



## Global Empowerment Movement (GEM) Hosts

### The 63<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women Side Event

#### Film Presentation: "Activating Women Participation in Politics for Sustainable Development"

**Date:** Friday, 15 March 2019 | **Time:** 6:15:00pm - 7:45pm | **Venue:** Church Center for the United Nations, New York

#### CONCEPT NOTE

##### Background Information

While Human trafficking is a global phenomenon and a global challenge, Africa human trafficking is often interwoven with and tied to poverty. The poverty-human trafficking interconnectedness manifests in the growing numbers of women and children in vulnerable situation of poverty, desperation, depression, victimization, and hopelessness that have become victims of trafficking due to some of the push and pull factors that made them susceptible. The situation has reached an alarming proportion.

To this end, in view of no one-size-fits-all strategies to frontally confront this scourge **there is need for continuous conversation and dialogue around the phenomenon of human trafficking and poverty eradication** among social practitioners, academia, members of diplomatic community, and other stakeholders with the view of proffering holistic solutions that would result in comprehensive and integrated approach founded on behavioral modification, reorientation, continuous sensitization, mentoring, empowerment and support to victims of human trafficking in tandem with philosophical underpinning of Agenda 2030 of leaving no one behind.

In the context of human trafficking, gender-based violence, rising levels of conflict, humanitarian crises, and impoverishment, women and girls as subjects and as powerful agents of change - the core of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This is why we must **embark on women empowerment through economic, education, political, fiscal, social protection policies, etc.**

Women Participation In Politics is a Global United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. **Although women have made a number of remarkable political gains in recent years**, women are notoriously under-represented in government; while more women have entered political positions in recent years, including through the use of special quotas, they still hold a mere 23.7 per cent of parliamentary seats, far short of parity.

The situation is not much better in the private sector, where women globally occupy less than a third of senior and middle management positions (Adapted from UN Economic and Social Council (2017). Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: Report of the Secretary-General (E/2017/66).

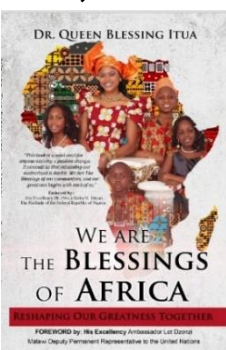
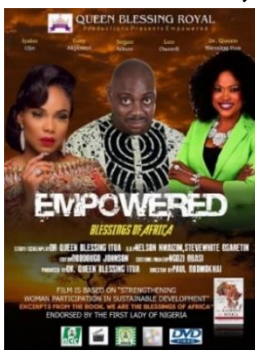
*It does not make sense to see the surge of crimes against women as these historical achievements.* Quite often, human trafficking involves some form of forced, coerced, sexual or labor exploitation, including the quest for greener pastures. Many have been deceived or coerced, while a significant number of African women willingly acquiesced into being trafficked or transported in order to seek supposedly “better life” abroad. *Women stay in hostile environments longer because of not knowing where to go for help.*

***There is an urgent need to continue to empower women politically, economically, educationally, etc.*** Consequently, Global Empowerment Movement (GEM) organization, which is granted Special Consultative Status by the United Nations Economic for Social Council (ECOSOC) embarks on series of Global Education and Economic Empowerment Programs in USA and in Africa. Global Empowerment Movement Corporation is committed to working with poor and disadvantaged people, especially women and children building critical lifesaving skills and inspiring them to greater heights, thereby helping to restore poor and disadvantaged families, communities unto the path of sustainable development. ***GEM uses educational books and awareness film/entertainment that leverage the art and literature to acts to empower women and girls across all its programs and advocacy as well as to bring attention to the struggles and challenges faced by women.***

*Women’s equality and empowerment is one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, it integral to all dimensions of inclusive and sustainable development. All the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) depend on the achievement of Goal 5 which includes,*

- *Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.*
- *Promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels because with stepped up action on gender equality, every part of the world can make progress towards sustainable development by 2030, leaving no one behind.*

**On March 15, 2019,** in line with the theme of 63rd Session of the Commission on the



Status of Women - CSW63, Women’s empowerment and the link to sustainable development Global Empowerment Movement Corporation (GEM USA) will host a side event in to present a women empowerment. Nollywood **film called: “Empowered” Blessings of Africa to discuss the theme: "Activating Women Participation in Politics for Sustainable Development" with the aim to highlighting the power of an empowered woman.**

## 2. Purpose of “Empowered” *Blessings of Africa* Film and the Book:

The “Empowered,” *Blessings of Africa* film is based on following excerpts from book, “We Are the Blessings of Africa,” endorsed by the first lady of Nigeria.

