

STATEMENT BY

H.E. AMBASSADOR LAZARIUS KAPAMUNO
PRESIDENT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
AT
THE OPENING OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH SESSION
OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

22 February 2011

Chair,
Deputy Secretary-General,
Under-Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

It is a great honour for me to address the opening of the 55th session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The Economic and Social Council and its newly created Bureau have clearly defined the critical role this Commission performs in the maintenance of relevant policies and women's empowerment, and as a catalyst for gender mainstreaming across the intergovernmental machinery. I pledge the full support of the Council and Bureau for your efforts.

The Economic and Social Council is the main forum in the United Nations for discussing international economic and social matters, and for formulating relevant policy recommendations. ECOSOC, as a coordinating body, has a crucial role in merging the normative and operational aspects of the work of the United Nations.

During my tenure as President of the Council, I shall strive for greater coherence and coherence between the Council and its functional commissions, as well as enhance the alignment of the work of ECOSOC with that of other UN entities and regional mechanisms of the UN Development Group. With the necessary cooperation, ECOSOC can do more strategic work towards achieving

Chair,

It is gratifying to note that the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, UN Women, is expeditiously moving towards making a difference in the lives of women and girls around the world, particularly in developing countries. In the past, negotiations for the establishment of UN Women, member States were emphatic in their call to provide support to national partners in countries and enhanced support at the country level where the needs are greatest. Let us ensure that we do not fail to live up to their expectations.

With the able dynamic and leadership of Madam Danjer we are confident and have high ambition and determination to meet the challenge. Member States must equally demonstrate the necessary political will to ensure that the process is successful.

Chair,

At this fifty-fifth session, the Commission will focus on women's access to education, training, science and technology, and the transition to employment. Education is a basic right, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women elaborates

Check against every

an women's equal, fair, and dignified education. The Government shall guarantee the need to immediate stereotypical concepts of men and women in all forms and at all levels of education. The past decade has seen remarkable improvements in the field of education, particularly at the primary level. Investing in women's and girls' education has positive multiplier effects on the well-being of their families and the development of the communities. Sustainable investments lead to faster poverty reduction and more sustainable economic growth. I believe in the old Chinese saying that:

“To plan for a day, plant rice; To plan for a year, plant a tree; To plan for a lifetime, educate a girl!”

Yet the majority of children of primary school age, as well as adolescents who are out of school are girls and girls are significant numbers, especially in developing countries. Gender stereotypes continue to permeate society and contribute to steering women and men into segregated study and career paths, with adverse consequences for women's economic opportunities and income. We continue to witness great challenges in women's transition into the labour market. Women's labour force participation was estimated to be 52.9 per cent in 2018 compared with a 77.5 per cent participation rate among the 20- to 24-year-old population, women continue to lag behind men in labour force participation in all regions, with South America creating the greatest gap, namely 82 per cent of men and 27 per cent of women employed or seeking employment.

The multiple crises have slowed progress previously made towards the achievement of many social development goals, including education. Each of these overlapping crises exacerbated existing inequalities, threatened the progress of women and girls, and made it harder to achieve the practical realization of the equality of women and men.

No woman can develop in a sustainable way without the full and effective participation of women in all aspects of life. With a renewed commitment and primary responsibility for achieving the goals of gender equality and women's empowerment, partnerships and strategic alliances among all stakeholders are key for delivering concrete, concrete and measurable results for women and girls. Non-governmental organizations have been consistently advocating for translation of Government commitments into practical reality, and I would like to thank their significant presence at this session.

The Declaration on the Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the Economic and Social Council, recognized the persistence of implementation gaps, and outlined strategies to close these gaps. At our session in July, we will monitor progress in implementation of the Declaration and enhance accountability of all stakeholders. It is my hope that the outcome of this Commission will provide the necessary guidance and strategic direction that will feed into the ECOSOC's Annual Ministerial Review on the Implementation of a Voluntarily Agreed Goals with regard to education.

I wish to wish every success as you embark on two weeks of rich debate and exchange of experiences and good practices, and consider lessons learned to overcome obstacles and challenges.

Thank you.