



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



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Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zambia to the United Nations

237 East 52nd Street, New York, NY 10022 Tel: +1(212) 888-5770 Fax: +1(212) 888-5213 Email: Zambia@un.int

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*Media Statement*

*For Immediate Release*

Zambia committed to protecting women, envoy tells UN Committee

***NEW YORK, Thursday, October 18, 2012 – The Zambian Government has told a UN committee that it is committed to protect and promote women’s rights, and curb gender-based violence.***

Addressing the United Nations’ Third Committee on Tuesday, Zambia’s Permanent Representative, Dr Mwaba Kasese-Bota, said the Government wants to reduce gender inequalities.

She said the Government would continue to amend legislation to strengthen the protective environment of women and girls.

Ambassador Dr Kasese-Bota informed the Committee that over the last one year President Michael Sata has appointed several women to head key institutions including the Judiciary, the police, anti-corruption Commission and Drug Enforcement Commission, among others.

She said the UN-initiated Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) would fall short of the expected outcome as the womenfolk continue to suffer various physical, social and economic inhibitions.

“All the eight Millennium Development Goals are inherently and uniquely dependent on inclusive and equitable advancement of women’s rights as well as women’s unequivocal participation in policy decisions and strategic implementation of the development agenda,” she said.

Ambassador Dr Kasese-Bota said, as the international community was formulating the post-2015 Development Agenda, Zambia hoped for a stronger response to advance women empowerment to ensure an all-inclusive and equality growth to attain the aspirations of “The Future We Want” document.

Zambia in 2000 formulated the National Gender Policy, which is being used to reduce gender disparities and improving the status of women and girls. In 2011, the Zambian Government established the Ministry of Gender and Child Development to prioritise the advancement of women and strengthen the capacity to influence decision-making at the highest level on matters pertaining to gender equality and children.

The envoy cited the anti-gender based violence Act and the Anti-Human Trafficking Act, which compliments the women empowerment agenda.

She said President Sata established the Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health, which places women at the center of community development, and aims to provide a holistic and integrated health services for women and girls as close to the family as possible, as well as other social protection services.

Ambassador Dr Kasese-Bota said the continued marginalization of the female gender perpetuates the vulnerability of individuals and poverty in our societies, but Zambia was committed to redressing this imbalance.

She expressed concern that womenfolk continue to lag behind in decision making, political participation, in accessing and controlling of productive resources despite constituting over 60 per cent of the productive work force.

She noted that the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon's indicated that violence against women and girls was on the rise globally.

She said women continued to be exploited as they were subjected to vices such as human trafficking and used as couriers of drugs.

Ambassador Dr Kasese-Bota informed the UN Committee that the Zambian Government has prioritized the domestication of human rights conventions, and the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

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***Issued by:***

***CHIBAULA D. SILWAMBA (Mr.)***

***First Secretary for Press and Public Relations***

***Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zambia to the United Nations***

[www.zambiaun.com](http://www.zambiaun.com) Mobile: +1(646)2405430, Email: [chibaula@zambiaun.com](mailto:chibaula@zambiaun.com)

#### **Notes for Editors**

- *The Future We Want is a global initiative to focus on the sustainability solutions that are ready to be implemented by 2030.*
- *During the year-long 67<sup>th</sup> Session, the UN's Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs Committee (the Third Committee) will focus on human rights, advancement of women, protection of children, indigenous issues, treatment of refugees, promotion of fundamental freedoms through the elimination of racism and racial discrimination, and the right to self-determination, social development related to youth, family, ageing, persons with disabilities, crime prevention, criminal justice, and international drug control.*