*“Women economic empowerment is a prerequisite for sustainable community development. Empower a woman, and the issues of Human sex trafficking, domestic violence, abuse, impoverishment, and abandonment will be tackled with ease. Empower a woman, you empower the family, Community, City, Country, and Continent.”* - Quotes from the empowerment book – “We Are the Blessings of Africa, Reshaping Our Greatness Together.” **The book and film are produced by Dr. Queen Blessing Itua**, Global Empowerment Movement Founder/Executive President and Award-Winning Author.

**“Empowered” *Blessings of Africa* highlights real issues** affecting the lives of women across Africa and many communities. It exposes the challenge the social, cultural, and political norms that limit the potential and contribution of women as well as the factors that limit their potential for independence, leadership and meaningful contribution. It also addresses injustice arising from the perception of the subjugations against women inequality and transformation and it bravely serves up the cultural and societal norms that oppress and limit African women and their participation in politics.

The “Empowered” film highlights the *Importance of Women Participation In Politics.* Women and mothers alike must be “empowered” to rise to leadership in curbing the unrealistic and unhealthy taste that causes our motherland a waste of natural resources. ***When women are fully involved, only then can we make good progress, and only then can we truly prevent or even eradicate human trafficking and poverty.***

The “Empowered,” *Blessings of Africa* film highlights the power of art for social commentary while showcasing the struggles of women, particularly those in Nigeria, to overcome pervasive barriers to full equality, dignity and well-being. The film will empower women to break the culture of silence, challenge the status quo, move beyond barriers, and create solutions by stepping into leadership position as well as gives a voice to African women living on the Continent and in the Diaspora, as the world gains insight into African gender inequality that leaves African Countries dealing with issues like Godfatherism, embezzlement of public funds, poor infrastructural development, poverty and impoverishment, bad roads and poor educational system, abandoned already mobilized contracts and you can go on and on and every real man and woman must desire a better change or all.

The ***Empowered*** film brings to the fore the value of women in leadership, and women participation in politics. Women empowerment is the link to preventing human trafficking and eradicating poverty for sustainable development.

**Empowered is an educational-empowerment tool** that shows the critical urgency on women empowerment and women participation in politics and leadership positions as the link to correcting poverty, negative impact of human trafficking, and forced labor on the social and economic life development of women, especially in rural communities. “Empowered” is purposed to *Activate Women Participation in Politics for Sustainable Socio-Economic Development* as well as sensitize women, especially the rural women to leadership roles.

### **3. Objectives of the CSW63 Side Event Empowered Film Presentation and Discussion**

In accordance with the United Nations General Assembly resolution on women’s political participation (A/RES/66/130), this movie will promote the importance of women leadership and political participation.

- *Removal of all barriers that directly or indirectly discriminate against the participation of women, to develop their capacity to analyze issues from a gender perspective, and to adopt policies, as appropriate, **to promote the ability of women to participate fully at all levels of decision-making within those political parties;***
- *Investigation of allegations of violence, assault or harassment of women elected officials and candidates for political office, create an environment of zero tolerance for such offences and, to ensure accountability, take all appropriate steps to prosecute those responsible;*

Adapted from UN Women. In Brief: Women’s Leadership and Political Participation.’

Overall, the side event will emphasize the strategies for women in leadership empowerment as the solutions for the eradication of Poverty, Human Trafficking, Gender-Based Violence, Victimization of Women, and Sustainable Community Development.

