

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 PATRICIA MULASIKWANDA, MP
MINISTER OF GENDER AND WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT**

ON BEHALF OF

**THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
(SADC)**

AT THE

**FIFTY-SECOND 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"**

February 25, 2008
New York

Chairperson,

I have the honour to address the Fifty Second Session of the Commission on the Status of Women on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) namely: Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zimbabwe and my country Zambia.

SADC joins the rest of the International community in congratulating you and other members of the Bureau on your election and assure you of our cooperation and support during the deliberations on this important Session.

SADC aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Minister of Labour, Public Administration and Empowerment of Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Chairperson,

SADC Member States commend the Commission for bringing to the fore this very important issue of "Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women" as a theme for discussion at this Session. We strongly maintain that good initiatives, good policies and good programmes will come to nought if they are not adequately resourced and funded. It is in this regard that we welcome the report of the Secretary General on Financing for Gender Equality which highlights the gaps in financing for gender equality and recognises the persistent gender inequalities that need to be explicitly identified and addressed. We therefore take note of the recommendations contained in the report which deserve our careful consideration.

Chairperson,

As the SADC Region, we consider this agenda as critical to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals. In this regard, SADC commits itself to continue allocating the necessary financial resources to ensure the implementation of our commitments to gender equity and equality.

In order to translate our commitments into reality, we in SADC have already begun to implement gender budgeting initiatives. About half of the 14 SADC Member States have taken the bold step to implement gender budgeting and we are determined to ensure that the remaining Member States institutionalise gender budgeting and put in place mechanisms for tracking resources with an emphasis on economically empowering women and in turn promote for gender equality.

Chairperson,

SADC is in the process of developing a regional gender policy, which will be a guiding tool to operationalise the SADC Plan of Action and improve on synergies between national and regional structures and mechanisms. Furthermore, the Policy will provide a framework for mainstreaming gender in the SADC sector specific policies, programmes and activities.

In addition, SADC has continued consulting on the SADC draft Gender Protocol and it is expected that the Draft Protocol will be adopted by the Heads of State and Government Summit which is scheduled to be held at the end of this year. The Protocol, when adopted will accelerate the implementation of the gender programmes in the Region.

Chairperson,

You will recall that in our report to the 51st session of the CSW, we reported that the region had the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence in Africa. One year down the line, the status quo remains the same although the infection rate has slowed down. I wish at this juncture to commend the UN for giving this matter attention at the highest level by ensuring that the Office of the UN Special Envoy of the Secretary General for HIV and AIDS in Africa is held by an African woman.

Chairperson,

With regard to the emerging issue of climate change, SADC recognises the efforts of the international community to address this concern as it is not only having adverse impact on the eco-system but also on the global economy. The SADC region is already experiencing adverse effects of climate change. The region has recorded frequent droughts and floods whose intensity has increased in the last decade.

This year in particular, a number of SADC Member States have been ravaged by floods which has resulted in the loss of human life; the displacement of thousands of people; and loss of agricultural fields, products and livestock. The floods have also caused severe damage to the infrastructure forcing Member States to divert resources meant for development including resources for financing for gender equality.

Chairperson,

SADC Member States have noted that the current international framework of addressing climate change under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Kyoto Protocol have not adequately taken gender concerns into account. In this regard, we call for gender mainstreaming in international protocols on Climate Change, increased funding and acceleration of the implementation of the Adaptation Fund. In addition, capacity development and awareness creation in climate

change particularly among women is required to ensure that they effectively participate and contribute to decision making on climate change.

While we call for sufficient funding for adaptation and mitigation under climate change, these funds must be in addition to the committed 0.7 percent of the Gross National Product of the industrialised countries as Official Development Assistance (ODA). We, therefore, urge the international community to step up the efforts in addressing the problem of climate change as the poor countries who have not contributed much to the problem are bearing the brunt of this threat to development which is undermining efforts to achieve meaningful financing for gender equality.

Chairperson,

SADC wishes to call upon the international community to consider establishing a global fund for gender equality and empowerment of women to increase financing for gender equality. This call is borne out of the realisation that while the international community have continued to call for accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, there has not been corresponding financial commitments for implementation.

Chairperson,

Although there has been progress in meeting some of the global commitments much remains to be done. While it is evident that investing in women and girls has a positive impact on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth, this has not been matched by corresponding allocation of resources despite the call for increased funding in mainstreaming gender in economic and finance processes.

It is our hope that the Fifty-Second Session of this Commission will truly reignite the will of the international community to honour their commitments so as to ensure that the internationally agreed development goals are achieved particularly as they relate to gender equality and empowerment of women. SADC will continue to support the efforts of the international community in this endeavour.

I thank you.