



**UGANDA**

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**STATEMENT BY**

**HON. NAKADAMA RUKIA ISANGA, MINISTER OF STATE  
FOR GENDER AND CULTURE OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
UGANDA.**

**AT THE 56<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE  
STATUS OF WOMEN (CSW)**

*Please check against delivery*

*New York, February 29, 2012*

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STATEMENT BY

HON. WAKADAMA RUKIA ISANGA, MINISTER OF STATE  
FOR GENDER AND CULTURE OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
UGANDA

AT THE 58<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE  
STATUS OF WOMEN (CSW)

New York, February 28, 2012

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Madam Chairperson,  
Excellences,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honored to address this Distinguished Assembly of the 56<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women. I congratulate you Madam Chairperson and Members of the Bureau on your election to guide this important meeting. At the onset, let me state that my delegation aligns itself with the Statement delivered by Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China as well as the Statement made by Tunisia on behalf of the African States Group.

My delegation welcomes the theme for this year's session as it is in the line with development framework of my country which focuses on rural transformation and ensuring prosperity for all. Within this framework, the pursuance of gender equality and the empowerment of women is paramount. About 85% of Uganda's population of 37million is rural based depending largely on agricultural production for their livelihood. Women constitute the largest proportion of the agricultural labour force, and their contribution to Uganda's economy is significant. Despite the effects of the global economic crisis and the impacts of climate change that have resulted in high costs of food, fuel and essential commodities, rural women in Uganda remain resilient. They continue to provide food and care for their households and communities.

Our Government policy and legal framework support the empowerment of women in all spheres. Government is committed to translating policy commitments into action for example;

- Law which protect the rights of rural women have been enacted. These include the Land Act which guarantees the right to occupancy where spousal consent is a requirement prior to any transaction on matrimonial land. The employment act extended maternity leave to 60 working days, introduced paternity leave, and prohibits sexual harassment; the penal code was amended to prohibit defilement of girls and boys.
- Intensified action to address Gender Based violence including Female Genital mutilation (FGM) has resulted in the passing of specific laws on Domestic violence, FGM and Trafficking in Persons. Advocacy at community level has increased through community activism and formation of male action groups. Government plans to establish safe shelters for survivors of GBV.
- The gender gap in primary school enrolment has been narrowed to the current 49.9% for girls and 50.1% for boys. This brings Uganda close to attaining MDG 2 of achieving gender parity in Primary Education by 2015.
- In the last general elections of 2011, the number of women in political and decision making positions increased. At parliament women representation has risen from 24.6% in 2001 to the present 35%. Local Council structures have provided space and given voice to the rural women to participate in governance.
- In the last 2 years, Government has put in place Social protection measures for vulnerable groups including older women to facilitate their access to basic services for health, and food security.
- Other interventions include revolving funds and grants for rural women, adult literacy programs and business skills development.

Despite this progress, we are still grappling with challenges of high maternal deaths, teenage pregnancies, early marriages and persistent poverty which exhibits a female face.

My Government will continue to work in close collaboration with Civil Society, Faith based Organizations the Private Sector and Development Partners to ensure that equality, development and enjoyment of rights becomes a reality for all women, men, girls and boys.

I thank you Madam Chair.

My delegation welcomes the theme for this year's session as it is in line with development framework of my country which focuses on transformation and social equality for all. Within this framework, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women is a key priority. About 80% of Uganda's population of 37 million is rural based depending largely on agricultural production for their livelihood. Women constitute the largest proportion of the agricultural labor force, and their contribution to Uganda's economy is significant. Despite the efforts of the global economic crisis and the impact of climate change, their resilience has kept them in the forefront of the global economic recovery. However, their needs are not being met. They continue to provide food and care for their households and communities.

Our Government does not just pay lip service to the empowerment of women in all spheres. Government continues to formulate gender-responsive policies for example:

- Law which protect the rights of rural women have been enacted. These include the Land Act which guarantees the right to ownership which general consent is a requirement prior to any transaction on matrimonial land. The employment act extended maternity leave to 90 working days introduced statutory leave and provides sexual harassment, the penal code was amended to prohibit defilement of girls and boys.
- Introduced action to reform Gender Board within existing Female Gender Multisector (FGM) has resulted in the passing of specific laws on Domestic violence, FGM and Trafficking in Persons. Autonomy is commonly level that is consistent through community education and formation of village groups. Government plans to establish village groups for women of GBV.
- The gender gap in primary school enrollment has been narrowed to the current 48.9% for girls and 50.1% for boys. The Ministry Uganda also to achieving MDG 2 of achieving gender parity in Primary Education by 2015.
- In the last general election of 2011 the number of women in political and decision making positions increased. In parliament women representation has risen from 24.8% in 2001 to the present 38%. Local Council structures have provided space and given voice to the rural women to participate in governance.
- In the last 2 years, Government has not in place Gender Action plan measures for vulnerable groups including older women to facilitate their access to basic services for health, and food security.
- Our Government has been working hard and giving for rural women, adult literacy programs and business skills development.