



13th AFRICAN WOMEN'S AU PRE-SUMMIT CONSULTATION

SOLEMN ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We, representatives of African women's organisations and civil society meeting under the umbrella of "Gender Is My Agenda Campaign" (GIMAC) at the 13th AU Pre-Summit African Women's Consultation in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from January 27th and 28th 2009, convened by Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) with the support of the African Union Commission (AUC), AU Gender Directorate (AUGD), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), ActionAid International, Department For International Development (DFID), African Development Bank (ADB), African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland;

Welcoming the decision of the Heads of States of African Union to devote their 13th ordinary session to issue of infrastructural development in Africa which has grave implication for the operating environment for African women;

Appreciating the support of our various partners and also H.E. Madam Gracia Machel whose address and charge at the opening ceremony brought to the forefront the success that African women have achieved over the years and the existing challenges that need further attention by the government and the women's movement which actually set the tone for the meeting with great insights and determination;

Building on past achievements of the African women's movement to keep women's priorities on the agenda of the African Union and **appreciative** of the AU's support and acknowledgement of the significance of the African Women Pre-summit consultation mechanism in engendering the Summit agenda;

Appreciative of the willingness of the Heads of State and Governments to continuously improve the livelihood of African citizens through various landmark initiatives, policies and programmes at the continental, regional and national levels;

Recalling the commitments of the AU Heads of State and Government to gender equality and women's empowerment as stipulated in the *AU Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa* (2003), *The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa* (2004) and other instruments and decisions of the AU;

Noting with appreciation the desire of African Heads of State to continue to engage African women and ensure that our voices are heard and our needs are effectively taken on board at all times;

Commending African initiatives and that of the United Nations to resolve conflicts across the continent, especially political conflicts in Zimbabwe and other crisis areas in the Sudan and the Great Lakes region;

Cognisant of GIMAC's commitment to monitor, evaluate and report on the implementation of *AU Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa* (2003), *The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa* (2004), and other decisions of the AU, commend the ongoing work of the various focal points in supporting Member States in the implementation of these commitments and preparation of their reports as provided for in the SDGEA;

Recognising the effort of WGDD and the chairperson of AUC to launch the Women's Trust Fund and appreciative of all the steps so far taken to activate the fund including close collaboration with African Development Bank (AfDB);

Cognisant of the need to ensure that gender equality in effective use of external finance in Africa especially as it relates to the implementation of SDGEA and the Protocol on the Rights of women in Africa;

Supportive of the recent initiative of the AUC Chairperson on the production of diversity (Parity) chart for the AUC in 2008 and AU organs in 2009 as well as its outcome and the lessons generated from it;

Appreciating the desire of the Chairperson of AUC to ensure that the various conclusions and recommendations of the Pre-summit meeting of the various Civil society organisations working of gender and women are properly mainstream into the decisions of the AU Summits especially those relating to the implementation of the SDGEA

URGE the 12th Ordinary Summit of Heads of State to adopt the following recommendations:

A. Second Heads of State Summit Debate on Gender

1. Further to our recommendation at the 12th Pre-Summit meeting and the effort of the AUC and the Gender Directorate on the above, we urge the Heads of State to accept the proposal and thus organise the second Heads of State Summit Debate on Gender to review and further strengthen African leaders' commitments to gender equality as provided for in the SDGEA and other related instruments;
2. Mandate the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) to initiate a process towards the convening of the Second Heads of State and Government Gender Summit for January 2010;
3. Further call all the women's organisations and organisations working on gender issues to mobilise necessary resources that will support the successful execution of the debate ;

4. Commit ourselves to study, analyse and produce a consolidated evaluation report on the implementation of the SDGEA by member states of the African Union and also submit necessary recommendations and strategies for way forward on the implementation of the Solemn declaration;
5. Further promise to produce a GIMAC index for the summit debate which will assist the Member States in assessing themselves in the overall implementation of the SDGEA. For the purpose we call on UNECA to provide necessary technical and financial support in the production of the index which will hopefully give all the stakeholders a tool for advocacy and engagement;

B. Implementation of SDGEA

1. Commit ourselves to the implementation of our strategic action plan produced during our 12th pre-summit meeting and urge the members States to do the same by articulating a national plan of action for the implementation of SDGEA;
2. Call on the remaining 35 countries that are yet to submit their mandatory reports on SDGEA to do so as a way of fulfilling their commitments toward gender equality in Africa;
3. Follow-up, utilise and ensure extensive circulation of the content of the Gender Practice Booklet within and outside the continent of Africa and to all the major organisations around the globe dealing gender issues and development;
4. Take urgent actions in the area of gender equality and effectiveness of **external finance** in Africa by conducting research on the use of such support and its impact on women's advancement at all levels. Continued to raise awareness on external financial and development, advocacy and lobbying around gender mainstreaming, including promotion of gender equality programmes and policies by states

