



Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Swaziland  
to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY

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OF SWAZILAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS

NATIONAL STATEMENT  
ON AGENDA ITEM 28  
ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

17 OCTOBER, 2012, NEW YORK

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**KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND - NATIONAL STATEMENT ON AGENDA ITEM 28: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN – 17 OCTOBER, 2012**

**Chairperson,**

At the outset allow me to congratulate you on your election and wish you and the Bureau a successful and productive 67th session

We align ourselves with the statements delivered by Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the one delivered by Malawi on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC)

We thank the Secretary-General for the Reports under this Agenda Item and we further thank all the various speakers for their informative and thought-provoking presentations

**Chairperson,**

The Kingdom of Swaziland subscribes to the fundamental ideals of democracy, such as the upholding of human rights, respect for the rule of law at national and international level, the presence of constitutionally granted freedoms which include strengthening gender equality and the empowerment of women. To this end, we have acceded to most international instruments relating to the advancement of women including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

We are also pleased to announce that in September, 2012 the Kingdom of Swaziland ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and we believe in including and integrating the rights, well-being and perspective of persons with disabilities, including women with disabilities in development efforts at the national, regional and international levels. Our Constitution recognizes that people with disabilities have a right to respect and human dignity and the Government and society shall take appropriate measures to ensure that they realize their full mental and physical potential. Government is also working towards the integration of programmes for all persons with disabilities into mainstream education and also the provision and upgrading of accessible infrastructure, namely government buildings.

At regional level we are also party to The SADC Declaration on Gender and Development and its Addendum on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women and Children and the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development

**Chairperson,**

The Government of Swaziland has recognized the need to ensure equitable and full participation of women and men at all levels of development. Deliberate efforts have been employed to ensure that the obstacles that prevent full and effective participation of women and men in all sectors are removed. To achieve this, Government commissioned the formulation of a National Gender Policy in 2010, through a consultative process to remove prevailing gender imbalances.

This National Gender Policy is aimed at redressing the inequities between women and men. It provides a vision to improve the living conditions of women and men including practical and forward looking guidelines and strategies for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the related constitutional provisions. The objectives and strategies proposed in the policy will be implemented in line with all other policies.

The National Gender Policy will serve as a tool to guide and direct the planning, programming and implementation processes of national, regional, community and sectoral development programmes and projects.

**Chairperson,**

The Kingdom of Swaziland recognizes that rural women play a significant role in the domestic and socio-economic life of society.

Our country is blessed with leadership that supports rural development. Her Majesty the Queen Mother who is the leader of all women in Swaziland, has launched several developmental projects targeting women in rural areas. These include a mushroom plant, and a Marula cosmetics project. At the recently held Rio +20 Conference the Marula cosmetics project, aptly named Swazi Secrets was awarded the Equator Prize in recognition of the efforts of Swazi rural women.

**Chairperson,**

Despite the progress we have made, many challenges still exist. The ongoing devastating effects of the economic and financial crisis, the food and energy crisis and challenges posed by climate change have impacted immensely on the Kingdom of Swaziland. Unemployment, poverty and hunger are some of the problems which disproportionately affect women and girls.

The HIV and AIDS epidemic has also compounded the responsibilities of our women as they bear the greater burden of care giving in the home

To this end, the government of the Kingdom of Swaziland appreciates the assistance provided by our development partners in the field of technical co-operation and local capacity building and it is our hope that this co-operation will be further strengthened

**Chairperson,**

Violence against women and girls still remains pervasive and we can no longer remain silent about it. Eliminating violence against women and girls requires determined and concerted efforts by governments, traditional and religious leaders, civil society and the international community. This Committee is well placed to draw attention to the scourge of violence and by providing guidance on actions that should be taken, at different levels and by different stakeholders, to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls that occur in all parts of the world

The Kingdom of Swaziland recognizes that human trafficking continues to pose a serious challenge to humanity and it requires a concerted international response

Human trafficking involves the acquisition of people by force, fraud, deception or other improper means with the aim of exploiting them. It generates profit at the expense of the victims who are predominantly women and girls. It is in all aspects a contemporary form of slavery.

In an effort to address this scourge, Government has established a Prevention of People Trafficking and People Smuggling Secretariat under the auspices of the Prime Minister's Office

The objective of the Secretariat is to co-ordinate the implementation of the People Trafficking and People Smuggling Act of 2009

At international level we have also ratified the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children, 2000, United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000 and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Persons by Land, Sea and Air, 2000

**Chairperson,**

In conclusion I wish to reiterate Kingdom of Swaziland's commitment to the improvement of the quality of life, achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women at all levels of society.

I thank you.