**The key objectives of the side event film presentation and discussion:** The side event will emphasize the strategies for *women in leadership empowerment as a means to greater impact and the solutions for the eradication of Human Trafficking, Gender-Based Violence, Victimization of Women, and Sustainable Community Development.* In addition, the side event will call on women to step into leadership position as it explores ways, we can strengthen women empowerment through economic, education, political policies as the prerequisite for poverty and human trafficking eradication and the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**4. The Special Guest of Honor/Chair of the Side Event is the First Lady of Nigeria, Her Excellency Dr. (Mrs.) Aisha Buhari, represented by DR. HAJO SANNI – OON, PHD, Senior Special Assistant to the Wife of the President of Nigeria.**

### **Speakers**

- **Ambassador Fatima K. Mohammed**  
Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union to the United Nations
- **Representative Karen Bennett**  
Chair, Black Caucus, Georgia State Legislature
- **HRH Princess Angelique Monét**  
Founder of Nothing on Television TV
- **Mr. Jimmy Chue**  
Asian American Chairman for Republican Party

### **5. Guiding Questions**

1. What measures can we put in place to build capacity and socioeconomic empowerment, position women with the confidence to step into leadership position *and provide women with education, contacts and resources needed to become effective leaders?* **(Amb. Mohammed)**
2. How can we overcome the challenges and barriers surrounding the political participation of women as well as ensure no violence against women running for office and campaign of free electoral violence? **(Rep. Karen Bennet)**
3. Using Arts and Literature, how can we generate interests and provide support for various endeavors aimed at women-youth empowerment, combating poverty, and curbing human trafficking? **(HRH Princess Angelique Monét)**
4. How can we ensure legislative and constitutional reforms to ensure women's fair access to political spheres— as voters, candidates, elected officials and civil service members as well as ensure that policy makers draft a new constitution and develop voting guidelines that guarantee seats for women candidates? **(Mr. Jimmy Chue)**

### **6. Recognizing Women Leaders Leading by Example**

Due to the current more than ordinary attention being given to addressing the phenomenon of human trafficking, women empowerment, and poverty eradication globally and women in leadership empowerment, **it is important to begin to recognize the efforts of individuals** who have stepped into politics and leadership positions and are using their platforms to empower other women and making a difference in the community. Amongst these are **Her Excellency Dr. (Mrs.) Olufunso**

**Amosun, the wife of the Ogun State Governor, Federal Republic of Nigeria**, who will be honored with the **Global Impact Award for Excellence in Service** and for using her platform as a woman in political leadership to campaign for women, young girls and children support, assist, integrate and provide hope to numerous victims of some of the societal ills. Mrs. Amosun through her pet project “UPLIFT Development Foundation,” has dedicated her service towards environmental and socio-economic empowerment of women, children, and the youth in Ogun State Nigeria. In addition, Mrs. Amosun complimented government various initiatives by teaming up with relevant stakeholders in Ogun State and beyond to address some feminine challenges in the country.

Also being honored are **Ms. Lucia Kiaser**, a two-time Emmy Award-Winning Producer/Humanitarian **with a Global Empowerment Award for Excellence in Service** for her outstanding lifetime contributions to humanitarian causes and her pioneering role model to women empowerment as well as **Ambassador Fatima Kyari Mohammed**, the Permanent Observer of the Africa Union to the United Nations honored for work with displaced, vulnerable communities from Northeast Nigeria particularly women and children and youth empowerment as the Founder of the LikeMinds Project, a non-profit, non-partisan Organization.

The Global Empowerment Movement **Past Awardee is the First Lady of Nigeria, Her Excellency Dr. (Mrs.) Aisha Buhari**, Recipient of the Most Distinguished Global Award for Excellence in Women Empowerment and Gender Development.

## **7. Format: Film Presentation, Interactive Discussion, Speakers, Award**

In segment one – Opening Remarks, Book/Movie Presentation, and Contest-Setting: The Moderator will introduce the Event Chair for opening remarks, and the GEM Executive President, the host of the 63rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women Side Event to present the book on which the Movie is based on excerpts: “We are the Blessings of Africa, Reshaping Our Greatness Together” for context-setting  
In Segment Two – Film Presentation and Discussion: The Moderator will invite the film presentation and a follow up film review by the Producer.

In Segment Three –Panel Discussion/Interactive Session: The Panelists are expected to structure their presentations around the concept note and the theme: “*Activating Women Participation In Politics as a means to Greater Impact - Eradicating Human Trafficking, Poverty, and Sustainable Development.*” Following the Panelist Discussion, the Moderator will open the floor for interactive dialogue and invite questions directly related to the presentations.

In Segment Four – Award & Keynote: The Speakers are expected to structure their presentations around the theme: “*Activating Women Participation in Politics for Sustainable Development*” and make recommendations from experience and work as a woman in leadership position.