C. African Union

1. Call on the Chairperson of the AUC to make the *Diversity (Parity) Chart* an annual endeavour and call on all the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and member states of the Union, to embark on the same exercise in all their agencies and government departments;
2. Recommend to the Heads of States to make deliberate attempt at engendering the various organs of AU and units of the AUC that needs to be more gender responsive;

3. Urge the AU to work closely with AfDB to conduct the feasibility study on the Women's Trust Fund that was expected to be ready in January 2009. We urge the Executive Council to revisit the decision and pass the same to AfDB.
4. Call on the African Union, through its members states, to implement the Action Plan from the 6th African Development Forum (ADF) which emphasise three priority action on:
 - a. Africa-Wide campaign to eliminate violence against women;
 - b. Financing for gender equality, women's empowerment, ending violence against women and girls;
 - c. Reliable data on gender equality, women's empowerment and violence against women and girls;
5. In line with (4) above, we call for the development, launching and implementation of the UN Secretary General's campaign in Africa on ending violence against women and girls, through 2015, under the auspices of the African Union and the African Development Bank (AfDB) in partnership with the UN System, within the gender component of the Regional Consultation Mechanism of UN Agencies and Organisations Working in Africa (RCM) and other development partners such as GIMAC network, women's organisations and CSOs, as per their respective mandates;
6. Also recommend that the proposed Second Heads of State Summit Debate on Gender be used as the opportunity to launch this Campaign in Africa and afterwards in the Member States of the African Union;
7. Advise the Chairperson of the AUC and the Gender Directorate to further reflect on the proposed structure for the AU gender pre-summit meetings so it would not be seen as an attempt to stifle CSOs voices, efforts and commitment towards achieving the objectives of the AU gender programmes and the implementation of the SDGEA;
8. On infrastructural development, the meeting call upon the African Union and Member States to make deliberate effort to developed a gender-driven framework for infrastructural development in terms of design, funding and impact on the lives of African women

D. OTHER ISSUES

The 13th African Women AU Pre-Summit Consultation also deliberated and made recommendations on the other issues as well as on current crisis situations in Zimbabwe and the Sudan and the Great Lakes region :

a) ON THE SITUATION IN ZIMBABWE:

- i) We reiterate our desire to follow through our decision as a Network to undertake a Women Solidarity mission to Zimbabwe in support of our sisters in that country;

- ii) Appeal to all the political actors and stakeholders to ensure that the solidarity Mission is given access to the Zimbabwean women and also increase the tempo of their actions in ensuring that the political, social and economic crisis confronting the citizens of Zimbabwe especially the women are resolved as quickly as possible;
- iii) Call on the African Union to support the efforts of SADC on Zimbabwe and ensure that a functional government is put in place without further delay.
- iv) Appeal to the African Union to open an office in Harare as part of the efforts to assist Zimbabwe in overcoming its current political and economic challenges
- v) We have also resolved that March 8, 2009 which is the women's day will be use as a day of mourning in solidarity with the women of Zimbabwe.

ON THE DARFUR SITUATION:

- i) Support all efforts to end the violence and the violation so that women refugees and their families and displaced persons can go back to their homes;
- ii) Support the women of Darfur to get to the negotiating table;
- iii) Requesting the AU Peace and security council to appoint a Gender Adviser with a focus on the Darfur Peace process;
- iv) We recommend that steps should be taken towards justice and psycho-social support for women and girls victims of sexual and other forms of violence;
- v) We recommend measures for compensation for disposed families and reparations for displaced communities;
- vi) Calling for support for institutional capacity building, human resource endowment and technical support for the Sudanese Womens's Forum on Darfur

ON THE GREAT LAKES REGION:

- ii. Efforts should be made to ensure that functional domestic legislative framework are put in place by the parliaments in GLR to punish perpetrators of crimes against women and not just depend on the International Criminal Court (ICC) to bring justice to few people while the majority of the perpetrators remain unaccountable;
- iii. There is a need to incorporate trauma therapy and counselling into the rehabilitation of victims of all forms of violence specifically rape, domestic violence and violence during the time of war and conflicts;

- iv. Urge the governments of GLR should stop the culture of impunity by ensuring government officials who participate in crime against women are brought into justice;
- v. Encourage the MS of AU to embrace the statute of Rome and work on them to domesticate the content of the statute which deals with crime against women

ON THE INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM

I) Members of the GIMAC reiterate our pledge to provide technical and moral support to the initiative of Her Excellency Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President of Liberia, to convene together with Her Excellency Tarja Halonen, President of Finland, an International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security, in March 2009, in Monrovia, Liberia,

II) Decent Work

We appreciate and support the new initiative of ILO on "Decent Work" and call on the AU and Member State to work closely with the ILO in domesticating this initiative.

**Gender is My Agenda Campaign Secretariat,
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, January 28th 2009**