



REMARKS

BY

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AT THE UN WOMEN

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER FORUM

**60TH SESSION COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
(CSW) 60**

***“IMPLEMENTING THE 2030 AGENDA TO ACCELERATE
REALIZATION OF GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT
OF WOMEN AND GIRLS ”***

21st January, 2016

New York

**Moderator,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,**

- 1.0 Allow me to join my distinguished fellow panelists in commending UN Women for organising this Stakeholders Forum and for affording us the opportunity to participate in it.
- 1.1 It also very timely, coming shortly after adoption of Agenda 2030.
- 1.2 Allow me to sincerely commend you, Madam Moderator, for the very able manner in which you are guiding our deliberations this afternoon
- 1.3 Adoption of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development last September remains one of the major highlights on the global agenda.
- 1.4 It was this principle of inclusivity that informed the intergovernmental negotiations on the 2030 Agenda, culminating in its adoption by world leaders.
- 1.5 The leaders clearly defined and articulated the necessity for an inclusive global development agenda to ensure its sustainability and effectiveness.
- 1.6 Agenda 2030 cannot be fully realized without the participation of all, nor would it be sustainable if anyone is left behind.
- 1.7 I wish to particularly underscore the critical importance of Sustainable Development Goal 5, which seeks to **“Archive Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls”** – and the critical importance of inclusive participation in the implementation of Agenda 2030.

- 1.8 There is specifically need for creation of space in the social, economic and political fields, as well as other areas of human endeavour for women to play active roles in national development processes, including assuming leadership positions.
- 1.9 A significant number of women in Botswana is in positions of leadership including the Speaker of the National Assembly, Attorney General, Governor of the Central Bank, Ombudsman as well as Chief Executives of the Government Departments. Many civil society organisations are also led by women such as Ditshwanelo, the biggest human rights organisation in the country
- 1.10 It is important to recognise that men are important partners in the pursuit of Goal 5, as leaving them behind would be failing to address a critical challenge in the perpetration of gender inequality.
- 1.11 Afterall, Sexual and Gender based Violence, which is prevalent in many parts of the world including in Botswana, is mostly committed by men against women.
- 1.12 That notwithstanding, we welcome and appreciate the fact that men worldwide, albeit at different levels, have generally awakened to the challenge faced by women and have begun to advocate gender equality and women's empowerment, through various platforms, including civil society organizations.
- 1.13 At the moment, in Botswana, there are men-led civil society organizations speaking against sexual and gender based violence and these are proving to be effective advocacy mechanisms.
- 1.14 In conclusion, I wish to highlight the important role and contribution of civil society organizations in this endeavour.

- 1.15 This is important because government cannot single handedly carry out all the necessary advocacy work by themselves or effectively implement policies and programmes on gender equality without working in partnership with other stakeholders, especially the private sector, NGOs and civil society.
- 1.16 Civil society organisations have the advantage that they have regular contact with populations, including at the grassroots level, giving them greater outreach than governments have.
- 1.17 It is therefore important that governments should meaningfully engage the private sector, NGOs and civil society in the development and implementation of gender sensitive policies and programmes in order to ensure their relevance and improve their chances of success.
- 1.18 The High Level Consultative Council (HLCC) is a classical example of public-private sector partnership. The HLCC involves the civil society in their forums to improve business in the country and that the same could be done for realising women empowerment and gender equality. This could also serve as a platform for monitoring progress on the implementation of the Goal 5. (there could be an HLCC for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda to ensure policy coherence across sectors).
- 1.19 National Vision 2016 was the result of a comprehensive and wholly consultative process, and the new National Vision 2036 follows that foundation. The National Development Plans give effect to the National Vision and are therefore implicitly inclusive in nature.
- 2.0 It should be noted that in Botswana, the Kgotla and can be another platform to engage populations on issues of gender equality. It, as well as VDCs for example, would also be useful in reaching the marginalised communities and ensuring their needs are met and they are not left behind.

- 2.1 Education is absolutely critical. It is the key to success, unlocking the potential for women and girls to realise their human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is also the key to raising the awareness of men and boys on the significant role that women can play in the national economy.
- 2.3 Before I conclude, I wish to particularly highlight the issue of resource constraints, particularly lack of funding, which compromises the effectiveness of women's and other civil society organisations. Note that in Botswana, many such organisations have folded because of a lack of funding. Therefore, call for assistance to build the capacity of civil society organisations to effectively carry out their mandates.
- 2.2 Allow me to conclude by reaffirming Botswana's commitment to Goal 5 and the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

I thank you for kind attention!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!