

Mr. John Feakes, Australian High Commissioner:

Diplomatic Partners Resourcing the Delivery of the Women's Agenda in the Wake of Post 2015

Asante sana (thank you very much), Ms Makena. Habari ya asubuhi (good morning) diplomatic colleagues, members of the panel, ladies and gentlemen, all protocols observed.

I am honoured to be here today to show Australia's support for the work of Kenyan women and the Kenyan Women's National Charter.

Gender equality is central to economic and human development and to supporting women's rights. Equal opportunity for women and men supports economic growth and helps to reduce poverty.

Gender equality and women's empowerment are priorities for the Australian Government, both domestically and internationally. Australia prioritises its work in areas where persistent challenges and progress toward gender equality has been slow, including:

- increasing women's voice in decision-making, leadership and peace-building;
- women's economic empowerment; and
- ending violence against women and girls.

Australia is committed to supporting and partnering with Kenya to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

Recently, our government set a target requiring that at least 80 per cent of development investments, regardless of their objectives, effectively address gender issues in their implementation. Expenditure on initiatives where gender equality is a significant or principal objective is expected to total approximately \$2 billion in 2014-15 of Australia's administered ODA

Achieving this will require a sustained effort and a new strategy is being developed to support staff to meet this ambitious target.

We all know the facts behind the push for gender equality, but they bear repeating:

- Globally, including in Australia, one in three women who have been in a relationship have experienced physical and / or sexual violence by their partner.
- Worldwide, women hold just 22 per cent of parliamentary seats in single or lower houses and
- Two thirds of the 774 million illiterate adults worldwide are women – this proportion has remained unchanged for the last 20 years and spans most regions.

In Kenya, the figures tell a similar story:

- We know that by controlling the number of children they have, women's lives are longer and safer, yet fewer than half of all births here are attended by a skilled provider, a quarter of women have no access to birth control, and over a quarter are married by 18.
- 27% of Kenyan women have been cut and almost half of Kenyan women have experienced spousal abuse.
- Only 19% of seats in national parliament are held by women, similar to Australia's figure of 26%.

Kenya has come a long way towards meeting the goals of 2015, but we are not meeting those goals relating to gender equality and women's rights.

We need to make gender equality the centerpiece of our effort. And the only way to ensure the rights of women and girls are central to the development agenda is to ensure that we budget for it.

As Litha Musyimi-Ogana said about gender:

We don't just need a stand-alone goal; we also need stand-alone money for gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment

We have learnt lessons in the work that we have done to empower Kenyan women. Post-2015, we need to maintain the pressure on development partners and government to ensure that resources are there to meet the gender goals of the Constitution, Vision 2030, and the new global development goals.

National development plans and strategies must adequately incorporate gender financing for development.

Implementing gender equality commitments requires that governments implement policies that remove gender-based discrimination and guarantee women's rights.

This means Kenya needs to consider financial resources, institutional capacity and accountability systems in national plans and budgets to ensure the resources are available to act on change at every level.

We need to support gender planning in public finance management systems, budget planning and macro-economic frameworks. Gender analysis can support the National Treasury to make better budget choices by highlighting existing gender gaps and the impact of public expenditures and revenue-raising on women and girls.

In trade and labour policy, development partners can work with the government and private sector to ensure equal opportunity and reward for Kenyan women and men. Youth employment strategies must take into account the labour gap for young women, and develop policies to stimulate their employment.

Civil society is central to this agenda and development partners will continue to work closely with you all in promoting women's rights and budgeting for them.

In conclusion, we have an extraordinary opportunity here today. This forum can set the agenda for women's rights in Kenya well into the future. In this stadium we have the culmination of the experience and wisdom of the Kenyan women's movement and as development partners we stand beside you as you promote women's rights. Let us not lose this opportunity to set the agenda post-2015, realising that women's empowerment and safety is not only good for women, but essential so that Kenya can progress as a nation.

Asante sana, kwaheri (Thank you and goodbye).