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**STATEMENT
BY**

THE HONOURABLE NOLUTHLANDO MAMPESE SERUYA

**MINISTER FOR WOMEN, CHILDREN AND PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES OF THE REPUBLIC OF
SOUTH AFRICA**

TO THE

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

**2 MARCH 2010
UN HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK**

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THE HONOURABLE NOLU THANDO MAYENDE-SIBIYA
MINISTER FOR WOMEN, CHILDREN AND PERSONS WITH
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Chairperson

Allow me to congratulate you on your election as the chair of the 54th Session of the Commission on Status for Women. We are confident that under your leadership the Commission will successfully conclude its program. South Africa wishes to extend its best wishes with its statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of Equatorial Guinea and Yemen on behalf of the African Women's Continental Conference and the African Women's Movement for G77 Countries.

On behalf of the South African people, we extend our heartfelt sympathy and condolences to people of the Horn of Africa who have been recently devastated by natural disasters. We believe you and your partners trust that the resilience of the human spirit will enable you to overcome your ordeals.

Chairperson

The world has seen significant progress towards the realization of the advancement of women. Sadly, challenges persist. Hence, the Government of South Africa welcomes this important session which provides the opportunity to reflect and share best practices.

The Outcome Document of the 54th Session together with the Beijing Declaration endorsed by Ministers Heads of States will guide the region in the continuation to exchange best practices. The document provides for the acceleration of the implementation of the MDG's.

UN Gender Architecture

South Africa has initiated a review of the implementation of its post-apartheid transformation agenda.

This review and broader social consultation process informed the establishment of a Ministry for Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities. The Ministry will ensure that there is effective planning and coordination of government programmes. It recognizes the need for enhancing the capacity of the state to mainstream gender in delivery against national priorities.

Chairperson

South Africa supports the consolidated and strengthened UN Gender Machinery. We believe that this will do a long way in strengthening the UN system's work on gender.

International and National level. We, therefore, call for the speedy conclusion of the
...
...the greatest gift the UN can give to the women of the world on the 15th
...
...architecture.

Economic Empowerment

South Africa is largely a rural country, and the government's focus is on ensuring that
... economic opportunities and sustainable development.
...
...access to Early Childhood Development assists
... economic opportunities.

... quality of life of women is realized through
... depending on:

1. Enhancing the quality of education;
2. Improving provision for health care including enhanced response to HIV and
AIDS, infant and child mortality and maternal deaths;
3. Expanding access to basic services including water, sanitation, and
electricity;
4. Fighting crime and improving access to justice for women and girls
5. Investing in development of human and physical infrastructure that creates job
opportunities for women.

Alignment of International Instruments

South Africa is pleased to note that this conference is focused on aligning key gender
... Platform for Action, CEDAW and
... in order to provide greater
... AS a country, we do not
... which promoted such integration to effect
... greater efficiency, promote integrated delivery and minimize reporting fatigue.

South Africa has met the target for Millennium goal 2 on Universal Access to Primary
Education as early as 2002. Currently data indicates that the gender parity index is
consistently greater than one at secondary level. At tertiary level we are putting special
emphasis on girls in areas such as mathematics,
science and technology.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls remain a major concern of our country. Through some achievements of note in the past few years, we are in a position to develop a comprehensive framework to address violence against women and girls. This includes, among other legislation, the Sexual Offences, Harassment in Persons, Domestic Violence Act and the Children's Act. We have placed a high priority on such issues as the Day of the Girl and Plan of Action on the Violence against Women and Children and address sexual offences.

Our Thuthuzela Care Centres, which are comprehensive one-stop centres for victims of domestic violence, rape and other sexual crimes is hailed as a best practice in the 2007 UN Secretary General's report on violence against children, as a care model that is replicable at the global level.

In keeping with UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820, South Africa has played a significant role in the development of the African continent. South Africa is proud of the high number of women who have been appointed to key positions, averaging 19%.

Regarding the promotion and protection of human rights, our legislation and the Constitution have been tested through landmark court cases, where the final rulings have been in favour of women's emancipation.

Finally, Chairperson, as you are aware, South Africa is only 100 days before South Africa hosts the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the first time ever for such an event to take place on the African soil.

On behalf of the women of SA, allow me to take this opportunity to extend an invitation to all our sisters attending the 54th Session to the World Cup. We look forward to welcoming you to our shores within the next one hundred days.

I THANK YOU

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls remains a major concern of government. There are some achievements of note over the past fifteen years. We are in an advanced stage of developing a comprehensive framework to address violence against women and girls. This includes, among other legislative measures, the Domestic Violence Act and the Children's Act. We have put in place service delivery mechanisms such as the 365 Day National Plan of Action on Violence against women and children and Sexual Offences Courts.

Our Training Centre for Gender Workers, which is a regional centre for victims of domestic violence, and other service centres is being established in the 2007 UN Secretary General's report on violence against children, which is replicated and piloted in some countries at the global level.

In keeping with UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820, South Africa has played a significant role in advancing the peace process on the African continent. South Africa is proud of the high number of women deployed in peace-keeping missions, averaging 40%.

Regarding the promotion and protection of human rights, our legislation and the Constitution have been tested through landmark cases where the final rulings have been in favour of women's rights.

Finally, Chairperson, as you are aware, today marks the 100 days before South Africa hosts the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the first time ever for such an event to take place on the African soil. On behalf of the women of SA, allow me to take this opportunity to extend an invitation to all our sisters attending the 54th Session to the World Cup. We look forward to welcoming you to our shores within the next one hundred days.

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