that this year's session is focusing on the theme "the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care-giving in the context of HIV and AIDS". In this regard, I wish to extend my appreciation to the Secretary-General for his reports.

Allow me to congratulate you and other members of the bureau on your election. I assure you of my delegation's support throughout the session.

My delegation aligns itself to the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of Sudan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the Honourable Minister of South Africa on behalf of Southern Africa Development Community (SADC).

Chairperson,

Zambia continues to work tirelessly in the fulfillment of its commitments made at national, regional, and international levels towards the protection and promotion of women's rights. The recent signing of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development in August, 2008 by our Head of State, is a demonstration of Zambia's resolve to promote women's rights and their advancement.

Chairperson,

In relation to this year's theme I wish to report that the Zambian Government in strong partnership with the civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders has implemented the following measures including:

- a. Adoption of the national cultural policy in 2003, whose principle aim is to encourage positive cultural practices which are not discriminatory to women. The policy also aims at socializing boys and girls as equal partners in family and community responsibilities;
- b. The establishment of community radio stations in all provincial centres to ensure increased access to information on positive cultural practices that value girls and women positively in society;
- c. Development of guidelines on management and care of people living with HIV and AIDS which calls for the full involvement of men in the care giving role;
- d. Introduction of paternity leave which seeks to encourage men in the public service to take an active role in child care;

- e. Incorporation of human rights training in the curricular of primary and secondary school education, to facilitate the socialization of boys and girls as equal partners in family and community responsibilities;
- f. Revision of the educational curriculum with the aim of eliminating gender stereotyping and encouraging boys and girls to progress in education; and,
- g. Establishment of an Economic Empowerment Fund to assist women access services that will facilitates their care giving roles.

Chairperson,

I wish to report that government is in the process of developing comprehensive legislation on gender based violence. This is in order to contribute to the elimination of discriminatory practices targeted at women including in matters of HIV and AIDS. Further, government adopted and is implementing the national HIV and AIDS policy which encourages, among other things, male involvement in the national response.

Chairperson,

Despite measures being undertaken to address the unequal sharing of responsibilities between women and men and the impact of HIV and AIDS on care-giving responsibilities, we continue to encounter a number of challenges. These include:

- a. Negative cultural practices and poor economic status of women that prevent them from being assertive, productive, and negotiate safer sex;
- b. Gender stereotyping especially in rural areas; and,
- c. Inadequate mechanisms to encourage male involvement in the care economy.

Chairperson,

Government is mindful of the fact that in order to address these challenges there is need for among other things to:

- a. Accelerate the implementation of various international instruments and incorporate them into national legislation and policies;
- b. Recognize and incorporate the value and cost of measuring unpaid work in macro economic and social policies;

- c. Expand quality, affordable health care services and increase resource allocation to strengthen and support home based care; and,
- d. Significantly scale up efforts to achieve universal access to comprehensive prevention, treatment, care and support and incorporate aspects of gender equality and care-giving responsibility in the context of HIV/AIDS.

Chairperson,

The need for enhanced international cooperation and partnership in this regard cannot be over-emphasized. We therefore urge the international community to continue to meet its development commitments so as to ensure that the goals we have set ourselves can be fully realized.

Let me conclude by reiterating Zambia's commitment to the goals of the Beijing declaration and platform for action, the MDG's and indeed other internationally agreed development goals, especially those related to women. We hope that the outcome of this meeting will provide the necessary guidance and direction to further promote gender equality, equity and the empowerment of women, particularly in relation to the priority theme.

I thank you.