



**Remarks
By**

**Ms. Anita Kiki Gbeho
UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident
Representative**

**Launch of the 16 Days of Activism Campaign
Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**

**24 November 2017
Windhoek, Namibia**

Director of Ceremonies,

Hon. Doreen Sioka, Minister of Gender Equality and Child Welfare;

Hon. Lucia Witbooi, Deputy Minister of Gender Equality and Child Welfare;

Ms. Wehlencia Uiras, Permanent Secretary of Gender Equality and Child Welfare;

Ms. Martha Mbombo, Deputy Permanent Secretary of Gender Equality and Child Welfare;

Lieutenant General S. Ndeitunga, Inspector General of the Namibian Police Force;

Mr. Saltiel Shinedima, Executive Director for WAD¹ on behalf of Civil Society;

Pastor Lukas Katenda;

Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Members of the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the UN family in Namibia, I would like to begin by thanking the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, for inviting us to be part of Namibia's launch of 16 Days of Activism.

¹ Women's Action For Development.

First celebrated in 1991, 16 Days of Activism aims to raise awareness about the importance of ending violence against women.

These physical, sexual and psychological acts, such as early marriage, beatings, and rape are acts, most commonly perpetrated against a woman, simply because she is a woman.

- Globally, 750 million women are married before the age of 18²
- Approximately 1 in 3 women face violence throughout their lifetime.³
- And only 40% of these women seek help

In its absolute and worst form, GBV, ends with, death.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The world has recently launched a new development agenda with 17 Goals to eradicate poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all.

Namibia has also launched its National Development Plan 5, the Harambee Prosperity Plan and a Blue Print on Poverty Eradication and Wealth Redistribution; Namibia has vowed that no one should feel left out.

These strategic plans, in line with national, regional and international development agendas⁴, recognise that poverty will not be eradicated nor will we achieve prosperity for all, if women receive unequal treatment, are not empowered and continue to be victims of violence.

² Secretary-General's remarks for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women 2017. <http://bit.ly/2hP9mOD>

³ UNFPA. State of the World's Population Report 2017. <http://bit.ly/2B7sKxA>

⁴ Including NDP5, AU Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Director of Ceremonies, empowered women are great multipliers of development and improve prospects for the next generation; Namibia's children and Namibia's future work force⁵.

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 school⁶.

And "Research indicates that violence against women, could cost around 2% of the global gross domestic product (GDP); equivalent to 1.5 trillion USD"⁷.

Clearly, GBV, has a detrimental impact on the global economy. Therefore, addressing GBV is not only about what is right – it is also about what makes good economic sense.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Namibia, does have good stories to tell when it comes to Gender

- Namibia is the third most gender-equal country in Africa⁸.
- Namibia has adopted and ratified international and regional human rights frameworks⁹ such as CEDAW and has a National Gender Policy¹⁰ and National Gender and GBV Plans of Action¹¹.
- Namibian Parliamentarians have committed to: mainstream gender into laws; and support sexual & reproductive health and rights, (SRH-R) as part of the UN's *He for She*¹² campaign.

⁵ UNFPA: Gender Equality (2016) & UNFPA Welcomes World Leaders' Action Plan for Progress on Maternal Health, Poverty (2010)

⁶ Save the Children State of the World's Mothers report: 2014

⁷ UN Women. *Remarks by UN Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director of UN Women, Lakshmi Puri at the high-level discussion on the "Economic Cost of Violence against Women"*. <http://bit.ly/2hNGNki>

⁸ African Development Bank Group. *Africa Gender Equality Index 2015*. <http://bit.ly/2BhcvPq>

⁹Including the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, and the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development.

¹⁰ (2010-2020)

¹¹ (2010-2020; 2012- 2016)

¹² More about *He for She* campaign: <http://bit.ly/1KzGT4P>

However, one just has to pick up the morning paper to recognize that there is still a lot of work to be done.

- About 7% of girls in Namibia are married before the age of 18¹³, contributing to school drop-out rates.
- One third of Namibian rape victims are under the age of eighteen¹⁴.
- And 33% of women aged 15-49 years have experienced some form of violence¹⁵.

So as I near the end of my remarks, the UN has two asks today.

If we are to reach those furthest behind in terms of GBV, we must strengthen and prioritize our evidence base and we must speak out.

- Solid data is required to manage strategies; to indicate where GBV challenges us most; to understand which laws and policies to adjust, and to know with whom to engage if attitudes and practises are to be changed.

As the saying goes – if you can't measure it, you can't manage it.

- Our second ask is that Namibians 'report it to stop it'¹⁶ actively support campaigns such as Namibia's First Ladies ¹⁷ Break Free 2 Be Free from violence movement; Tell someone about the 106 GBV helpline. Make sure you have 'Zero Tolerance of Gender-Based Violence'.

As your partner of choice, the UN stands in solidarity with Namibians who have been beaten, raped and killed, We stand

¹³ UNICEF's State of the World's Children 2016 Report

¹⁴ UNAIDS and Victims 2 Survivors. *Gender-Based Violence in Namibia*. <http://bit.ly/2A5RHKA>

¹⁵ NDP5

¹⁶ Launch of the campaign for zero tolerance to Gender Based Viloence 2009

¹⁷ FLON is the UNAIDS Global Advocate for Young Women and Adolescent Girls.

ready to support Namibia to act with surgical precision; We stand ready to act in order to end violence against women.

Gender Based Violence can be prevented

I thank you.

DRAFT