



**Permanent Mission of the United Republic of Tanzania
to the United Nations**

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STATEMENT BY

**MS. MARIAM MWAFFISI, A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**

ON

AGENDA ITEM 62: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

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STATEMENT BY MARIAM MWAFFISI A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA ON AGENDA ITEM 62: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN.

Chairperson,

At the outset, we thank the Secretary General for his reports presented for this agenda item. The reports have provided recommendations which warrant our serious considerations.

We align ourselves with the statements read by Sudan on behalf of the group of 77 and China and by Malawi on behalf of SADC.

Chairperson

The government of the United Republic of Tanzania is fully committed to the attainment of gender equality and the empowerment of women. In this endeavour the government has continued to implement the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the 23rd special session through the national policies and programmes, in particular gender has been mainstreamed in the implementation of the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty which is MDG based. The National Gender machineries of Tanzania mainland and of Zanzibar provide policy guidelines, advocacy and coordination for gender mainstreaming in other government sectors. We thank our bilateral donors, the European Union and the United Nations system in particular UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNICEF, UNECA, ILO and UNDP for their support to the National Gender machineries and gender mainstreaming efforts in the country.

Chairperson,

We continue to make significant strides and achievements in women empowerment in Tanzania. Notable examples include the achievement in gender parity in primary education enrolment and a significant increase in female students in secondary and tertiary education. The abolition of school fees and the introduction of programs targeting girls such as the science camps for girls organized by the Ministry of Education and the gender dimension program at the University of Dar es Salaam have greatly contributed to the increase of girls in tertiary education including those taking science subjects. In the representation of women in decision making position, the government has surpassed the 30% threshold for women in public service and for those in the parliament; the target now is to reach the 50 percent mark. A committee to look into ways of achieving the 50 percent mark has been established

Chairperson,

Economic empowerment of women is an important aspect for attainment of gender equality and empowerment of women. It is in this regard that the government has been actively promoting savings and credit societies in both rural and urban areas as means of improving finance to micro enterprises. In addition, a fund known as the Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF) has been established. The fund facilitates communities to prioritize, implement and

manage sustainable development initiatives and in the process improve socio-economic services and opportunities. Women have also been beneficiaries of this fund. The government has now established a women's bank to give added momentum to the efforts of empowering women economically. The bank will provide training as well as credit to women; this will complement the support in micro financing and entrepreneurship development that is provided to grass root women by several national and international civil society organizations.

Chairperson,

Violence against women continues to be a challenge in the attainment of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The government of the United Republic of Tanzania is taking several measures to stop violence against women. The government has ratified major international human rights instruments at the global, Regional and Sub regional levels. In addition the government has enacted legislations such as the Sexual Offences (Special Provisions) Act of 1998, which provides for stiff punishment to the perpetrators and the right of compensation to victims of violence; the Human Trafficking act has also been adopted by the parliament. Furthermore, the government has in place a National Plan of Action (NPA) on the prevention and eradication of violence against women and children. The Plan of Action provides strategies and activities to be implemented by various stakeholders.

In response to the escalating incidents of violence against women and children the President of the United Republic of Tanzania on 24th May 2008 launched the National wide campaign on SAY NO TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN TANZANIA; the campaign is still in progress. This campaign which supports the Secretary General's call to end violence against women has been developed within the context of the National Action Plan on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence against women and Children. To ensure that the campaign efforts are sustained beyond the campaign period, a national committee for gender based violence to be responsible for implementation and monitoring gender based violence at the national level has been established. The committee has further been tasked to work for the protection and safeguarding of women's human rights as enshrined in various international Human rights instrument.

We commend the Secretary General for his efforts to combat violence against women. We believe that his call for a campaign to end violence against women has given a new thrust in the fight on violence against women.

Chairperson,

We are encouraged with the attention paid to rural women in various international fora. Given that the majority of rural women depend on agriculture for their livelihood, it is imperative that we reverse the neglect that has been given in the development of the agriculture sector both in ODA and in government spending. Productive resources also need to be made available to women. The government of the United Republic of Tanzania has put legislation to ensure women's access and ownership of land. The Land Act No. 5 and Village Land

Act No. 4 of 1999 provide for the right of land ownership for both women and men. The Land Act No 2 of 2002 established Land Tribunals which must include not less than 43 percent women. In 2004 the land Act was further amended to make land economically valuable and allow it to be mortgaged to access financial and resources for investment. Furthermore, the Village Act provides for 30% women participation in the village council which is the decision-making body at village level. The government through the ministry of Land and human Settlements Development is actively promoting this act and some women in the rural areas have already been issued with land ownership certificates.

The current economic, food and energy crises threatens to reverse the gains already made and rural women are the most vulnerable to the negative impacts of the crises. Thus efforts to curb these crises have to consider the plight of rural women.

Chairperson,

We are also encouraged with the attention paid to gender equality by the United Nations systems. It is in this regard that we believe a strong gender entity at the United Nations and with strong presence at the field level will enhance the cause of mainstreaming gender in the United Nations and provide support to the member states in their endeavours to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women. We are thus pleased with the decision of the General Assembly to support the Composite Gender Entity in advancing system wide coherence reforms in the United Nations. The government of Tanzania looks forward to the forthcoming intergovernmental negotiations on system wide coherence.

Chairperson,

The reviews of the Millennium Development Goals and of the Beijing Declaration and the outcome of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly as well as the high-level segment of the Economic and Social council which will all take place during 2010 provide opportunities for taking stock of our achievements and charting the way forward for furthering the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda. We thus need to utilize these events constructively.

Allow me to conclude by reiterating that the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women is pivotal to the attainment of international agreed development goals including the millennium development goals and that international cooperation and support are crucial in this regard.

I thank you.