

Fifty-sixth Session
of the
Commission on the Status of Women



Statement by

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Please check against delivery.

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Chairperson,

I am honored to address the 56th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women on the efforts undertaken by the Republic of Suriname in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Please allow me to express our appreciation for the able manner in which you have been guiding the proceedings of this session. We look forward to a successful and meaningful conclusion of this meeting.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements on behalf of the G-77 and China, CELAC and CARICOM delivered respectively by the distinguished representatives of Algeria, Chile and Jamaica.

Chairperson,

Suriname acknowledges the role of women in socio-economic life. In its *Development Plan 2012 – 2016 entitled "Suriname in transformation"*, the Government of Suriname commits itself to accord high priority to gender as an essential cross cutting issue in its national policy.

There is an increased recognition of the importance of education and skills training for social mobility and the improvement of the situation of rural women. It is worth noting that recently the first rural woman was appointed as the leader at the level of local government.

The Government also commits itself to implement policies and programmes towards realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women, benefitting all, including rural women, and that measures are tailored to the specific situations of women.

To this end the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Animal Husbandry for example has set up development centers throughout the interior, with the aim to train and guide the local communities, in particular women, given the fact that women are the main producers. Furthermore an Agriculture Credit Fund was established which improved access to credit for women producers. Women have been making use of this fund in order to set up their own business.

Agricultural training programs were conducted in the rural districts Para, Coronie and Nickerie to support women in increasing their income from productive activities.

The Department of Agriculture in the Ministry of Regional Development was supported by Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in structuring the interior agriculture program. To this end a document was developed entitled "Impact study for the Agricultural Development in the Interior of Suriname".

Farmers of an Amerindian village in the interior were able to increase production through the introduction of improved methodology and technology provided by IICA. In addition the women adopted improved cassava processing technology.

Several NGOs with a focus on gender equality are doing significant work in creating gender awareness among rural women. A policy priority of the National Women's Movement (NVB) is to strengthen the capacity of women groups. Nationwide more than 30 women groups are being guided. With the exception of Paramaribo, Suriname's capital, the NVB is active in 4 rural districts, empowering women to enhance their quality of life, including by doing business.

The NVB is also assisting women in the interior to participate in the eco-tourism sector which provides an extra source of revenue. Women are also being trained in setting up different kinds of businesses for instance in arts and crafts.

Chairperson,

The National Bureau for Gender Policy which is tasked with promoting and monitoring gender equality and the empowerment of women in Suriname is currently in a process of a transformation. The vision for a transformed Bureau is to increase its focus on research in regard to gender issues, gender specific data-collection and sharing, including for rural women.

De-concentration of national gender policies will be a priority in the formulation and implementation of these policies, in this context the multi ethnicity will play an important role.

This national gender policy will therefore be directed at equal access to education, employment and the elimination of discrimination of women by law and in practice.

Suriname is of the view that solidarity between all social partners, organizations, groups and individuals is a precondition in order to realize the gender policy. A continued dialogue between Governments, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders is therefore necessary. The Government of Suriname remains committed to pursue gender equality and the empowerment of women in every policy area and therefore to a continuation of this dialogue.

In closing Chairperson,

If we all agree that investing in women is investing in development, we will have to redouble our efforts in implementing the Beijing Plan for Action and the MDG's.

We have to create strong global partnerships for accelerated actions to improve living conditions, wellbeing and opportunities for all women and girls, in particular for rural women and women of disadvantages populations.

Suriname reiterates its commitment to the goals of gender equality and the empowerment of women as well as the compliance to treaty obligations under CEDAW and Belem do Para and in this regard the cooperation with local, regional and international organizations will be optimized.

Thank you!