



**MINISTRY IN THE PRESIDENCY FOR WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**SPEECH DELIVERED BY PROFESSOR HLENGIWE MKHIZE, DEPUTY
MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY FOR WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES
TO THE NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON SOUTH AFRICA'S CHAIRSHIP FOR
CSW 66 AND 67**

Programme Director, Adv Mikateko Joyce Maluleke: Director-General,
Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities

Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane: Minister in the Presidency: Women,
Youth & Persons with Disabilities

Ms Anne Githuku-Shongwe: UN Women Multi Country Office
Representative

The Commission for Gender Equality

Government Officials

The Business Sector

Civil society Organisations

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you Minister for providing us this opportunity to deliberate on South Africa's Chairship for the 66 and 67 Session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Indeed Minister, Covid-19 is an enemy to the struggle of women, it has reverse the gains and created new challenges. Women all over the world are severely affect by Covid-19. The lessons we have learned from this pandemic should help us to generate permanent solution for the challenges facing women and their children. Across every sphere, from health to the economy, security to social protection, the effects of the pandemic are exacerbated for women and girls.

Our participation at the Conference of State Parties on Disabilities has revealed the true extend of exclusion exacerbated by the global pandemic of COVID-19. Participation of persons with disabilities in every day decision making has been severely curtailed and this must be addressed in our daily work.

It must be understood that South Africa has not become the Chair of the CSW 66 and 67 session by chance. South Africa is a member of the United Nations and a signatory to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action which is the blueprint that informs the work of the Commission. This gives South Africa a legitimate right and creditable moral standing to Chair the Commission and to participate in any United Nations Platform and to lead the global agenda on gender discrimination, gender inequalities and the empowerment of women and girls.

Therefore, South Africa must strategically use this Chairship opportunity to champion and influence the acceleration of gender equality following the unpleasant outcome of fifth Beijing (Beijing+25) review, which led to the initiation of Generation Equality Campaign which was launched by UN Women under the theme '**Generation Equality: Realizing women's rights for an equal future**'.

In particular, within the context of “**leaving no one behind**” and the hashtag “**whatwomenwant**”, under this Chairship South Africa should lead the world to accelerate (a) women's economic and financial empowerment and inclusion; (b) demand for equal pay and fair labour practices; (c) women's access to education and technology and skills development; (d) participation of women in the green industry; (e) equal sharing of unpaid care and domestic work; (f) an end to sexual harassment and abuse and all form of violence against women and girls; (g) responsive health care services to the needs of women and girls including sexual and reproductive health and rights; (h) equal participation of women in political life and decision-making in all areas of life; and (i) land ownership for women, as well as cultural beliefs that are prejudiced against women.

In terms of the struggle of women against discrimination, segregation and inequalities, the CSW Chairship will position South Africa to be a strategic, attractive and influential leader given its historic experiences, gains and achievements. In this regard, South Africa will play a role in building international solidarity, advocate for harmonise joint-effort in achieving peaceful outcomes for a better Africa and the World.

As we progress on discussions we must consider the voices of young women and women with disabilities. Women in their diversity must be considered when navigating competing demands and finding common ground on a global stage. The principal of inclusion which we fight so hard for, must not be forgotten once we are handed the stage.

This Chairship is an opportunity to lead the global dialogue on transformation agenda, with intention to secure and amplify renewed states accountability to accelerate gender equality and women empowerment agenda. As a country we have made our observations concerning the Commission on the Status of Women and this Chairship provides a great opportunity to table our view and proposal on what can be done to make the two week commission more effective than just a talk show.

Wishing you a successful discussion

I Thank You