

Dr Robinson: We Must Empower Women for the Future of Madagascar

Written by Australian Business

ANTANANARIVO, Madagascar, September 25, 2013 /PRNewswire/ --

On Pan African Women's Day, Madagascar Presidential candidate for the AVANA Party, Dr Jean Louis Robinson, has warned that a failure to address gender inequality will hold the country back from future development.

Speaking in Antananarivo today, Dr Robinson said: "Everybody with a legal right can vote in the elections this year, but many women in our country are denied access to equal opportunities in many other areas of life on a daily basis, including education and jobs. These are basic human rights, and we must ensure men and women, young and old, are given the same opportunities. This is the only way we will be able to establish a long-lasting democracy, in which women continue to play an integral role in our society.

"If Madagascar is to regain the trust and respect of the international community and retake its rightful position on the global stage, we must be progressive in the development and implementation of policies to stamp out the discrimination of women in their daily lives."

Increasing women's rights is a key area of Dr Robinson's manifesto along with rebuilding international relations and encouraging foreign investment into Madagascar's economy. Greater investment in healthcare and education are also top priorities for Dr Robinson, and the women of Madagascar, who have suffered most in recent years, will particularly benefit.

This year's presidential elections in Madagascar have been wrought with controversy, with one of the only female candidates, Madame Lalao Ravalomanana, being forced to withdraw from the race in August. Since she stepped down, Madame Ravalomanana and her party, The

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Mouvance, have pledged support for Dr Robinson, whom they believe is the only hope in restoring democracy and political stability to Madagascar.

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Notes to editor:

The AVANA party has been created with the purpose to initiate change in Madagascar by returning it to its former glory and sovereignty. The party's manifesto heavily prioritises a social "action plan" to help rebuild Madagascar's society.

The Mouvance, along with former presidential couple Lalao and Marc Ravalomanana, have pledged their full support of their party to Dr Robinson's candidature.

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SOURCE AVANA Robinson 2013