

## **PEACE AND SECURITY**

In its second article, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) states:

***Ensure the full and effective participation and representation of women in peace processes including the prevention, resolution, management of conflict and post-conflict reconstruction in Africa as stipulated in UN Resolution 1325 (2000).***

***Appoint women as Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the African Union.***

Most of today's conflicts are characterised by systematic attacks to the civilian population. Women and children constitute the majority of this population – sometimes, they have an active role in conflicts, as voluntary or involuntary combatants. In spite of this, they have only a marginal if any role in peace processes. Article 2 focuses on women's role in armed conflict and their contribution to conflict resolution through a direct reference to the most important document addressing the issue, the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted in October 2000.

The Resolution, "expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict [...] and recognizing the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation", endeavours to address the needs of women in all stages of peace and conflict and places particular emphasis on including women in conflict prevention. It demands the UN to expand the role of women in UN field-based operations; to provide gender training and materials on the protection of women; and to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, their role in peace building and the gender dimension of peace processes and conflict resolution.

The Resolution demands Member States to increase the number of women involved in decision-making processes in conflict prevention, management and resolution,, and to include a gender perspective in negotiating and implementing peace agreements. In addition, it urges parties of armed conflict to respect international law on the rights and protection of women and girls; to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, to support local women's peace initiatives, and to involve women in all stages of peace processes.

States, however, have the main responsibility for its implementation, both through contributing to the UN's efforts and through national measures. A growing number of States are in fact adopting and putting in place National Action Plans, but no African country is doing that. Unfortunately, with the exception of the annual report that the Secretary-General presents each year, no reporting mechanism is foreseen for monitoring the implementation of the Resolution. This gap is partially filled by the linkage existing among the Resolution and other continental and international instruments: the Beijing Platform for Action of 1995; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women of 1979 and its Optional Protocol of 1999. In the African continent, the gap has been filled by the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of 1981 and its Protocol on Rights of Women in Africa of 2003. Since 2004, the Solemn Declaration and its reporting mechanism also addresses the wide challenge of Resolution 1325. In October 2005, AU Member states adopted an Implementation Framework of the SDGEA within which Targets, Actions and Indicators are enumerated for guiding their efforts.

Besides recognizing the importance of the document and the need to be 'on alert' about it, Civil Society Organisations have developed their own guidelines for implementing, monitoring and evaluating the Declaration, thus producing their own Targets, Actions and Indicators. The two evaluating systems, although different, are not in opposition but complementary elements, providing a more comprehensive overview of the situation.

### Targets:

- A group of women mediators and Special Envoys and Representatives is established for an effective and equal participation in peace processes,
- Partnership is built between the AU Peace and Security Council and Civil Society,

- The Resolution 1325 (2000) of the UN Security Council is popularized among grassroots populations,
- Public awareness raising on humanitarian laws is increased.

#### Actions:

- Organize training for women peace builders and peacekeeping forces,
- Develop a comparative database on gender participation in peace processes at national and regional levels,
- Organize advocacy visits to appropriate governance institutions in order to increase women's participation in peace processes,
- Share best practices and success stories of women in peace building and conflict resolution,
- Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework.

#### Indicators:

- Number of women appointed as Special Envoys, Representatives and Rapporteurs for the AU on prevention, resolution, management of conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction,
- Number of women appointed as heads of peace negotiators by 2007,
- Increased level of gender parity and participation reflected at the national and regional initiatives, dialogues and actions on peace,
- Inclusion of a Gender Unit in peacekeeping missions.

## **METHODOLOGY**

ACCORD, FAS and SaferAfrica are the Focal Points responsible for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Article 2 on Peace and Security of the SDGEA. Accordingly, FAS prepared the present report, submitting it to ACCORD and SaferAfrica for their contributions. The report is based on the interim report presented by FAS during the 8<sup>th</sup> Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting held in Banjul, in June 2006 and attempts to improve it, not only analysing recent developments, but by capitalizing on the experience of the three focal points in the Peace and Security realm. Thus, it includes findings, recommendations and conclusions of the "10 Year Evaluation Study" FAS carried out for assessing its 10 years of activities in training, networking and advocacy for and with African women, in order to empower and enable them to incorporate their unique perspectives into politics and peace processes at all levels.

The study analyses countries such as Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Somalia, highlighting successes of the women's peace movement in those countries. Furthermore, it explores the dimensions of women's leadership within and beyond the women's peace movements, showing the viability and importance of women leaders in promoting peace and rebuilding societies after conflicts.

FAS also has strong field experience from its peace initiatives in the Mano River and Great Lakes regions, thus developing a long-term and rights-based approach to conflict resolution.

Moreover, an important contribution to the present work derives from FAS' membership to the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security based in New York, which monitors Resolution 1325. FAS is also chair of the NGO Working Group on Peace based in Geneva and works closely with the UN Human Rights Council. These two working groups are important observation points for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of UN SCR 1325 (2000) and, more generally, women's participation in peace and security activities. The expertise of ACCORD and SaferAfrica has also greatly contributed to this report.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Conflict is often viewed as a cycle, which begins with prevention and then moves through phases of escalation, management, de-escalation, resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction. Each stage of the conflict requires different approaches at international, regional, national and local levels.

The **conflict prevention** stage relies on mechanisms of early warning and risk analysis, as well as on education and community building initiatives aimed at promoting a culture of peace, and non-violent devices of conflict resolution. Once conflict has erupted, concerns of **human security and the protection of civilians** must be central to any conflict management strategy. This includes responding to the needs of refugees and internally displaced persons, who are overwhelmingly women and children. In the process of de-escalation, **conflict resolution and peace-building efforts** must take thorough confidence building

measures, negotiations and peace talks as well as grassroots efforts to build peace. Traditionally, these processes have focused on warring parties, thus excluding the concerns and contributions of women. However, peace-building activities must include all stakeholders in order to bring lasting peace. It is also important to recognize that the conflict cycle does not stop with peace negotiations. Rather, **post-conflict reconstruction** efforts that incorporate disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), and promote reconciliation are critical to preventing resurgence of violence. Thus, conflict prevention is a crucial component of the reconstruction process. Post-conflict reconstruction must also include sustainable development projects that promote the economic empowerment of women and rebuild the war-torn society.

Bearing this in mind, the present report focuses on the following main areas:

- Latest developments threatening regional peace and security,
- The inclusion of Gender Units in Peacekeeping Operations,
- IDPs and refugees,
- The inclusion of women in peace processes,
- The role of women in post-conflict reconstruction, specifically their inclusion in Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) programmes and in the political landscape.

