



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

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**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR OMBENI SEFUE,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC  
OF TANZANIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**ON BEHALF OF SADC ON AGENDA ITEM 28:  
ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN**

**NEW YORK, MONDAY 11 OCTOBER 2010**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. OMBENI SEFUE, PERMAMENT REPESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA ON BEHALF OF SADC ON AGENDA ITEM ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN.**

**NEW YORK, MONDAY OCTOBER 11, 2010.**

**Chairperson,**

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Member States of the Southern Africa Development Community, (SADC), the countries of Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe and my own country, the United Republic of Tanzania.

We thank our presenters this morning for their eloquent presentations which have provided more clarity to reports presented under this agenda item. We also thank the Secretary General for his informative reports provided under this agenda item. The recommendations contained therein warrant positive consideration during our discussions.

We align ourselves with the statements read by Yemen on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and by Malawi on behalf of the African Group.

**Chairperson,**

SADC Member States recognize that gender equality, the empowerment of women, women's full enjoyment of all human rights and the eradication of poverty are essential to economic and social development, including the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals. It is in this regard that all SADC Member States are committed to promoting gender equality and equity in their respective countries. This commitment is affirmed by their signing and ratification of, or accession to, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women as well as other regional instruments pertaining to women's rights and empowerment.

SADC Member States further reaffirm the need for the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and welcome the review undertaken by the Commission on the Status of Women early this year. On their part, SADC member states have continued, individually and collectively, to implement the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the 23<sup>rd</sup> special session of the General Assembly. While significant progress has been achieved, there are still major gaps and constraints that are hindering progress in attaining full gender equality. The gap between commitment and implementation remains a major concern. Contradictions exist between customary laws, national laws and international commitments. Representation of women in decision making positions remains low. High and disproportionate levels of poverty among



women and girls remain major obstacles for gender equality. Concerted efforts are thus needed to address these challenges.

**Chairperson,**

Following the successful MDG summit last month, we cannot but add our collective voice to the concerns that at the current levels of efforts, the majority of developing countries, including SADC Member States, would not realize some of the MDGs, in particular MDG 4, 5, and 6 relating to the reduction of child mortality; improvement of maternal health; and combating HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases. In this regard, a regional Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) Strategy for the SADC Region 2006-2015 has been developed, with efforts to implement it already underway. We welcome the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health and commend the Secretary General for his leadership role in its development and fundraising.

We note also, with deep concern, the large number of women who die or are incapacitated each year as a result of obstetric fistula. We believe that ending obstetric fistula has to be part of the comprehensive strategy on reproductive health and it is our expectation that the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health would also address it. It will be recalled that the SADC sponsored resolution on the girl child introduced the issue of obstetric fistula to the General Assembly. We commend UNFPA and partners for their efforts towards ending fistula.

**Chairperson,**

The attainment of gender equality and empowerment of women requires a strong gender architecture at national levels as well as within the United Nations. We thus welcome the establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), and pledge our full support for its operationalization. It is our expectation that UN women will have a strong presence at the field level and would complement the efforts of national governments and regional gender units. It is our expectation too that UN Women would have adequate and predictable funds to enable it carry its mandate. We commend the Secretary General and his team for the support and leadership that has made the establishment of UN women a reality. We congratulate Ms. Michelle Bachelet, former President of Chile, upon her appointment as the head of UN Women and extend to her our support as she discharges her duties.

We also commend UNIFEM for its work in the field. UNIFEM has been a key partner of SADC Member States as well as the SADC Gender Unit in undertaking gender and women advancement activities. We thus support the recommendations of the UNIFEM Consultative Committee as presented in the Secretary General's report on UNIFEM.

**Chairperson,**

SADC Member States condemn violence against women in all its forms and manifestations. SADC is fully committed to end violence against women. In this regard, all Member States have ratified the addendum to the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development on violence against women. All SADC countries have a draft or a national action plan (NAP) to end violence against women; nine SADC countries have legislation on domestic violence, seven on sexual offences and five on trafficking. In addition, the SADC Gender Protocol adopted in 2008 gives a new impetus to these efforts as it specified a number of issues that governments have to undertake so as to end violence against women.

**Chairperson,** let me conclude by reiterating the commitment of SADC towards the attainment of goals for gender equality and the advancement of women. We are ready to partner with the international community for the full realization of the Beijing declaration and platform for action and other internationally agreed goals pertaining to gender equality and the advancement of women. For too long women and girls have looked to this body to provide leadership in pursuit of gender equality and their advancement. Together we have accomplished much, but we certainly can do more. SADC is ready to play its role.

**I thank you**