



Permanent Mission of the United Republic of Tanzania  
to the United Nations

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

STATEMENT BY

HON. SOELA SIMBANDA, MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY  
GENDER AND CHILD AFFAIRS OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

AT THE 56<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN  
"THE EMPLOYMENT OF RURAL WOMEN AND THEIR ROLE IN POVERTY  
AND HUNGER ERADICATION: DEVELOPMENT AND CURRENT CHALLENGES"

NEW YORK, 28 FEBRUARY 2012

**Chairperson,**

My delegation congratulates you and its members for the Bureau's election and assures you of our full cooperation and support.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements issued earlier by the Group's representatives of Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, Tunisia on behalf of the African Group and Angola on behalf of SADC member states.

**Chairperson,**

The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has made a commitment to support women's productivity agenda. Rural women provide 80 percent of labour force in rural areas and producing 60 percent of food production. Though they are the main food producers, the environment does not allow them to realize their own wealth.

Recognizing that the empowerment of women in the rural areas and their improvement of the agriculture sector would greatly promote rural women empowerment and eradicate poverty, the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has laid down the foundation to overcome challenges facing rural women especially in agriculture sector.

**Chairperson,**

The Government has developed Agricultural Sector Development Programme (ASDP) for Mainland and Zanzibar, and "Kilimo Kwanza" strategy translated as "Agriculture First" which aims at modernizing and improving the productivity of our agriculture sector. Under these programmes, farmers are provided with agricultural subsidies for inputs like fertilizers at a reduced cost. These have enabled more rural women to access agricultural technologies, credit as well as enabled them to own property and produce food crops, and therefore, reducing poverty.

There is also a Five Year Development Plan with the main aim of economic growth and poverty eradication which gives priority to agriculture, industry, infrastructure and social services. In this regard, the current government has seen increase on agricultural sector.

**Chairperson,**

In the same line, the Government has revised its National Land Policy of 1995 and enacted Land Law Act of 1999 as well as the Village Act of 1999. This has enabled women to own clan and family land. The Government is working with NGOs and international development partners have made a step to educating men and women on the importance of women owning land and other means of production. More schools have been built in rural areas to enable both girls and boys attend schools. Through alternative learning schools for drop outs and vocational training, girls and boys have been sensitized and empowered to be active in development activities.

**Chairperson,**

Despite the commitments to still with a great extent of inequality between rural women and urban women. Such inequalities are contributed by several factors such as unequal access to productive resources like land. Cultural and traditional values, lack of education, insufficient social infrastructure, services, poor technology and women's work load which limit women's ability to participate actively in economic endeavors.

**Chairperson,**

Improvement of infrastructure is another critical area that the Government is focusing in its efforts to stimulate empowerment of rural women. However, infrastructure development has not been provided with adequate investment, especially direct foreign investment. It is in this endeavor that the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania is promoting public-private partnerships in road infrastructure. We are thus calling upon the international financiers to provide direct foreign investments geared towards agricultural infrastructure development, such as irrigation, roads to the markets and modern technologies.

**Chairperson,**

In conclusion, the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania remains committed to creating a favorable environment which will encourage rural women and stimulate their role in poverty and hunger eradication. We urge for a stronger partnership between Government and development partners in order to address the challenges face rural women in the processes of poverty and hunger eradication.

**I Thank You**