**8. Time: 6:15pm – 7:45pm; Total Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes**

The time allocation for the discussion is as follows:

| <b>Speaker</b>  | <b>Suggested Speaking Time</b> |
|---|--------------------------------|
| <b>Introduction/Opening Remarks/Context-Setting</b><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Moderator: Introduction @ 5 minutes</li> <li>- Event Chair Remarks – Opening Remarks/Women In Leadership @ 5 minutes</li> <li>- GEM Executive President: Welcome Remarks/Book-Movie Presentation/ Context-Setting @ 3 minutes</li> </ul>  | 13 minutes                     |
| <b>Film Presentation @ 15 minutes /Film Review by the Producer</b>  | 18 minutes                     |
| <b>Interactive Panel Discussion: Women In Politics/Leadership</b><br>4 Panelists @ 5 minutes each. Open dialogue/interactive discussion with questions and comments from the audience (10 minutes) and Panelists Closing Remarks (1minute/each)   | 34 minutes                     |
| <b>Award/Keynote Speech/Closing Remarks</b><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Introduce Awardee</b> (Amb. Mohammed) (1 minute)<br/>Acceptance Speech Remarks: Call to Action (3 minutes)</li> <li>- <b>Introduce Speaker/Award</b> (Ms. Lucia) (2 minutes):<br/>Speech: (Women Lead Humanitarian Service) (5 minutes)</li> <li>- <b>Introduce Keynote Speaker/Award</b> (First Lady) (2mins)<br/>Keynote Speech: Women In Politics Impact On Sustainable Dev. (10 minutes)</li> <li>- <b>Closing remarks By Host/Facilitator @ 2minutes</b></li> </ul> | 25 minutes                     |

**Chair: Opening Remarks**

**H.E. DR. (MRS) AISHA BUHARI**

**First Lady of Nigeria**

Represented by DR. HAJO SANNI – OON, PHD  
Senior Special Assistant to the Wife of the President of Nigeria

**Facilitator/Film Presentation**

**DR. QUEEN BLESSING ITUA**

*Recipient of the President Obama Lifetime Achievement Award*  
UN Representative/Facilitator/President, Global Empowerment Movement  
Producer of “Empowered,” Blessings of Africa  
Author, “We Are the Blessings of Africa, Reshaping Our Greatness Together”

**Moderator**

**JOANA VARGAS**

Co-Founder, 9 Gems Hospitality

## **8. Expected Outcomes**

*There is an urgent need to continue to build on the gains of women empowerment politically, economically, educationally, etc. Women must not allow the media, advertisement, designers, others to determine who they are and their purpose. Women must be empowered to take their place and help our struggling children with their identify so that they can start training their children early about family, life, responsibility, values and respect which will continue the training process.*

*As we make these historical gains in politics and women in leadership, this side event will help us to strategize how to maximize the position of the elected women officials, how to empower others to step up into leadership roles, etc. It is time to define purpose, develop a plan, and implement it for the betterment of women. Therefore, women must present an agenda to political officers; stating their expectations at all levels of government.*

*Women's economic empowerment is central to realizing women's rights and gender equality. Women's economic empowerment includes women's ability to participate equally in existing markets; their access to and control over productive resources, access to decent work, control over their own time, lives and bodies; and increased voice, agency and meaningful participation in economic decision-making at all levels from the household to international institutions. (UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment, Leave No One Behind: A Call to Action for Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment).*

***Empowering women in leadership, politics, in the economy, and closing gender gaps in the world of work are key to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*** and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 5, to achieve gender equality, and Goal 8, to promote full and productive employment and decent work for all; also Goal 1 on ending poverty, Goal 2 on food security, Goal 3 on ensuring health and Goal 10 on reducing inequalities.

The outcomes or recommendations of the discussions will be reflected in the GEM Executive Chair's summary, which will also serve as an archive of GEM event.

## **7. Post Award at the Nigeria House, Permanent Mission of Nigeria to the United Nations, Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017**

Participants are invited for a post event dinner party at the Nigeria House, Permanent Mission of Nigeria to the United Nations, New York, Time: 8-10:30pm. This event is by invitation only and participants are advised **to pre-register online** at [www.globalempowermentmovement.org/united-nations-events/](http://www.globalempowermentmovement.org/united-nations-events/)

**For More Information, Please Visit**

**<https://www.globalempowermentmovement.org/events-activities/>**