Recognizing the role of different actors in gender mainstreaming within the Peace and Security realm, the report attempts to analyse efforts put in place by the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), Governments and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Regional Peace and Security are threatened by several crises sharing common elements, such as the lack of effective democracy, authoritarian tendencies, and widespread corruption in managing the *res publica*. We are currently witnessing an escalation of national crises into wider, regional ones as a consequence of states' interdependency, vulnerability and incapacity to cope with such emergencies. Four geographical areas require special attention, namely, Central Africa, the **Horn of Africa**, **Central Africa**, the **Great Lakes** region and **Western Africa**.

As for **Sudan**, even if a positive development can be recorded in the eastern region, with the signature of the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement, peace is far from being attained. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), signed in 2005 between the Government and the SPLA/M is hampered by an internal Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SPLA/M) crisis and by the lack of real engagement by the Government. It is unfortunate that women and civil society members were largely excluded from the peace process – both during negotiation and implementation. In addition, the transitional government, sworn in according to a power-sharing agreement and composed of various commissions, includes few women.

In Darfur, the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), signed in May 2006 between the Government and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army, ends a 2-year negotiations mediation effort carried out by the AU. Civil society organisations such as the Sudanese Women Association in Nairobi (SWAN) and Sudanese Women's Voice of Peace (SWVP) have been active in promoting a common agenda for women in Sudan and training them to be more effective in the peace process. Thanks to the work of many women's organisations, along with Community Development Association, and thanks to the support of UNIFEM, the 7<sup>th</sup> round of talks, held in Abuja, has been more inclusive of women. These women – referred to as the Gender Expert Support Team – worked with official women delegates from all negotiating parties to develop a common position paper on gender equality.<sup>1</sup> Thus, women were identified not only as victims, but also as actors actively working and contributing towards finding a durable peace agreement. More recently, the UN SC Resolution 1706 (2006), adopted in August, recalls the UN SCR 1325 and calls upon the Government of National Unity to take urgent actions to tackle gender-based violence in Darfur, and to effectively implement the "Action Plan to Combat Violence Against Women in Darfur" formally launched in November 2005 by the Government.

The respect of human rights has been at the centre of attention of various bodies. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, in its recent 40<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session, held in November 2006, adopted the "Resolution on the Situation in Darfur", expressing its concern for the human rights violations perpetrated

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<sup>1</sup> "Women's Priorities in the Peace Process and Reconstruction in Darfur", document available at: <http://www.amis-sudan.org/gender2.html>

against civilian populations, as well as for the deterioration of the humanitarian situation. On December 13, the newly established UN Human Rights Council, during its fourth Special Session dedicated to Darfur, adopted a decision establishing a high-level mission to be sent to the Darfur region. Composed of five highly qualified persons, the mission has been requested to report to the Council on its findings, at its fourth regular session.<sup>2</sup> On that occasion, FAS made a statement denouncing the massive gender-based violence in the region and calling for the inclusion of gender expertise in the field mission. In addition, a parallel informal meeting has been organized by Amnesty International, International Federation of Human Rights Leagues and Human Rights Watch, entitled "Voices from Darfur: Relaying the Victims Account" in which several CSOs express their frustration about the continuing violence and the inability of the international community to actively intervene in defence of the civilian population.

Finally, during the recent Security Council Arria Formula Meeting hosted by the United Kingdom in November 2006, Ms Bineta Diop, Executive Director of FAS, read a statement on behalf of the Sudanese Women Peacebuilders. The document contained recommendations prepared by members of Sudanese women civil society and addressed to the Security Council delegation that visited Sudan in June 2006. The recommendations focused on three critical issues, namely, the adoption by the Sudanese Government of the Voluntary Work Act hampering the very existence of women's civil society organisations; the humanitarian situation, and in particular the urgency to put in place measures to combat violence against women through the investigation and prosecution of perpetrators; and finally, the voluntary return process. At the very heart is their demand for women's active participation in the decision making bodies established by the CPA and the DPA, but also their active participation in the Darfur Dialogue and Consultation process.<sup>3</sup>

Threats of other war crises continue. In spite of two peace agreements signed between **Chad** and Sudan to stop support to each other's rebel groups, the situation at the border remains very serious. A state of emergency was declared in November in Chad, and UN humanitarian agencies were evacuated due to security reasons, while an estimated 25,000 Chadian fled their homes, to be added to the estimated 200,000 Darfur refugees hosted in Chad. In addition, a rebellion in the northwestern region of the **Central African Republic** (CAR) emerged at the beginning of the year. Due to the low level of security, humanitarian agencies cannot operate there, leaving some 50,000 IDPs surviving on their own in the bush. The Government, after several civil society demonstrations and international pressure, recognized the seriousness of the internal situation and is now developing plans to stabilise the region and end the humanitarian crisis.<sup>4</sup> In fact, since 2003, the situation in the country has been relatively stable and the government has made strides towards consolidating peace. However, significant gaps in addressing the needs of women in the process of reconciliation remain an impediment to sustainable peace. Following the coup in late 2002 and the ensuing conflict, rape and other forms of gender-based violence were committed against women of CAR, mainly by members of the Movement for the Liberation of Congo. According to a report conducted by Amnesty International, "by July 2004 no one had been indicted in connection with the rapes that occurred in late 2002 and early 2003."<sup>5</sup> In its January 2006 report on the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, the CAR outlined a commitment to the protection of women but did not indicate concrete measures for implementation of this commitment, nor did it indicate its intention to sign or ratify the Protocol.<sup>6</sup>

With the exception of Djibouti, every country in the **Horn of Africa** has experienced armed conflict at some level in the past decade. Despite the regional dimensions of many of these conflicts, there has been limited activity to properly address the situation, as recently shown by Somali conflict where Ethiopia and Eritrea are backing opposing sides, thus continuing abroad their long-standing dispute. Women have a limited role in the public sphere due to traditional practices and cultural barriers, and efforts of women's organizations to increase their capacity to lobby for the participation in the peace process have failed: consequently, they have not participated in the formal peace process. To increase the capacity of women to lobby for the participation in the peace process in these countries, SC Resolution 1325 has been translated into Amharic. Women's Organizations have also been working to protect the interests of women in both countries. The Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA) is working to defend women's human rights and improve civil

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ohchr.org/english/press/hrc/index.htm>

<sup>3</sup> "Recommendations from Sudanese Women's Civil Society Organizations to the Security Council Delegation, 5-9 June 2006", document available at: [www.womenpeacesecurity.org](http://www.womenpeacesecurity.org)

<sup>4</sup> "[Silent crisis in northwest lingers](#)", IRIN, 7 June 2006

<sup>5</sup> Amnesty International: <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAFR190012004>

<sup>6</sup> [www.achpr.org/english/state\\_reports/car\\_state%20reports\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.achpr.org/english/state_reports/car_state%20reports_ENG.pdf)

society throughout Ethiopia, and the National Union of Eritrean Women has been working for over two decades to improve the status of women in Eritrea.

