



**Permanent Mission of the United Republic of Tanzania
to the United Nations**

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PRESENTATION BY

**MS. ELLEN MADUHU, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF
TANZANIA, DURING THE UNITED NATIONS SIDE EVENT ON THE
IMPORTANCE OF ESSENTIAL SURGICAL CARE IN EMPOWERING WOMEN
AND CHILDREN**

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THE IMPORTANCE OF ESSENTIAL SURGICAL CARE IN EMPOWERING
WOMEN AND CHILDREN**

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a great honour for me to join you here this afternoon.

On behalf of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, I would like to thank the International Collaboration for Essential Surgery for organizing this event on a topic that is of priority to the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Surgical interventions play a major role in helping to prevent death and chronic disability. But despite of this fact surgical, interventions are not accessible by everyone. Regrettably pregnant women are the ones who suffer most.

In Tanzania every year 454 women die from pregnancy related complications for every 100,000 live births. Most maternal deaths occur during childbirth and in the immediate postpartum period (period after delivery). Statistics on maternal mortality identify bleeding, unsafe abortion, pregnancy-induced hypertension, obstructed labour, and infections as the common direct causes of death, while the indirect causes are mainly malaria, anaemia and HIV and AIDS.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Majority of maternal deaths can be prevented, if pregnant women can be assured of access to skilled attendance at childbirth and emergency obstetric care when pregnancy related complications occur.

The Government of Tanzania is committed to end preventable maternal and child mortality in all segments of our society. To ensure that women get access to health services and do not die from pregnancy complications, the Government has continued to expand coverage of Primary Health Facilities and strengthen provision of comprehensive and basic Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care equipment national wide. In addition, we have in place a health policy that offers free health services to women during pregnancy and postpartum period and also to children under-five years.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Despite of global achievements and our commitments, actions need to be taken beyond 2015 to ensure that women do not die when giving birth. Governments such as mine despite our good intentions and commitments, we are very much constrained. We still need support from different stakeholders like the United Nations system, our development partners, the private sector, and civil societies to look for an effective workable strategy beyond 2015 that will end preventable deaths among children and women. One strategy that we propose is to include increasing access to essential surgery as a sustainable development goal in post 2015 agenda within the framework of universal health care.

Conclusion

Prevention of maternal mortality is the basic right of all women and we must make it our priority not only in ensuring that life is sustained but also in enhancing our commitment to the advancement and empowerment of women. Women are being kept out of education, workplace and their communities because of their gender -based health issues. We have made many commitments and declarations; it is now time to call for action on those commitments and improve women's and children's health.

I thank you