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STATEMENT

ON THE

**PRESENTATION OF ZAMBIA'S COMBINED
FIFTH AND SIXTH REPORT
ON THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION**

OF ALL

FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

BY
Dr. Winnie Sithole-Mwenda
Permanent Secretary (Legal)
Ministry of Justice
Lusaka, ZAMBIA

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Chairperson,

Allow me to express my profound gratitude on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Zambia at having been accorded this opportunity to present Zambia's combined Fifth and Sixth Report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

I wish to begin, by thanking you for the rare privilege and honour that has been given to my delegation to interact with your Committee. In my delegation's view, this dialogue will greatly assist in explaining the various measures that the Zambian Government is taking to implement the CEDAW.

As part of my preliminary remarks, I wish to inform your Committee that the responsibility of preparing State Reports in Zambia lies with the Ministry of Justice. This is provided for in our Country's statutory portfolio and functions of Government. Hence, in line with this mandate, the Ministry of Justice has proceeded to prepare State Reports on various treaties as and when they fall due. In our view, this clear identification of portfolio and mandate goes to describe the Zambian Government's commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights, democracy and good governance.

Chairperson

The State reporting procedures that are obtaining in our country require the Ministry of Justice to include all relevant stakeholders during the preparation of State reports. Your Committee may wish to note that over

the years, a procedure has been put in place to guarantee the participation of all relevant stakeholders. The first step of this procedure involves the hosting of consultative workshops, whose purpose is to establish frameworks for constructive dialogue amongst different stakeholders in the Zambian society that is State and Non-State actors. Usually, these workshops will culminate into the drafting of a report that would be subjected to further consultations.

Once a draft Report has been prepared on a particular treaty, national validation workshops are the norm. These workshops serve to ensure that the contents of a draft Report represent the views provided by the stakeholders during the consultative process. Your Committee may wish to learn that one of the distinguishing features of the Zambian state reporting process hitherto, is that where possible, the views of non state actors are included in the Final report.

Chairperson

Against that background, it gives me pleasure in informing you that a thorough process for the preparation of the CEDAW Report was charted from the onset. It was highly participatory with consultations held with all relevant Government Ministries and Departments, the National Assembly of Zambia, the Judiciary, Civil Society Organisations, particularly, women's organisations and relevant statutory bodies at both the national and provincial levels. This was done to ensure that all the diverse views in society on the implementation of the CEDAW were captured and included in the Report.

It is opportune that I should, therefore, rejoin my earlier remarks by stating that the State report before your Committee represents an honest, open and accurate account of measures taken to implement the CEDAW.

Chairperson,

Zambia prides herself in being a cosmopolitan State that allows diversity and the co-existence of different ethnic and religious groupings. This is coupled with the promotion of different cultural practices, lingual and ethnicity. Apart from that and given our unique peaceful co-existence, your Committee should also note that Zambian women take pride in the fact that they are now more actively involved in the pursuit of their rights and freedoms.

The current situation in the country supports this by allowing women to operate in all spheres of society. Such a feat cannot and should not be taken lightly. In addition, through the legislative, judicial and administrative measures obtaining in the country, there is strong commitment on the part of Government to further the rights and welfare of women. As a reminder Chairperson, these measures are contained in the responses to the List of Issues before your Committee.

That being said Chairperson; your Committee is informed that the measures that are being undertaken by the Zambian Government regarding the CEDAW are provided in two parts, in the Report before you. The first part of the Report contains responses to the issues that were raised by your Committee during the consideration of Zambia's Combined Third and Fourth Report. The second part of our Report provides specific

information on the implementation of the various provisions of the CEDAW. These include the following:

1. the Constitutional prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, colour, creed, marital status, political affiliation or tribal extraction;
2. the enactment of the Industrial and Labour Relations Act, which, prohibits any form of discrimination in employment on the basis of sex, race, marital status, religion, political affiliation or tribal extraction;
3. the enactment of the Zambia Development Agency Act which promotes gender equality in accessing, owning, managing, controlling and exploiting economic resources;
4. the enactment of the Zambia Police (Amendment) Act which, establishes the Police Public Complaints Authority (PPCA), which has the responsibility of receiving complaints against police action, investigating such complaints and submitting its findings, recommendations and directions to relevant authorities;
5. the undertaking of a study on the Restatement of Customary whose main objective was to ascertain customary laws and their conformity with the current social, political and economic values in the country;
6. the reservation of 30 percent titled land for women as prescribed in the National Gender Policy of 2000;

7. the attainment at High Court and Supreme Court levels of the 50 percent threshold of women in decision-making positions in line with the African Union and Southern African Development Community declarations;
8. the incorporation of human rights teaching in the curriculum at primary and secondary levels in schools;
9. the training of local court justices on aspects of human rights and access to justice;
10. the promotion of civic awareness through the introduction of easy licensing procedures relating to the setting up of community radio stations throughout the country;
11. the launch by Government in June 2010 of the Campaign for Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA) in order to address the high maternal mortality rate. Under the CARMMA, the Government is undertaking the following measures to reduce maternal mortality:
 - a) Strengthening of Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (EmONC); and
 - b) Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT).
12. the enactment of the Education Act, which prohibits the marrying, marrying off or preventing or stopping of a learner who is a child from

attending school for purposes of marriage. A person who is guilty of committing the above offence is liable upon conviction to imprisonment for a period of not less than fifteen years and may be liable to imprisonment for life;

13.the implementation by the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services of three kinds of social transfer schemes, namely, the Katete Old Aged Based Pensions Scheme, the inclusive model for the 10 percent most incapacitated households and the child grant; and

14.the undertaking by the Zambia Development Agency of a number of activities that are of benefit to women in the informal sector. One of the initiatives undertaken is the Linkages Programme where the Agency links the small and micro enterprises to large multinational companies for the supply of goods and services which enables them to improve both their incomes and quality of goods and services.

Chairperson,

The new developments that have occurred since the last Report as submitted in the List of Issues, speak to the following legislative amendments:

1. the Anti-Gender Based Violence Act, 2011, which provides for the effective protection of victims of gender-based violence;

2. the Anti-Human Trafficking Act, 2008, which provides for the prohibition, prevention and prosecution of human trafficking of persons; and
3. the Education Act, 2011, which, *inter alia*, obliges the Minister of Education to promote equality in access to education, participation in and successful completion of education at all levels.

Chairperson,

While we are mindful of the reasonable progress that we have made as a country in the implementation of the CEDAW, we are also mindful of the huge responsibility that remains in fully implementing the same. A number of factors and difficulties inhibit our progress as a country and are worth mentioning before your Committee as follows:

1. the huge financial constraints which sometimes make it difficult to effectively guarantee human rights in the face of competing and demanding national basic social needs;
2. the huge number of women who are illiterate and as a result are unable to claim their rights; and
3. some negative customary practices which continue to place women in subordinate positions and often deter women from exercising their full potential in their enjoyment of their rights and freedoms.

Chairperson

In spite of the challenges that Zambia faces, it is important to bear in mind that the Zambian Government places a lot of importance on the protection and promotion of women's rights. Hence, it is my sincere hope that my delegation will be able to fruitfully enter into meaningful dialogue with your Committee.

Last but not the least, I wish to inform your Committee that the delegation before you is made up of highly competent officers drawn from various Government institutions. It is my hope that we will be able to have a frank and honest dialogue, in which we can discuss the issues that affect our country women with a view to improving their lives and livelihood.

I thank you.