Women in **Somalia** have made important contributions to the peace process in the country despite continued threats to their safety and security. Somali women illustrated themselves through innovative mechanisms such as by the creation of a 6<sup>th</sup> clan to allow their participation in the peace talks in Djibouti, even though they were again marginalized in the 2002 peace conference in Kenya. Still, women's civil society organizations under the leadership of Save Somali Women and Children (SSWC), did not back down and in 2004, Asha Hagi Elmi signed the Nairobi Peace Accord on behalf of civil society.<sup>7</sup> Despite this accord, the peace process in Somalia has failed to produce peace and security in the country. Women's groups, along with other civil society and business groups, have played a prominent role in initiating and supporting pre-disarmament encampments in Mogadishu. They have also been successful in convincing militia leaders in both Mogadishu and Kismayo to dismantle a large number of checkpoints and improve the security environment in those cities to some degree.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, on February 23, 2006, the Foreign Affairs Minister of the Somali transitional Federal Government signed all remaining 17 treaties of the African Union that Somalia had not signed since the country has been in Civil War; in this regard Somalia became one of only four countries that have signed all the AU treaties.<sup>9</sup>

The Great Lakes region has been devastated by armed conflicts and humanitarian crises, the highest example represented by the genocide in Rwanda. To respond to them, in 2000 the UN Security Council called for a conference on peace, security, democracy, and development in the region with the aim of pushing African countries to find their own lasting solutions. From then on, a process started, involving all the leaders of the region and culminating with the adoption of the "Dar es Salaam Declaration on Peace, Security, Democracy, and Development in the Great Lakes region", signed in 2004 during the First International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (IC/GLR) Summit. The Declaration expresses the vision of the leaders to "transform the Great Lakes Region into a space of sustainable peace and security for states and peoples, political and social stability, shared growth, and development and cooperation". It is worthwhile stating that all stakeholders have been involved in the process – women, youth, and representatives from civil society and the private sector were invited to participate in the draft of the Programmes of Action and legal Protocols. Together with the Dar es Salam Declaration, they constitute now the "Pact of Security, Stability, and Development in the Great Lakes Region", endorsed by the Heads of State and Government during their second Summit in Nairobi 14th and 15th December 2006.<sup>10</sup>

In **Uganda**, the points at the centre of the recent Juba Peace Talks are essentially five: cessation of hostilities; inclusion of LRA in national political and social life;; the resettlement of the large population of internally displaced; a formal ceasefire; and the definition of a DDR programme for LRA ex-combatants. In August, a cessation of hostilities was signed. It was renewed in early November but was interrupted in late November.<sup>11</sup> ISIS-WICCE, a Ugandan organisation, has recently delivered a message to the Juba Peace Talks mediator, Dr Riek Machar, on behalf of the Uganda Women's Network (UWONET) which is supported by UNIFEM. The message stresses the efforts of Ugandan women in the peace process, but also raises the issue of women's representation at the peace table in order to ensure that the final agreement will include specific women's concerns. In fact, although Ugandan women Members of Parliament are acting as observers, women from conflict areas have had a marginal role so far.<sup>12</sup> But ISIS-WICCE has also been active in training women in Uganda on the use and implementation of SC Resolution 1325 to allow women to take a more active role in peacebuilding.

Another relevant attempt to solve the Northern crisis was carried out by Betty Bigombe, former government minister. Acting as chief mediator between the LRA and the Government, she received recognition from the government and the international community for her role as a mediator. Government actions to protect women and children in the north remain limited. During a recent trip to Uganda, the special representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Radhika Coomaraswamy indicated

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<sup>7</sup> FAS Case Study, June 2006

<sup>8</sup> WomenWarPeace: <http://www.womenwarpeace.org/somalia/somalia.htm>

<sup>9</sup> Pambazuka : <http://www.pambazuka.org/fr/petition/about.php>

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.icglr.org/F\\_END/events.asp](http://www.icglr.org/F_END/events.asp)

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=55747&SelectRegion=East\\_Africa&SelectCountry=UGANDA](http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=55747&SelectRegion=East_Africa&SelectCountry=UGANDA)

<sup>12</sup> "ISIS-WICCE delivers a message to the Juba Peace Talks Mediator, Dr. Riek Machar", document available at: <http://www.isis.or.ug/news.php?p=1&id=82>

that “there was a particular situation with vulnerable girls in northern Uganda relating to sexual exploitation and violence.”<sup>13</sup> Several international agencies and NGOs are on the ground in Uganda working to provide humanitarian assistance to the vulnerable populations in the camps. The Ugandan Government, however, recently passed a restrictive bill, raising concerns about tightening space for civil society engagement.

In **Burundi**, despite not having been invited to the Arusha peace talks (2001), women effectively lobbied and were recognized as permanent observers in the negotiations. As a result, 80% of their recommendations were incorporated in the Accords.<sup>14</sup> Still, only three out of twenty-nine members of the Arusha Agreement Implementation Monitoring Committee are women.<sup>15</sup> This small number of women overseeing the implementation of the peace agreement illustrates the government’s failure to implement the commitment to gender parity in national peace actions enshrined in the SDGEA and severely limits the role women can play in the peace process in the country. Civil Society and International organisations continue to be active in Burundi and are working to both protect and empower women in the process of post-conflict reconstruction. The United Nations mission in Burundi (MINUB) has a gender advisor and UNIFEM and OCHA are active in addressing gender-based violence in Burundi; the Collectif des associations et ONGs féminines du Burundi (CAFOB) works to unite women of Burundi under a common agenda. In addition, the UN Peacebuilding Commission has recently established a country-specific group aiming at bringing together major institutional actors (AU, UE, UN specialized agencies), civil society and bilateral donors.<sup>16</sup> Unfortunately, a deterioration of human rights and political pluralism has been recorded during the last months, including arrests and summary executions of opposition politicians and suspected members of the rebel group FNL.

In the **DRC**, although women were not initially invited to the Sun City talks in 2002, Women Partners for Peace in Africa (WOPPA), in partnership with FAS and UNIFEM, brought together a coalition of women in Nairobi prior to the talks, to train them in negotiation and help them develop a common agenda. The Nairobi conference resulted in the formation of the Congolese Women’s Caucus, which effectively lobbied for the inclusion of women at the peace table. Their lobbying efforts resulted in the inclusion of 25 women in the talks, not as delegates, but as experts.<sup>17</sup> Among the women’s achievements at the Sun City negotiations was the establishment of a Ministry of Family and Women’s Affairs. Women’s lobbying also contributed to the adoption of the principle of gender parity in article 14 of the Constitution of the transitional government. During the recent elections women made up only four of 33 presidential candidates; and of 9,060 parliamentary candidates, less than 15% are women. Despite these defaults in gender parity, third parties are working to ensure the participation of women in the electoral process. Eleven of the 21 members of the plenary assembly of the Independent Electoral Commission in the DRC are women.<sup>18</sup> Additionally, continued support from FAS and UNIFEM in the DRC has helped Congolese women to further identify priority needs and create a national platform called the Cadre Permanent de Concertation des Femmes Congolaises, that represents women’s branches from eleven provinces and elects their own national bureau and provincial branches. The UNDP Programme in the DRC has also developed a gender programme and is working with UNIFEM to ensure that women’s needs and contributions are incorporated into development projects in the country.

