



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Namibia to the United Nations
360 Lexington Avenue, Suite 1502, New York, NY 10017
Tel: (212) 685-2003 • Fax: (212) 685-1561 • E-mail: namibia@un.int

(PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY)

**STATEMENT
BY
H.E. MR. WILFRIED I. EMVULA
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

AT

**THE 67TH SESSION
OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**AGENDA ITEM 28
“ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN”**

**NEW YORK
16 OCTOBER 2011**

Mr. Chairman

My delegation takes this opportunity to congratulate you on your election to preside over the work of the Third Committee. We wish you and Members of your Bureau great success in leading the committee to its successful conclusion.

Namibia associates itself with the statements delivered by Algeria on behalf of G77 and China, Cameroon on behalf of the African Group and Malawi on behalf of SADC.

My delegation would like to express its appreciation to the Secretary General for the comprehensive report on this agenda item with emphasis on violence against women and girls, and the recommendations therein.

Mr. Chairman

Namibia acknowledges that Advancement of Women is key to a country's overall socio-economic development and the achievement of gender equality. Women's participation in mainstream development grants them the human right, as equal partners and participants in the development processes and gives them the platform to enjoy the fruits of socio-economic advancement in all spheres of life.

Namibia's commitment to gender equality is enshrined in our supreme law, the Constitution, which provides that "all persons shall be equal before the law, no person may be discriminated against on the ground of sex, race, colour, ethnic origin, religion, creed or social or economic status." To fulfill and abide by the constitutional provisions, the government of Namibia ratified various international protocols and convention on the rights of women and girls, and joined forces with regional and international partners in the promotion of gender equality and advancement of women.

We have also enacted various legislations, and developed numerous policies and programmes, aimed at addressing gender inequalities and redressing issues of economic and social injustice, brought about by discriminative cultural practices and historical imbalances.

A significant amount of resources have also been allocated to national legal reforms in ensuring that gender issues are integrated into all laws, policies and programmes.

Mr Chairman,

Incidences of violence against women and children have dramatically increased in the past years and have become a serious national problem. More than half of the victims suffer violence at the hands of those who claim to love them such as intimate partners, parents and spouses. This phenomenon cuts across lines of income, class and culture.

In an effort to curb the scourge, the Government enacted several laws, among others, The Prevention of Organized Crime Act, Combating of Domestic Violence Act and Combating of Rape Act. Those acts deal with issues of human trafficking, domestic violence and child rape.

Furthermore, the government in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, established the National Gender Based Violence System envisaged to provide necessary data for planning and assisting them to develop focused intervention in addressing Gender Based Violence.

In addition to the legal framework the government established the National Advisory Committee on Gender Based Violence that advises the line Ministry and key stakeholders on policy, legislations and other actions to be undertaken to combat and prevent gender based violence in the society. The government also established Women and Child Protection Units in all 13 political regions. These units provide a multi-sectoral approach to assist victims of gender based violence, and are staffed with trained police officers, medical doctors and nurses, as well as equipped to administer Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) for rape victims to prevent HIV Infection.

Mr Chairman

With regards to the advancement of rural women, the Government has introduced Income Generating Activities (IGAs) Grant programme, which funds and promotes IGAs /Small Medium Enterprises run by rural women in order to enhance employment opportunities, hence improving their living standards.

The IGAs Grant programme makes provision for the training of Women in basic business management skills in order to ensure the survival, growth and sustainability of their businesses. This is complemented by the mentorship programmes, which are arranged for women business owners, to exchange visits and participation in international, regional and local trade fairs.

Mr. Chairman

Despite the commendable progress, and government's strong commitment to promote gender equality and women empowerment for sustainable development, gender disparities still persist in all sectors. To that effect, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare with the support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through the MDG- Spanish Fund has embarked upon a gender responsive budgeting exercise for four sectors; Agriculture, Water and Forestry, Education, Health and Social Services and Finance. The overall goal is to ensure that government resources are used to meet the needs of the poorest and the most vulnerable. This would help to translate governments' commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment into budgetary commitments.

Mr. Chairman

In conclusion, I wish to point out that legislations alone cannot make a difference in the plight of women. Thus joint efforts and cooperation need to be taken with government, international community, civil society, traditional leaders, religious leaders, media, women and men, boys and girls.

I thank you