

Statement by Her Excellency  
Mrs. Ana Paula Sacramento  
Vice-Minister of Family and promotion of Women  
Of the Republic of Angola  
At the 51<sup>st</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

THEME: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLENCE AGAINST  
WOMEN

New York, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006

**Madam Chair,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am honored to take the floor during this Session on the Status of Women, on behalf of my Government and the Angolan delegation, allow me to congratulate you, Madam Chair, on your election as the presidency of the work of the 51<sup>st</sup> Session. I would like to express my delegation's appreciation for the progress achieved in the implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action, as well as in the implementation of the Recommendations of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Special Session of the General Assembly of the UN.

**Madam Chair,**

Angola recognizes the importance of the role of women in the development of the country, and for this reason, the Government's strategy to access to education for all will focus, inter alia, on the inclusion of all levels of the population, providing educational opportunities, with a special emphasis on girls.

In spite of the Angolan Law not to be discriminatory, however, it is important to stress that aspects of cultural nature, such as the customary practices, particularly at the rural level, have constituted some of the causes for discrimination against girls with regard to access to education and other opportunities in relation to boys.

The promotion of education for all until 2015 and its Action Plan constitutes for us an imperative challenge, and it is already part of an integrated strategy that our Government intends to implement in the context of its post-conflict measures.

Allow me to present some statistics on the enrollment of students in the regular educational system in the period from 2003 to 2006.

- 2 million 918 thousand children joined kindergarten schools, of whom 989 thousand, or 34%, are girls.

- 1 million 472 thousand students were enrolled in junior high school. Of this figure, 304 thousand are girls, corresponding to 21% of the total.

In this regard, several steps have already been set in motion. For instance, pedagogic elements have been included in the educational curriculum in order to stimulate equality between the genders and non discrimination among children and adolescents of both genders.

In spite of this progress, we still have not reached equality in the rate of enrollment between boys and girls. Considerable efforts have been made in previous years in order to raise the population's awareness to the fact that girls should not continue to be used only for domestic affairs or for exploitation, which, sadly, is a common practice in our society.

**Madam Chair,**

Angola lived through long years of war. At this time, we enjoy an absolute peace which has already lasted five years. Now many girls that lived in conflict areas are able to try a new life. A large part of them benefit from the national literacy program, since the illiteracy rate in Angola rounds 65%, of which 50% are women.

With the normalization of life in the country, new educational infra-structures, such as schools and professional training centers, are to be built throughout the whole national territory, thus giving us hope of a real educational boom in the next years, as we believe that it is a fact that our population, girls in particular, are willing to attend school.

**Madam Chair,**

Angola is proud to have been a cornerstone in reducing HIV-AIDS prevalence thus to the lowest level in the Southern Africa region, we will strongly continue to support and cooperate with social partners such as ANASO (Forum of Angolan Organizations that fight against AIDS) and UNAIDS, particularly their broad awareness programs on the danger HIV-AIDS poses to the future of the Country.

Important progress has equally been made in the health sector, such as a Governmental program that includes all aspects linked to reproductive health, family planning, medical aid, and construction of hospitals and health centers in all urban and rural sectors.

My Country's efforts focus on the reinforcement of measures aiming at regulating all pending issues, mainly those that assure the well being of the population, particularly girls.

These efforts will be assisted by the Strategy of Integrated Assistance to Childhood Diseases and the National Program of Nutrition, which constitute priority areas in our policy, especially in the social domain.

**Madam Chair,**

Violence against girls today is an intolerable reality, and it poses a threat against society.

The failure to meet the basic needs of girls, and the non materialization or accomplishment of their will, desire, and aspiration have been reasons of disturbance that lead them to frustration, resulting in deviations of conduct.

Fighting violence against women in Angola has been developed as a mission shared by all spheres of our society. Recently, our President His Excellency, José Eduardo dos Santos, made important remarks linked to the need for educational and preventive measures in order to address domestic violence, which has reached worrying proportions.

**Madam Chair,**

Intent on creating an atmosphere that fasters the progressive implementation of the Declaration of Beijing and its Platform for Action, the Government has activated a process of revision of the criminal code, with special attention to the elaboration of a new Law against domestic violence and a National Action Plan on zero tolerance against domestic violence between 2007-2010.

In light of Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of Children, the Government of Angola adopted measures that guarantee the protection of children against economic exploitation and jobs that are harmful to their growth, education, and development.

The adherence of Angola to Treaty number 6 on the Nightly Work of Children, Treaty number 182 on the Worst Forms of Work for Children and immediate action with a view to their elimination and Treaty number 132 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Work, constituted the guiding documents for the elaboration and approval in Angola of Law N°2/2000, which gives effective protection to young working girls.

To conclude, Madam Chair, I would like to launch an appeal to this Noble Assembly by saying the following: if we take care of our girls today, we guarantee the future of the women of tomorrow, and so the society provided with happy families.

**THANK YOU**