Finally, the country that has suffered the tragedy of the genocide, **Rwanda**, has now become a positive regional and continental example of women’s active contribution in post-conflict reconstruction. Women have played a critical role in the aftermath of the genocide of 1994. When the genocide ended in 1994, women made up over 70% of the society of Rwanda. The government of Rwanda has adopted a gender policy and has signed and ratified the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa. There is a ministry of Gender and Family Promotion in the government, as well as a woman chief justice of the Supreme Court, several women cabinet members, a woman head of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission and a woman deputy police chief. Furthermore, women make up 48% of the national legislature, the highest percentage in the world.<sup>19</sup> Women’s civil society groups and non-governmental organizations in Rwanda, such as Pro-Femmes and Federation of African Women Peace Networks (FERFAP), remain active in

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<sup>13</sup> [http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=53895&SelectRegion=East\\_Africa&SelectCountry=UGANDA](http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=53895&SelectRegion=East_Africa&SelectCountry=UGANDA)

<sup>14</sup> FAS Case Study, June 2006

<sup>15</sup> WomenWarPeace.org

<sup>16</sup> ICG Report, “Burundi: Democracy and Peace at Risk”, Africa Report n°120, 30 November 2006

<sup>17</sup> FAS Case Study, June 2006

<sup>18</sup> [www.sadcpf.org/documents/ Pre-Election%20Mission%20Statement.doc](http://www.sadcpf.org/documents/Pre-Election%20Mission%20Statement.doc)

<sup>19</sup> InterParliamentary Union, figures as of May 2006

promoting the domestication of these instruments, training women in peace building and ensuring the continued participation of women in the processes of reconstruction and reconciliation.

**Liberia** is slowly beginning the process of reconstruction, after the Accra Peace Agreement, which Theresa Leigh-Sherman signed, representing civil society. Women have played a critical role in this process. At the national level, a Ministry of Gender was created in 2003 and Ruth Perry served as President of the interim government in Liberia. In November 2005, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf became the first woman to be elected head of state in Africa, and women now hold key ministerial positions in the government. International organizations and NGOs have been active in promoting the effective participation of women in the post-conflict reconstruction process. The United Nations Mission in Liberia established a Gender Unit in 2003 that is very active. It provided technical expertise on how to integrate gender perspectives. Input to the Electoral Law was provided to ensure that special measures that will allow women's full and equal participation in the upcoming elections are integrated. Successful advocacy by the OGA, the Ministry of Gender and Development, and women's organizations has resulted in an electoral regulation calling for 30% representation of women in the selection of candidates. To ensure the implementation of the provision, the OGA has been involved in various meetings with relevant partners and stakeholders to work out strategies to enhance women's political leadership.

The MARWOPNET of Liberia has been internationally recognized for its contributions to peace building in the country. Founded in 2000 by women from Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia, it put forth an initiative to mediate the conflict and disagreement between Guinea and Liberia and dispatched a delegation to appeal to the feuding heads of states in the region believing that there would be no peace in Liberia without peace in the region. Other women's organizations, including the Liberia Women's Initiative and the Women in Peace Building Network (WIPNET) have also played key roles. Prior to the November 2005 elections, these groups were active in mobilizing women in the electorate and publicizing the list of women candidates, which was critical in advancing the role of women in the political sphere in the country. These and other local women's groups in Liberia, such as the National Women's Commission of Liberia (NAWOCAL), the Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL) and the Liberian Female Law Enforcers Association (LIFLEA) continue their work in "peace advocacy, micro-credit, skills training, trauma healing, advocacy on sexual and gender-based violence, legal advice and representation, leadership programmes, and research and activities relating to the reintegration of female ex-combatants".<sup>20</sup>

Like Liberia, **Sierra Leone** has only recently begun the process of reconstruction after nearly a decade of civil war. Although only two women were included in the peace talks in Lomé in 1999, women in Sierra Leone are making progress and beginning to gain more representation in government at the local and national levels and are involved in post-conflict reconstruction efforts. Currently, just over 14% of the seats in the national parliament are held by women.<sup>21</sup> In preparation for 2007 elections, Christina Thorpe was sworn in as the country's first female elections commissioner in May 2005.<sup>22</sup>

Despite these gains, the effects of the war on women of Sierra Leone have not been adequately addressed in post-conflict reconstruction efforts. According to the latest report of the Secretary General to the Security Council (April 2006), Sierra Leone has been making steady progress towards maintaining international standards on human rights. More specifically, there has been a consistent trend towards respect for women's rights. There has also been increased awareness among women themselves about their rights; and according to the report, women are now claiming their rights more than ever. However, the existence of poverty, illiteracy, discriminatory laws and other forms of gender based discrimination and practices still need to be addressed in order to further improve the prevailing condition of women. In particular, the economic empowerment of rural women is a key challenge towards improving women's situation country-wide. The Government of Sierra Leone is taking steps towards addressing some of these challenges: an example is the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission, where Ms Yasmin Jusu-Sheriff, member of FAS' board, serves as one of the five Commissioners.<sup>23</sup> In addition, with the assistance of UNICEF, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender, Women's and Children's Affairs "launched the Inter Ministerial Committee to boost the implementation of the anti-human trafficking legislation."<sup>24</sup> Civil society

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<sup>20</sup> [http://www.peacewomen.org/news/Liberia/Jan06/AWID\\_Sirleaf.html](http://www.peacewomen.org/news/Liberia/Jan06/AWID_Sirleaf.html)

<sup>21</sup> InterParliamentary Union, figures as of May 2006: <http://www.ipu.org>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.themercury.co.za/index.php?fSectionId=284&fArticleId=2524367>

<sup>23</sup> [http://standardtimespress.net/cgi-bin/artman/publish/article\\_285.shtml](http://standardtimespress.net/cgi-bin/artman/publish/article_285.shtml)

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.peacewomen.org/news/SierraLeone/news.html>

organizations, including MARWOPNET and Search for Common Ground have also been active in promoting the participation of women in the post-conflict reconstruction process, even using the power of the media.

