

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

A STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR. JAKAYA MRISHO KIKWETE, THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT: A COMMITMENT TO ACTION. DELIVERED TO THE GLOBAL LEADERS MEETING SESSION - 27TH SEPTEMBER, 2015 AT UN HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK

Your Excellency Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China;

Excellencies Heads of States and Government of Mexico, Denmark and Kenya;

Your Excellency Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations;

Honourable Ministers;

Invited Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I commend Your Excellency Xi Jinping President of the People's Republic of China for co-hosting this even with collaboration with the UN Women. This event presents to us yet another opportunity to position gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment at the centre of global agenda in line with new Global development framework and Sustainable Development Goals 2015.

I am comforting to note that the articulated vision of Beijing Platform (1995) for women and girls to have equal rights, freedoms and opportunities in all spheres of their lives free from fear and violence has been fully supported by the United Republic of Tanzania. After Beijing, we committed to implement four out of the 12 critical areas of concern namely; enhancement of women's legal capacity; women economic empowerment and poverty reduction; women political empowerment and decision making; and women access to education and employment.

I am proud to announce that Tanzania has always put agenda of women empowerment and gender equality higher on agenda. Our commitment can be traced as well on the number of important conventions we have signed and ratified that addresses the right of women.

Achievements

Excellencies;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Tanzania has taken the following policy and legal measures:

- The Land Act (1999) and its consequential amendments (2004) which provide opportunities and rights to women in acquiring, holding, using and owning land.

- The promotion of women equal participation in leadership positions in political and public life from which the number of women parliamentarians have increased from **21.5 percent** in 2005 to **34.5 percent** in 2015, while women Ministers increased from **6** in 2005 to **26** in 2015. Likewise, the number of female judges has increased from **8** in 2005, to **41** in 2015.
- Spearheading reduction of maternal mortality rates from **578** per **100,000** live births in 2005, to **454** per **100,000** live births in 2014.
- Enacted anti Gender Based Violence; and Violence against Women and Children.
- Adoption of the Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) since 2000.
- The promotion of Women's economic empowerment through the establishment of the Tanzania Women's Bank (TWB) (2010/11) that has up to (2014/15) provided soft loans to women entrepreneurs.

Tanzania Commitment

Excellencies;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

The significance of the SDGs for the women in Tanzania, Africa and Globally lies in the adoption of a standalone Goal 5 for Gender Equality and key gender equality targets and indicators in all other SDGs goals.

Tanzania reaffirms its commitment to promote gender equality and women's rights before the end of 2030 by ensuring:

- Full domestication of all women's rights treaties particularly Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) to guarantee women enjoy their full rights and opportunities;
- The amendment of all remaining laws which maintained cultural aspects that are deemed discriminatory specifically the Law of Marriage Act, Property and Inheritance; and the development of a standalone Act on Violence against Women;
- Promote and support financing for gender equality in line with Addis Ababa financing for development agenda including allocation of resources for full and sustainable implementation of national and local authority plans to end violence against women and children and ensuring harmonized protection mechanisms for women and children at all levels;

- The principle of 50:50 representation between women and men in all key decision making positions is achieved at all levels;
- Put in place effective mechanisms for accountability and monitoring of implementation of all gender equality and women's rights commitments at national and local levels; and
- Availability and use of sex disaggregated data for evidence based policy and decision making.

Conclusion

Excellencies;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is my expectation that, we will continue to enjoy support and collaboration from our development partners and other stakeholders working in this endeavor. Tanzania commits itself to ensure that the Economic Growth is leveraged to support women's rights in economic equality and opportunity which recognizes their critical importance for sustainable development. I therefore, call on my fellow Global leaders to put our commitments into action.

I thank you for your kind attention!