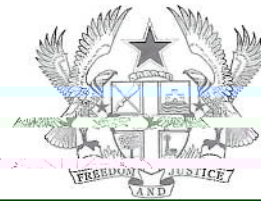
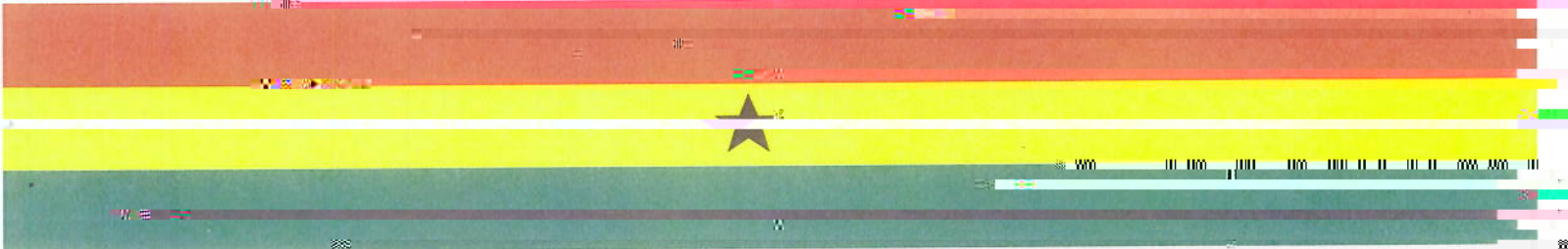


GHANA



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STATEMENT

BY

HON. JULIANA AZUMAH-MENSAH
MINISTER FOR WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S AFFAIRS

AT THE

56TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

ON

AGENDA ITEM 23 FOLLOWED BY THE FORTY-NINTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON
WOMEN AND TO THE TWENTY-THIRD SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY, ENTITLED "WOMEN 2000: DEVELOPMENT, EQUITY,
AND PEACE FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY"

NEW YORK, 28 FEBRUARY, 2012



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STATEMENT

BY

HON. JULIANA AZUMAH MENSAH
MINISTER FOR WOMEN & CHILDREN'S AFFAIRS

AT THE

57th SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

ON

AGENDA ITEM 3: FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON
WOMEN AND TO THE TWENTY-THIRD SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY ENTITLED "WOMEN 2000: GENDER EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT
AND PEACE FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY"

Chairperson,

It is my pleasure to address the 56th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women meeting. I wish to warmly congratulate you as well as to other members of the Bureau on your election to steer the affairs of the Commission in addressing current challenges in the empowerment of rural women, which has direct impact on their ability to fight poverty and hunger eradication. My delegation associates itself with the state statements by Angola on behalf of

Ghana regards the development of the rural economy as key to its socio-economic and sustainable development. This is reflected in our Medium Term Development Framework, the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (SSGDA). Ghana continues to promote the empowerment of rural women who constitute 53% of rural households and fall within the poorest 16% of the population. Rural women in households are responsible for almost 70% of household production and their work is often undervalued.

To address these challenges, interventions are being implemented, among others, and the introduction of the block grant system to revitalize agricultural production among smallholder farmers and the award of prizes to them during National Farmer's Day celebrations.

Chairperson,

The **AGRI-BASED RURAL ENTERPRISE PROMOTION PROJECT** through the development of rural enterprises in disadvantaged districts. Outcomes achieved included improved access to natural resources, technology transfer and skills development. The project focused on women and unemployed and underemployed youth.

In Northern Rural Growth Programme (NRGP) (2008-2014) a project funded with the support of IFAD was designed to train rural women in good agricultural practices to increase productivity and incomes, and is targeted at 1.55 million women. Ghana with the support of the UN Women, has established a Gender Responsive Budgeting Monitoring Unit (GRBMU) within the National Gender Machinery to ensure that sector budgets are gender-sensitive and addresses the needs of rural women.

With regard to gender-based violence, Ghana is in the process of developing inter-agency protocols, community response systems and training manuals for stakeholders to guide the implementation of the law on domestic violence that mostly affects rural women. In order to address existing challenges of maternal mortality for the achievement of SDG 3.6, provision has been made in the National Health Insurance Scheme to provide free maternal care for women and in particular, rural women.

Chairperson,

Public involvement in the development of national legislation to ensure the rural women's participation in government and decision-making has been launched. We recognize that rural women have an important role to play in ensuring peace and security and as a result, the new National Action Plan (NAP) 2020 on Women, Peace and Security, will be initiated in the coming weeks to begin its implementation.

Myself, Olayinka Olajide and the collaboration of CSOs has implemented a number of interventions targeting rural women. FIDA Nigeria has trained over 1,000 paralegals in legal literacy, dispute resolution, access to justice, and mediation to mediate socio-cultural practices. WIFEE has implemented the Legal Literacy Project in some Cocoa growing areas with the objective of empowering rural women farmers to know their legal and human rights. Action Aid Uganda (AAU) through its Women's Rights and Food Rights themes has used rights analysis to assist rural women, smallholder farmers to articulate their needs and challenges and demand for appropriate redress.

Chairperson,

In spite of their achievements, rural women are confronted with several challenges in terms of accessing technology, land, credit, extension services, markets, water and formal education that would enhance production as well as ensure rural security for families and assist in eradicating poverty.

The international community, United Nations and other organizations should intensify efforts to prioritize funding for agricultural and rural development and provide support for the implementation of policies and innovative partnerships with all stakeholders to promote gender equality and the empowerment of rural women. We identify with the recommendations in the Secretary-General's report and aim to accelerate the development of policies and timely interventions that would provide rural women with an avenue to enhance their productivity and contribute towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

I thank you.