In **Ivory Coast**, the conflict has severely threatened the security of women and children around the country. Despite this, the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire has not adequately included women: only one woman participated in the peace negotiations leading up to the Linas-Marcoussis agreement in 2003.<sup>25</sup> Since then, mediation by the AU has moved the peace process forward, but has not resulted in the formal inclusion of women in the process. Several women's groups are active, however, in promoting the participation of women in the democratic process. Nonetheless, the absence of mechanisms to unite them around a common agenda in order to overcome ethnic and regional lines is deplorable.

With tension still high, the UN SCR 1721, adopted on 1<sup>st</sup> November, backs AU's Peace and Security Council and ECOWAS suggestions to prolong the transitional period for 12 months, and to reinforce the Prime Minister's powers vis-à-vis those of the President. Appointed in December 2005 by African mediators, the Prime Minister is expected to speed up the peace process, in particular through the implementation of disarmament and dismantling militias programme, voter identification and the electoral process.<sup>26</sup>

In **Nigeria**, in the Niger Delta region — where dozens of oil workers have been kidnapped and pipelines have been attacked by the militant group MEND — the fragile security will adjoin the electoral violence ahead of the Presidential election scheduled for April 2007.

Nevertheless, there are some positive developments to be pointed out.

In **Angola**, a peace agreement was signed in August between the government and sectors of the Cabindan separatist movement, thus ending a long-standing conflict<sup>27</sup>. Moreover, in sight of 2007 general elections, the voter registration procedure has begun.

## PEACEKEEPING MISSION OPERATIONS IN AFRICA

The UN, the AU and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) — such Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) — are the principal actors operating to create sustainable peace and security in the region. Through peacekeeping operations, the AU and the UN — through the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) — are often the very first to deal with political and social stabilisation, not simply by force but also through a real political process based on strengthening the rule of law, supporting an electoral process, economic and social development and confidence-building measures. Thus, they are the first to operate in protecting and enabling women to play a more active role. Since 2000, this task has become mandatory under the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, thus Gender Units are an integral part of peacekeeping operation's structures. Currently, there are seven peacekeeping missions around the continent, five of them having a Gender Unit responsible for integrating a gender perspective in all policies, processes and activities. Where there is not a full-time Gender Advisor, Focal Points have been given additional gender-related responsibilities, which is the case of UNMEE and MINURSO.

In October, the UN Security Council Resolution 1719 (2006), stated the end of the current peacekeeping mission (**ONUB**) and established the UN Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB).<sup>28</sup> The BINUB will operate particularly in the development sector, coordinating the work of all UN Agencies, but following an explicit mention of the UN SCR 1325, the political affairs section will include a full-time Gender Unit.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, the ONUB Gender Unit has been active particularly providing training for military and civilian staff on gender issues. In collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Women's Welfare, several training sessions have been organised for potential women candidates, in order to improve their political and leadership skills.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> US Institute of Peace: [http://www.usip.org/library/pa/cote\\_divoire/cote\\_divoire\\_01242003en.html](http://www.usip.org/library/pa/cote_divoire/cote_divoire_01242003en.html)

<sup>26</sup> "AU hands down new peace blueprint", IRIN, 18 October 2006

<sup>27</sup> "Cabinda separatists ink ceasefire with Angola", Independent Online, 16 July 2006

<sup>28</sup> ICG Report N° 120, Burundi: Democracy and Peace at Risk, 30 November 2006

<sup>29</sup> UN SCR 1719 (2006)

<sup>30</sup> [http://www.unburundi.org/activities/gender\\_1.html](http://www.unburundi.org/activities/gender_1.html)

The UN Mission in Ivory Coast (**UNOCI**) Gender Unity, established in 2004, works on increasing women's participation in decision-making processes, particularly for including gender concerns in DDR programmes and in the preparation of the next elections. It has given its technical and financial support for the creation of a women's platform, bringing together and organising women's organisations for their effective and equitable participation in the electoral process.<sup>31</sup>

The UN Organization in DRC (**MONUC**) Gender Office works within and outside of the Mission — regular training sessions are given to mission personnel; and networks with civil society organisations are created.<sup>32</sup>

The United Nations Mission in Liberia (**UNMIL**) Office of Gender Advisor (OGA) is engaged in different areas such as gender mainstreaming in the DDR and electoral processes, the rule of law, sexual and gender-based violence. Concerning the DDR issue, its advocacy efforts have succeeded in the adoption of the term Women Associated with the Fighting Forces (WAFFs), a broader definition encompassing and recognising all roles women played during armed conflict, not only their role as combatants. In collaboration with the Ministry of Gender and Development and women's organisations, it resulted in the adoption of an electoral regulation requiring 30% of women's representation in the selection of candidates.<sup>33</sup>

Originally established for supporting the implementation of the CPA, the UN Mission in Sudan (**UNMIS**) also supports the implementation of the DPA. Its Gender Office Unit, currently composed of six full-time officers, will open nine offices around the country, Darfur included. Amongst its tasks, there is the development of a gender action plan addressing the high rate of sexual and gender-based violence.<sup>34</sup> In addition, the AU Mission in Sudan (**AMIS**) Gender component has identified six elements to be prioritized in its work: women's participation in the Inter-Sudanese Peace Talks on the Conflict on Darfur; the inclusion of women's concerns and suggestions in the DPA; increase women's participation in the Darfur-Drafur Dialogue and Consultation; implementation of gender-related provisions of the DPA; coordination and harmonization of all gender-related activities; and technical support for AMIS operations in Darfur.<sup>35</sup>

On 1 January 2006, the UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (**UNIOSIL**) replaced the former UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). Different from the former UNAMSIL, it is a peace building mission aiming to consolidate peace efforts and the preparation of elections. It is, however, directed and supported by the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO).

## **IDPs AND REFUGEES**

Civilian population is the first victim of armed conflict. Their attempt to escape the burden of such outbreak is at the origin of large masses of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), the difference between them being if they cross or not state borders. Among the 23.7 million Internally Displaced Persons around the world, 12.1 million are in Africa, with West Africa as the most affected region in the continent.<sup>36</sup> Internal displacement is a complex phenomenon that can affect neighbouring countries, if not adequately treated — that is, it can be at once cause and consequence of internal and regional instability.

Several actors are involved: national governments, regional and international organisations, as well as civil society. Their work has to meet the non-binding Guiding Principles on Internal displacement, elaborated by the Commission on Human Rights in 1998. Several African countries have adopted them at the national level, at times incorporating them into domestic legislation as Angola did in 2001, one year before the end of the conflict, with the adoption of the Norms for the Resettlement of Displaced Populations.

In 2004, Nigeria established a National Presidential Committee on IDPs grouping together representatives of different institutions and several national agencies. Its main tasks are the coordination of actors and the elaboration of national policy. The recent draft of the National Policy shows the comprehensive approach used. Other countries, such as Liberia, Burundi and Uganda specifically mention them in national laws and policies.

