

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, HONOURABLE DR OLIVIA N MUCHENA  
TO THE 53<sup>RD</sup> SESSION OF THE CSW: NEW YORK**

Chairperson,

Zimbabwe is honoured to deliver this statement to the 53<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, whose priority theme touches on the HIV/AIDS epidemic, a core challenge to ~~our country's development~~ *our country's development*.

In an effort to combat the HIV/AIDS scourge, Zimbabwe has adopted the National HIV and AIDS Policy in 2000 and Zimbabwe National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan in 2006. The Strategic Plan uses a multi-sectoral approach and recognizes the importance of dealing with gender dimensions of the HIV and AIDS epidemic. The National AIDS Council (NAC) was established with the overall role to coordinate implementation of HIV and AIDS activities at all levels. NAC also channels funds leveraged through the 3% AIDS

Chairperson,

Governments of developing countries need assistance in confronting existing unequal burdens that weigh on women in a range of policy areas, particularly on health, social welfare, education and the labour market. Countries require financial assistance to facilitate women's venture into non-care giving, formal, secure and better paying jobs. Financial resources are essential for advocacy work towards gender equity. Furthermore, financial assistance in the health sector would help lessen the burden of care-giving in the context of HIV/AIDS on women, as professional institutions take over. The establishments of feasible and affordable health care and social welfare programmes are pre-requisites. Zimbabwe further believes that a transformation of both individual attitudes and behaviour and institutional arrangements in the national and international economies would go a long way in facilitating the economic, political and social empowerment of women.

Chairperson,

Allow me to briefly address the emerging issue of "The gender perspectives of the financial crisis". It is a fact that the financial crisis has different impacts or repercussions to men and women, be it in the economic, social and political spheres. The current financial crisis' impact on women is huge, taking into consideration the fact that women in my country and in other parts of the world are employed in informal, low paying, temporary and generally less protected jobs. These are the kind of jobs that face immediate collapse during recessions such as the one the world is experiencing. The small scale business enterprises that women of my country dominate are worse off today because of the unavailability of loans from financial institutions. As we tackle the challenges of the current financial crisis women should also be involved in proffering solutions. Governments, international organisations and the civil society including