



The Republic of Uganda

**THE 54TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

STATEMENT BY

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GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

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Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. I would like to first of all thank the people of the Republic of Uganda for conveying our sincere congratulations to you and the Bureau for the astute leadership that the Commission has continued to provide in advancing the global gender equality and women's empowerment agenda. It is indeed an optimistic that the outcomes of the 54th session of the Commission will provide the impetus to the ~~of moving from commitment to action and~~ strengthen the momentum for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment across all United Nations Member States.

2. Madam Chair, by focusing on implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, this session provides a strategic opportunity to share our successes, challenges and opportunities from a global perspective. This session also affirms the linkages between the global framework on gender equality and women's empowerment and the Millennium Development Goals.

3. Madam Chair, I am pleased to report that the Government of Uganda has registered significant progress in strengthening the policy and legal frameworks to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. The 2002 laws on domestic violence; Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation and Human Trafficking, were enacted. The country has attained gender parity in school enrolment as a result of universal primary and secondary education programmes. Furthermore, rural radio services whose 70 percent of beneficiaries are women have contributed to the reduction of illiteracy levels.

4. Further progress is evident in poverty reduction. Currently, 63 percent of the Ugandan population lives above the poverty line, compared to 62 percent in 2005. HIV/AIDS prevalence rate has been contained at 6%, though the epidemic continues to exhibit a female face.

Government remains committed to and shall deepen efforts to ensure prosperity for all, with a special focus on poor and vulnerable population, especially 51 percent who live below the poverty line, including women and children, including a goal of dropping school dropout rates to 10%.

5. Madam Chair, despite the above progress, significant challenges still exist. High Maternal Mortality rates are a major concern to achieve Millennium Development Goal 5. Uganda's Maternal Mortality Ratio has remained high, despite the recent reduction from 505 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1998 to 435 per 100,000 in 2006. In this regard, Uganda has prioritized the key intervention areas focusing on improving skilled health care, increasing health facilities, mobilizing communities for birth and digitally pregnancy planning and ensuring that the unmet need for family planning is 11%.

6. Madam Chair, the Government of Uganda is fully committed to address the seven key areas agreed upon by African Ministers responsible for Gender and Women's Affairs in Banjul, Gambia in November 2009 as contained in the Banjul Declaration. We also remain committed to implementation of SIDA's Gender Theory Action and all critical regional obligations for the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment agenda, many of which we have translated into national level action plans.

7. Madam Chair, let me take this opportunity to thank the Secretary General for the progress made towards the creation of a full-fledged Gender Entity. I am confident that once established, this body will add impetus to the strides already being made in the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women worldwide. In the case of Uganda,

wish to request the Member States and in this Session of CSW to elaborate and conclude discussions on the outstanding issues related to this entity.

As I conclude, Madam Chair, allow me to thank all our international partners as well as the civil society organizations who have contributed in various ways to the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in Uganda.

I THANK YOU FOR LISTENING TO ME.