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<sup>31</sup> <http://www.onuci.org/genre.html>

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.monuc.org/news.aspx?newsID=728>

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.unmil.org/content.asp?ccat=gender>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.unmis.org/english/gender.htm>

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.amis-sudan.org/gender2.html>

<sup>36</sup> International Displacement Monitoring Centre: <http://www.internal-displacement.org/>

If the engagement of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is well known and consolidated in the refugees' field, it is only recently that it has extended its mandate in order to include the protection of IDPs, since then partly carried out by the International Committee of the Red Cross (as guardian of the Geneva Conventions). In fact, in 2005 after a wide debate focusing on the international community's failure to appropriately address needs and expectations of this large part of the civilian population, a comprehensive agreement was reached. It gives the UNHCR the lead responsibility to protect them.<sup>37</sup>

The engagement of civil society organisations is broad, often filling the gap created by states' weaknesses. NGOs played a vital role in Ivory Coast, where the ID population escaped to remote areas, difficult to reach and where their identification was difficult because they were hosted by local communities.. Civil society organisations carried out various activities, such as providing shelter or starting identification procedures, and thus developing capacities and skills that should not be underestimated. Moreover, the example of the West African Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons Network (WARIPNET) shows us how they are able to share their achievements and skills through their traditional networks, thus enlarging the number of actors able to cope with the issue.

Displaced women face two basic challenges: gender-based violence and equal access to services and participation in assistance programmes. Gender-based violence is the result of the breakdown of social order and its consequences on familial structures and relations, on traditional means of subsistence and on traditional sexual standards and practices. Violence is usually perpetrated inside the camps, even though women in Uganda and in Sudan were recently raped outside, while they were collecting firewood and grass.<sup>38</sup> Perpetrators are armed forces (including several cases with peacekeepers involved), criminals and private citizens.<sup>39</sup> Although there is a general attitude of impunity, some countries have adopted law and procedures to investigate and punish this crime - it is the case in Liberia and in Sudan, where the government in 2005 established a state committee on combating gender-based violence in southern Darfur. Here, rape and sexual violence have specifically been used to terrorize and displace rural communities. Amnesty International reports that rape is being used as a weapon of terror and "ethnic cleansing" - some women have been raped in front of their relatives, and other women have been forced into sexual slavery. Even after fleeing Darfur, women and girls in the refugee camps are still being raped and assaulted by civilians or militia members when collecting water, fuel or animal fodder. These high levels of rape have led to severe health consequences, including a risk of increased transmission of HIV/AIDS, physical injuries, and severe emotional trauma. Women's access to medical treatment is curtailed by cultural norms that stigmatize women who have been raped, discouraging them from seeking medical care. However, even if women do seek medical attention, clinics often lack the resources to provide necessary services, such as rape kits and emergency contraception. Sudanese law (Article 48) prevents doctors from treating rape victims with the 'morning after' pill without a referral from the police department. Doctors and health personnel can be arrested for violating this law; some have even been threatened in order to prevent them from providing these services.<sup>40</sup>

Nevertheless, rapes committed in the DRC, Sudan and Uganda are part of the cases investigated by the ICC as war crimes.<sup>41</sup> Regarding the access to reproductive health services, the main obstacles are the lack of healthcare infrastructures and insecurity, as well as prohibitive fees. Consequently, women often use traditional health caretakers.

Although the phenomenon is widespread through the entire continent, sometimes - due to natural disasters such as floods - special attention must be paid to specific countries.

In the **Horn of Africa**, the Eritrean government has started a programme for the resettlement of IDPs originating from the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ), one of the most fertile areas of the country. Unfortunately, there is no information about living conditions there, particularly about the presence of landmines. However, the still pending dispute with Ethiopia leaves about 40,000 persons unable to return home, as the issue is strictly linked to the political solution of the border dispute. Eritrea has recently

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<sup>37</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/protect/3b84c7e23.html>

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.womenwarpeace.org/sudan/sudan.htm>

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.internal->

[displacement.org/8025708F004D404D/\(httpPages\)/953DF04611AD1A88802570A10046397B?OpenDocument](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004D404D/(httpPages)/953DF04611AD1A88802570A10046397B?OpenDocument)

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.now.org/issues/global/080105darfur.html>

<sup>41</sup> Ibidem

decided to expel international NGOs and to block the UNMEE monitoring operations. In Ethiopia, only those officially recognized can be included in the government food-for-work programme.<sup>42</sup> There, a specific legislation approved in 2004, with the support of UNHCR, tries to cope with the high number of refugees originating from different neighbouring countries. As a consequence of floods and political circumstances, Somalia contributes to increasing the regional number of IDPs.

**Sudan** has an estimated 5 million IDP population, 1.8 million of them coming from Darfur. The signing of the CPA has allowed some of the IDP population to return home, however, the overwhelming majority of the 1.2 million IDPs who have returned since then, have not received international support. A big obstacle for a large-scale return foreseen by the UN and other international organizations is the lack of infrastructures and security conditions, particularly relating to the presence of landmines. In IDP camps in Darfur and Chad, sexual violence is an almost rampant problem. The need for investigation of reported cases of sexual abuse and rape and for strong actions to be taken against the perpetrators is urgent.<sup>43</sup>

In the **DRC** After the establishment of a power-sharing transitional government, most of the 3.4 million IDPs were reported to have returned home. However, the UN estimated that at least 1.48 million people remained displaced as of August 2006.

**Uganda** has an IDP population of about 1.7 million, mostly concentrated in the northern regions. In July 2005, a Ministry of Health survey revealed a high mortality rate in IDPs camps, but the government disputed these results. Recently, an emergency action plan has been prepared for the return of IDPs to their villages. The plan intends to move the displaced from large camps to smaller ones that are closer to their villages.<sup>44</sup>

In **Ivory Coast** the situation of some 750,000 IDPs is critical, especially in the northern and western regions, where access to basic social services is limited. Despite the government's commitment - through the assignment of focal points in the Ministry of Solidarity and War Victims, and the drafting of an IDP Action Plan - only a really functioning peace process can solve the issue once and for all.

In **Liberia**, although the IDPs return programme was officially closed in April 2006, some 28,000 IDPs remain in former camps. Those who have returned sometimes face the lack of basic social services or livelihood opportunities. There are serious concerns regarding sexual and gender-based violence, as well as violence stemming from disputes over land and property ownership - as Liberian law doesn't recognize the right to inherit land for those women who have been married in a traditional ceremony.

In Zimbabwe, the so-called Operation Restore Order, initiated in May 2005, has resulted in large-scale internal displacement, touching some 570,000 persons. They are currently living in transit camps where they receive limited assistance. In December 2005, the AU Commission on Human and People's Rights condemned the operation and expressed concern over the continuing violations and the deterioration of the human rights situation. President Mugabe was urged to allow an African Union delegation for a fact-find mission.

