



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

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STATEMENT BY

**HON. MARGARETH SIMWANZA SITTA, MINISTER FOR
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, GENDER AND CHILDREN
OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA AT THE COMMITTEE
ON ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN**

FRIDAY, 11 JULY 2008

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, GENDER AND CHILDREN OF THE UNITED
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NEW YORK, FRIDAY 11TH, 2008.**

**Madam Chairperson,
Members of the Committee,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

On behalf of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, I wish to express our gratitude for having this opportunity to present, for your consideration, the fourth, fifth, and sixth report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). This report is a result of a consultative process with various stakeholders' including state and non-state actors. The process was led by the Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children for Tanzania mainland and the Ministry of Youth Development, Women and Children for Zanzibar. I wish to note the presence of the Honourable Asha Abdula Juma, the Minister of Labour, Youth Development, Women and Children of Zanzibar.

Significant achievements have been realized during the reporting period. These include review of the Constitution and laws, enactment of new laws, formulation and implementation of policies, strategies and programmes with a gender perspective. Similarly there have been challenges in implementing the Convention. Male domination still exists and efforts are still required to change gender relations positively. Nevertheless, compared to the situation reported in the 2nd and 3rd combined reports, there has been considerable improvement in eliminating discrimination against women.

The government commends the efforts of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against women in monitoring the implementation of CEDAW and, closely following up progress made by Member States and advising on obstacles identified by them. I wish to assure you of my delegation's willingness to engage in a fruitful dialogue with the Committee.

EQUALITY OF WOMEN AND MEN UNDER THE CONSTITUTION

The 14th Constitutional amendments of the United Republic of Tanzania guarantees equality of men and women. Paragraph 12 (5) has further elaborated discrimination to include also discrimination on the basis of gender.

WOMEN IN DECISION MAKING POSITION:

The 14th Constitutional amendments in 2005 also increased the number of seats for women in parliament by amending the provision on special seats for women in parliament. The Constitution now provides that the number of women in Parliament shall be not less than 30 percent of a combined number of members. It is this same Constitution that empowers the President to nominate 10

members of Parliament, half of which should be women. These amendments are special measures to empower women to participate in political and decision making positions as well as aiming at meeting our regional and international commitments.

These special measures have increased the number of women's special seats from 47 to 75. Following the 2005 elections, out of the 321 Parliamentarians, 98 are women, (17 from constituencies and 75 from special seats, 4 nominated by the President and 2 from Zanzibar); this is equivalent to 31 percent of the total. The previous parliament had 290 Member of Parliament, out of those members there were 63 women - 16 from Constituencies and 47 from women special seats. This was equivalent to 21.72 percent of the total. It is also important to note that currently we have a woman Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly.

According to the data compiled by the Inter Parliamentary Union in July 2006, Tanzania is among the top 3 countries to have attained the SADC target of 30 percent women members of parliament. The government is now striving to attain the African Union 50/50 gender parity in 2010 elections, to make this a reality inter-ministerial Committee that is entrusted with the task of formulating gender parity strategies has been formed.

In Zanzibar, Act no 10 of 2005 which amended the Zanzibar Municipal Council of 1995 as well as the District and Town Council Act No. 4 of 1995 has increased the number of women members of councils from 10% to 30%.

There has also been a significant increase in the number of women in decision making position in various public institutions. As of 2008 out of 27 Ministers, 6 equivalent to 22.2 percent are women; out of 30 Deputy Ministers, 8 equivalent to 26.6 percent are women; out of 27 Permanent Secretaries 8 equivalent to 29.6 are women; Out of 15 Deputy Permanent Secretaries, 3 equivalent to 20 percent are women; out of 77 Judges, 22 equivalent to 28.6 are women;

NATIONAL POLICIES:

The National Development Vision 2025 which states among other things that gender equality and the empowerment of women in all social economic and political relations must be attained has laid the basis for formulation and reviewing of macro and sectoral policies, plans and strategies with gender perspectives. In view of this several policies such as the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty 2005 popularly known as MKUKUTA for Tanzania mainland and MKUZA for Zanzibar; Public Service Management and Employment Policies 2007, the Policy on Women and Gender Development 2000 and National HIV/AIDS Policy have now mainstreamed gender.

Furthermore, the government has put in place laws and regulations that prohibit discrimination in employment against women and other vulnerable groups.

LAWS AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK.

The government is providing enabling environment for legal awareness and services to reach women in both rural and urban areas. Organizations such as the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance and a number of NGOs have been conducting legal awareness and education programmes. Some of the NGOs have been providing legal aid to women.

Challenges for women to access justice include legal illiteracy and the low number of lawyers in the country and in particular the rural areas. It is expected that the legal reforms that have been initiated by the Legal Sector Reforms Programme (LSRP) will enhance access to legal justice of women and other marginalized groups; key result areas in LSRP which include access to justice, law reforms and awareness creation have been given utmost attention.

LAW REFORMS.

The Law Reform Commission has already recommended to the Government, amendments on the laws that discriminate against women including proposals on customary and other practices that prevent women from inheriting land and property. Various stakeholders participated in reviewing laws relating to marriage, succession, children's act, Penal and Criminal Procedure Act and Probate and Inheritance.

In compliance to article 15 of CEDAW, the right to administer property has been adopted through the Land Act number 4 and the Village land act number 5 Cap 113 and 114 of 1999. Similarly, in Zanzibar the Land Tenure Act of 1992 provides women and children with the right to protection and safeguard of matrimonial property.

TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

Currently there are no official data on trafficking in women. Trafficking where it occurs is done in secrecy and in other instances it is mixed with regular rural urban migration.

