



## **Remarks**

**By**

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**Gateway Conference Centre**

**Windhoek, Namibia**

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Director of Ceremonies,

Right Hon. Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia, Dr. Sara  
Kuugongelwa-Amadhila

Minister of Education, Arts and Culture - Hon. Katrina Hanse-  
Himarwa

Namibia Broadcasting Corporation Director General and  
President of Southern Africa Broadcasting Association (SABA) - Mr.  
Stanley Similo

Members of Civil Society

Members of the Media

Ladies and gentlemen

Good Morning,

I am pleased to be a part of the 2016 Gender and Media Summit, and would like to thank the Southern Africa Broadcasting Association (SABA), Gender Links (GL), and the Media Diversity Centre (MDC) for extending an invitation to the UN.

This year's theme: *“Empowering Women in and through the Media and Providing a Voice for Gender Equality”* is central to various global, continental, sub-regional and national development frameworks, such as the:

- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs),
- African Union Agenda 2063,
- SADC Protocol on Gender and Development,
- NDP5 and, the Harambee Prosperity Plan.

**Director of Ceremonies,**

The new Global Sustainable Development Agenda, launched last year, is designed to provide development focus over the next 15 years. The seventeen goals call for global action to eradicate poverty and to save the planet.

SDG five speaks to achieving gender equality, and how empowering women is crucial to accelerating sustainable development.

Goal five specifically, calls for the removal of key barriers to women's empowerment such as:

- Removing discrimination against all women and girls everywhere;
- Eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls;
- Ensuring women's full participation and equal access to leadership and decision-making opportunities; and
- Strengthening sound policies and enforceable legislation.

Numerous studies have demonstrated that women are great multipliers of development progress. Empowered women contribute to the health and productivity of whole families and communities; women improve prospects for the next generation.

A child who has a mother with some formal education is more likely to survive to their fifth birthday, receive adequate nutrition, and be immunized and enrolled in school.

Educated women make more informed decisions about marriage, when to have their first child, and how many children to have.

As many as 3.4 million births occur before girls reach the age of 17 in sub-Saharan Africa and south and west Asia.

In these regions, early births would fall by 59% (from 3.4 to 1.4 million) if all women had secondary education.

## **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Namibia has made progress in the area of gender equality.

Namibia ranks number 4 in Africa<sup>1</sup> in terms of gender parity in parliament. Women occupy two of the top four leadership positions in government.

Namibia has a National Gender Policy (2010-2020), National Gender and GBV Plans of Action (2010-2020; 2012-2016) and Gender Responsive Budgeting Guidelines.

--And while we can be proud of these achievements, we cannot become complacent.

Unfortunately, 33% of all married women aged 15-49 have experienced physical, sexual and or emotional violence from their spouse.

According to Police statistics released earlier this year, GBV in Namibia is on the increase with 822 cases reported this year alone. Approximately 3,500 female victims of grievous bodily harm were recorded for each year between 2009 and 2014.<sup>2</sup>

Women are also disproportionately impacted by poverty.

## **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

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<sup>1</sup> World Press Freedom of 2016

<sup>2</sup> NDHS 2012/3

Namibia ranks number 1 in Africa and number 17 globally<sup>3</sup> in terms of press freedom<sup>4</sup>. This status provides Namibian media an excellent platform from which to advocate both gender equality and accelerated development.

The media play a crucial role in improving the public's understanding of current or emerging issues. Media can help enhance transparency and accountability, by facilitating dialogue between decision-makers and the rest of society.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,** His Excellency the President has declared war on poverty, launched the Harambee Prosperity Plan and stated that no one should feel left out. Ever since, local and national media have played a vital role in helping to spread this message, and to foster open and informed debate.

**And without the media,** it would be extremely difficult to hold widespread discussions about achieving gender equality, ending poverty, and accelerating development.

**Director of Ceremonies, therefore and in conclusion,**

Whether through support to the development of monitoring tools (such as the National Gender Monitoring Toolkit for Media) or by conducting gender assessments of media houses or simply by providing content on the gender issues of the day; the UN system

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<sup>3</sup> World Press Freedom of 2016

in Namibia will continue to collaborate with the media, in support of Government, Civil Society, and Private Sector, and in order to promote the empowerment of women and girls.

We believe the media has been and can be a force for good. We see the media as a tool that holds us all to account in our common quest to eradicate poverty and save our planet for future generations.

And the future we want is a world where every person including women and girls can live free from discrimination, exclusion, and violence; a world where we all enjoy dignity and full human rights.

**I thank you!**