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<sup>42</sup> [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpCountries\)/2CC10DD018E56104802570A7004B304F?OpenDocument&expand=2.1&link=18.2.1&count=10000#18.2.1](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpCountries)/2CC10DD018E56104802570A7004B304F?OpenDocument&expand=2.1&link=18.2.1&count=10000#18.2.1)

<sup>43</sup> Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Situation in Darfur, presented at the 63<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the the African Union Peace and Security Council held in New York, on September, 18 2006

<sup>44</sup> [http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=55348&SelectRegion=East\\_Africa&SelectCountry=UGANDA](http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=55348&SelectRegion=East_Africa&SelectCountry=UGANDA)

## WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PEACE PROCESSES

Peace processes can be seen as starting points for rebuilding the social fabric of society. As every building exercise, the first stage is the most important, as it sets the basis upon which everything will depend, mainly future stability of the social construction. A social fabric cannot be stable if it refuses to include half of its constituency; i.e., women. It is not a matter of numerical inclusion, but rather of women's effective and active participation in each and every stage of the process, from peace talks to their implementation. Several past examples of male-dominated peace processes, that were blind to women's needs and expectations, resulted in failure societies where women's exclusion is the symptom of a general closure towards civil society. Unfortunately, lessons from the past have not been learned. Moreover, the inclusion of women in peace processes is not a question of numbers. They bring an added-value to the process. Women represent diverse societies that are able to agree around a common agenda, based on their experiences during conflict, and they can draft a strategy for the future.

In **Burundi**, despite women playing an important role during the Arusha Accords in 2000 and the incorporation of their recommendations in the Final Accord, their participation in the Arusha Agreement Implementation Monitoring Committee is only three out of 29. During the recent ceasefire agreement with the FNL rebel group, the eight-member delegation includes only one woman. A positive trend is noted as the Constitution calls for 30% of Parliamentary seats for women and in 2003 the National Policy on Gender was adopted. Of the 1000 women around the world nominated for the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize, ten were from Burundi.

In **Ivory Coast**, only one woman participated in the Linas-Marcoussis peace agreement in 2003, The situation has not improved. Although the Constitution is not discriminatory in law, the security situation and the traditional patriarchal power's structure render their participation and mobilization more difficult. Nevertheless, the recent Security Council Resolution 1721 "encourages the Prime Minister to seek, as appropriate, the active involvement of civil society in moving the peace process forward". It also urges all relevant actors "to take into account the rights and resources of women and of gender considerations as set out in resolution 1325 (2000) as cross-cutting issues in the implementation of the peace process including through the consultation with local and international women's groups".<sup>45</sup>

In the **DRC**, the Sun City talks testify a positive example of women's mobilization. After a training session held in Nairobi on negotiation procedures and the subsequent formation of the Congolese Women's Caucus, they succeeded in including women at the negotiation table not as delegates, but as experts<sup>46</sup>. The major achievement was the adoption of the principle of gender parity in the Constitution of the transitional government (Art. 14), but there is still much to be done. During the recent elections, women made up only four of 33 presidential candidates; and of 9,060 parliamentary candidates, less than 15% are women.

**Somali** women have played an active role in the peace negotiation process ending with the signing of the 2004 peace accords and the formation of a Transitional Federal Government (TFG), based in Baidoa in 2004. As Somali society is divided along tribal line, they created a 6<sup>th</sup> Clan, the so-called Somali Women's Clan, to allow their participation in the process. In the 2004 peace conference held in Nairobi, Asha Almi, President of Save Somali Women and Children (SSWC) and current member of the Parliament of TFG, signed the Nairobi Peace Accord on behalf of the civil society.

In **Sudan**, not only have women and civil society been largely excluded in the peace negotiations that ended with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005; but their participation in its implementation is very low. Several commissions were established, amongst them the Constitutional Review Commission. After pressure from donors, a small number of women were admitted to this Commission. Furthermore, only five out of 74 ministerial posts have been assigned to women.<sup>47</sup> Women have been excluded in the Darfur peace process as well. Because of the intervention of the AU and the international community, the way for women's inclusion has now been paved. Fifteen women were selected by their peers to attend the Abuja negotiations to press for the advancement of gender issues. Unfortunately, there are no

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<sup>45</sup> UN SCR 1721 (2006)

<sup>46</sup> Women Partners for Peace in Africa (WOPPA), in partnership with FAS and UNIFEM, brought together a coalition of women in Nairobi prior to the talk to train them. The continued support of FAS and UNIFEM, has brought to the creation of a national platform called Cadre de Concertation des Femmes Congolaises, representing women branches from 11 provinces.

<sup>47</sup> UNIFEM: [http://www.unifem.org/news\\_events/story\\_detail.php?StoryID=316](http://www.unifem.org/news_events/story_detail.php?StoryID=316)

guarantees for their implementation, nor quotas established for women's participation.<sup>48</sup> A humanitarian organisation, Sudanese Women's Voice for Peace (SWVP), established in 1994 by exiled Sudanese women living in Nairobi, is turning its attention to the situation in southern Sudan, and in particular, the exclusion of women from current processes and their protection with a focus on gender sensitivity in armed conflict. Aimed at promoting human and women's rights, peace and justice for women and children through peace building and advocacy in Sudan, SWVP is now responding to current challenges by fostering dialogue, mapping and sharing information, conducting consultations among military forces, and enhancing their capacity to take needed action.

## WOMEN'S ROLE IN POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION

The signing of peace agreements sets in motion a long-term process aimed to establish and consolidate political and social order. Among the main challenges women face, there is the implementation of the agenda they have developed — the question is often strictly linked with the unity of the women's movement. Once the urgency of the war passes, they often begin to divide along party or ethnic lines, thus losing their strategic strength. This has, for example, been witnessed in Burundi. Among several actions that must be taken, the Disarmament, Demobilization and Repatriation programmes, and political participation should be analyzed through a 'gender lens'.

### *DDR Programmes*

Conceived to build social cohesion, to sustain peace and reconciliation, the Disarmament, Demobilization and Repatriation (DDR) programmes more often deal only with the military and political dimensions. However, within a gender-based perspective, the interest in DDR programmes is two-fold: former combatants remain armed; violent crimes including rape and other forms of sexual abuse continue, even after the signing of peace accords; and yet, on the other hand, women and girls may experience military life either as active combatants or as military cooks or sexual slaves. Therefore, a new notion of combatants should be elaborated, rejecting the common formula "one man, one weapon", setting aside the image of women as an exclusively vulnerable group, and including them in the DDR programmes.