Government's efforts to curb trafficking have included advocacy and awareness creation on trafficking issues. The government, with support of IOM, has established a support project to combat trafficking. The project is designed to enhance Institutional capacity and training for relevant NGOs, law enforcers, prosecutors, judges and victim service providers.

The Ministry of Public safety and security has established an-anti trafficking section in the crime unit, responsible also for addressing terrorism, narcotics and money laundering. Currently no national plan to combat trafficking has been prepared. The government has put in place the Anti Trafficking in Persons Act of 2008.

It is the view of government that, the issue of trafficking in humans is a complex one and that it can be tackled through concerted efforts both at national, regional and international levels.

HIV AND AIDS:

In 2001 the government declared HIV and AIDS a national disaster that requires concerted efforts to combat. A national multi-sectoral strategy and the national policy under the Tanzania Commission for AIDS (TACAIDS) and Zanzibar AIDS Commission (ZAC) provide scope and coordination of efforts to combat HIV and AIDS. The policy accommodates the gender mainstreaming into HIV/AIDS programmes and plans. In 2007, the government prepared a guideline to manage HIV/AIDS in the Public service. A specific law on HIV and AIDS (Prevention and Control) Act, 2008 has been enacted for purposes of preventing and outlawing stigma and discrimination for people living with HIV/AIDS, the law also provides for voluntary, counselling and testing matters as well as privacy and confidentiality of the tests. Moreover, the Act criminalises among other things, deliberate transmission of HIV and provides for the punishment of the same. It is therefore expected that the application and operation of this law will complement the already existing policies; frameworks and gender perspective strategies.

On the 14th of July 2007, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, His Excellency Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, amplified the Government's political commitment by taking a lead to publicly test for HIV. The event was highly publicised and the public encouraged to undertake individual voluntary counselling and testing.

MATERNAL HEALTH:

Tanzania is currently facing high maternal mortality. According to the Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey, 2004/05, most births occur to women in the age group of 20 years to 34 years.

In order to address maternal mortality, the Government has developed a National Road Map Strategic Plan to Accelerate Reduction of Maternal and Newborn Deaths in Tanzania (2006-2010)', which provides new focus and direction to avert maternal and neo-natal deaths. In addition, there are other efforts to reduce maternal mortality rates which include the establishment of a White Ribbon initiative aiming at reducing maternal mortality and building capacity for Traditional Birth Attendants. Key challenges will be to expand skilled attendance at birth and to increase the availability of emergency obstetric care services.

EDUCATION:

Compared to the previous combined second and third Report of 1996, there has been considerable improvement in the areas of primary, secondary, and higher level education. The Government has made impressive performance in the implementation of the Primary Education Development Plan [PEDP] in Mainland Tanzania. Gross enrolment rates for girls increased from 83 percent in 2001 to

113.3 percent in 2007. Furthermore gender parity has been achieved at primary level.

The government is now implementing a secondary Education Development Plan (SEDP) of 2004-2009, which aims at ensuring that children from poor families get access to secondary education. Enrolment for girls has increased from 48,106 in year 2003 to 212,909 in year 2007. Despite these achievements, girls drop out rates in school is higher than boys due to early pregnancies, truancy, taking care of the sick and the siblings.

Girls falling victims of early pregnancies are expelled out of school. However consultations are taking place with various stakeholders. It is expected that these consultations will result in allowing girls to continue with their education. It is worthwhile to note that Zanzibar has already made progress in this area. Under the spinster's act 2005, girls are allowed to continue with their education after delivery.

Corporal Punishment;

The law with regard to corporal punishment is still valid and practical to the Tanzanian Education system as stipulated under the Corporal Punishment Act of 1979. However, the standards have been qualified to provide for modalities and limits as provided for by the Education Circular no. 24 of 2002. It should be noted that due to cultural, traditional and religious beliefs and practises it will take time to abolish corporal punishment in schools. More work needs to be done in this area in terms of sensitization and awareness creation to enable people to change their attitudes and mindset.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:

Violence against women continues to be a serious problem in Tanzania. Physical and sexual violence as well as economic, psychological and emotional abuse occur in families and communities in such forms as threats intimidation and battery, sexual abuse of children, economic deprivation, female genital mutilation and sexual harassment. The government, in collaboration with stakeholders, has taken steps to sensitize the public, law enforcers and the media on gender based violence.

In 2001 the government developed the National Plan of Action (NPA) to combat violence against women. The NPA for both mainland and Zanzibar provides strategies and activities to be implemented by various stakeholders and also focuses on legal, social economic, cultural and awareness building. Based on the NPA a national plan of action in combating FGM was also developed and is being implemented. The Government is signatory to the SADC declaration on Gender and development (1997) and its addendum on the prevention and eradication of violence against women and children. Both the SADC declaration and its addendum and, the CEDAW have been translated into the Swahili national language for accessibility to the majority of women and men.

The establishment of the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance whose functions include investigating allegations involving violations of human rights compliments the efforts of the government, to combat gender based violence. A special gender desk dealing with public education and women's rights has been established within the Commission to take care of this special vulnerable group.

I wish to underscore that there is very high political will to end violence against women. On the 24th of May 2008 the President of the United Republic of Tanzania launched and endorsed a national campaign of 'Say No To Violence Against Women' in support of UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon call for global action to end violence against women.

Before I conclude I wish to acknowledge the contribution of civil societies, NGO's and CBO's in the implementation of the Convention. The government will continue to work with them in ensuring that the objectives of the convention are realized.

The above achievements demonstrate the commitment of the government of the United Republic of Tanzania to implement CEDAW.

I will now introduce my delegation.

My delegation is ready to engage in discussions with the Committee with a view of receiving guidance on better implementation of the Convention.

I thank you for your attention.