Women in **Rwanda** played a significant role during the conflict. They could be counted as a small portion of the combatants, and also they carried out tasks including mobilizing funds for military, encouraging men to fight, and working within the military administration. After the conflict, an institutionalized process was set up to downsize troops — the Rwandan Demobilization and Reintegration Process (RDRP). The RDRP was implemented under the auspices of the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC). Interviews of women ex-combatants show them as disciplined and peaceful women. They are often called upon to resolve disputes. Currently, approximately 35 % of the Gacaca judges countrywide are women.<sup>49</sup> The Ndabaga Association is an NGO created for female ex-combatants, which represents 443 members from all different fighting forces. Having joined fighting forces at a very young age, many of them have not been educated and are now among the poorest in their countries. The situation of women in Rwanda is exceptional, not only because it is the result of exceptional violence, but also as a testimony to the value that women bring to politics.

In **Liberia**, OGA's advocacy resulted in the adoption of the term Women Associated with the Fighting Forces (WAFFs) rather than camp followers. WAFFs is a broader definition of women ex-combatants to include not only active fighters but also women who supported the fighters in any other role such as cooks, sex slaves, etc. Consequently, several assessment missions and sensitisation campaigns produced the disarmament and demobilization of 21,086 women.<sup>50</sup>

These, however, are exceptional cases standing beside a long list of failures.

In **Sierra Leone**, the Lomé Peace Accords does not refer to female combatants, who account for 12% of the total forces, according to calculations of the National Commission for DDR (NCDRR). Accordingly, DDR programmes did not adequately address the needs of women and girls. Small Girls Units (SGU) were usually used for scouting and pillaging villages. They were also dispatched (as Small Boys Units) to commit the worst atrocities. On the contrary, women and girls were "over-classified" as followers, slaves, domestics, etc.

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<sup>48</sup> <http://www.womenwarpeace.org/sudan/docs/sgreptos30jan06.pdf>

<sup>49</sup> [http://www.peacewomen.org/news/Rwanda/Apr06/Women\\_Peacemakers.html](http://www.peacewomen.org/news/Rwanda/Apr06/Women_Peacemakers.html)

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.unmil.org/content.asp?ccat=gender>

The disarmament and reintegration of combatants is also a serious concern in **Burundi**. In April 2005, the UN Mission in Burundi reported that 7,282 former combatants had been disarmed so far and reintegrated into society, 6,315 of whom were men, 328 women and 639 children.<sup>51</sup> These numbers and the continued threats to the security of women in Burundi indicate that it remains a significant gap in the empowerment of women in peacebuilding and reconstruction activities in Burundi.

Disarmament programmes have not effectively addressed the needs of women and girls in **DRC** as well. A study conducted by the Save the Children in 2005, shows that girls make up to 40 % of all children associated with armed groups. Yet, less than 2 percent of children who come to reintegration programmes and interim care centres in the DRC are girls, leaving about 12,500 girls in armed groups.<sup>52</sup>

### Women's political participation

The legacy of the genocide has had a strong impact on **Rwandan** women. They have now a central role not only because they are 54% of the adult population, but also because they are recognised as leading force in the reconstruction process. Several innovative mechanisms have been created in order to enable their participation in leadership structures: the 2003 Constitution, for example, requires 30% quotas for women's representation in political decision making posts and set aside 30% of seats in the Lower House for women emerging from a women-only voting system. Therefore, its National Assembly has the highest percentage of women in the world.<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, the most important result they achieved is the overcome of the ethnic lines that were at the heart of the genocide: the Forum of Parliamentarian Women is the first cross-party in Parliament. After the genocide, women's NGOs tried to fill the vacuum, providing the population with a range of services to the population under a multi-ethnic umbrella organisation Pro-Femme/Twese Hamwe, established in 1992. Now, it coordinates more than 40 women's NGOs. They have organized consultations with the local population, their grassroots members, advised the government on issues of women in democracy, and promoted reconciliation through the Action Campaign for Peace initiative that requires all member NGOs to have a peace platform and programmes to promote peace and reconciliation. They set up a process for civil society's participation in the ratification of the new constitution, through a consultation process at with its NGOs members and women at the grassroots level.

In **Ivory Coast** there is an increasing structured mobilisation for peace and women's participation. The Coalition des Femmes leaders, the Plate Forme des Femmes pour gagner, the Organisation des femmes Citoyennes, the Association des femmes jurists, the Femmes d'Ebournie pour la paix, have been very active in mobilizing and sensitizing public opinion about peace and electoral processes. In the past, a women delegation, collected in the Plate Forme de la Société Civile, went to Accra in 2005 to advocate for women political participation and in particular for giving them at least 30% of seats. Nevertheless, women are facing 2 challenges: first, their mobilization is limited to Abidjan area; secondly, it is necessary to create a women national caucus requiring a common advocacy strategy. Thus, only the electoral process is open to women participation and it is there they have to play a more active role.

In **Liberia**, women's tireless efforts, rewarded in 2005 with the election of President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, have recently resulted in an electoral regulation requiring 30% representation of women in selection of candidates: in order to obtain it, women's organisations worked in partnership with the Office of Gender Advisor and the Ministry of Gender and Development.<sup>54</sup> Moreover, OGA is engaged in training potential women candidates on public speaking, advocacy and resource mobilization; in supporting women elected in Parliament and training political parties on how to accede to the electoral regulation to prevent women from being marginalized from decision-making position in party selections.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, international organisations and NGOs have been active in promoting the effective participation of women in the post-conflict reconstruction process in Liberia. The MARWOPNET of Liberia has been internationally recognized for its contributions to Peacebuilding in the country. Other women's organisations, including the Liberia Women's Initiative and the Women in Peace Building Network (WIPNET) have also played key roles in training and mobilization of women in Liberia. Prior to the November 2005 elections, these groups were active in mobilizing women in the electorate and publicizing the list of women candidates, which was critical in advancing the role of women in the political sphere in the country. These associations continue their efforts

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<sup>51</sup> WomenWarPeace.org

<sup>52</sup> [http://www.womenwarpeace.org/drc/docs/drc\\_pfv.pdf](http://www.womenwarpeace.org/drc/docs/drc_pfv.pdf)

<sup>53</sup> InterParliamentary Union, figures as of October 2006.

<sup>54</sup> [www.unmil.org/content.asp?ccat=gender](http://www.unmil.org/content.asp?ccat=gender)

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.unmil.org/content.asp?ccat=gender>

in "peace advocacy, micro-credit, skills training, trauma healing, advocacy on sexual and gender-based violence, legal advice and representation, leadership programmes, and research and activities relating to the reintegration of female ex-combatants".<sup>56</sup>

Although only 2 women participated in the Lomé Peace negotiation in 1999, the following peace accord explicitly recognize their sufferences and recommends a full inclusion of women in the peacebuilding process "to enable them to play a central role in the moral, social and physical reconstruction of **Sierra Leone**".<sup>57</sup> They are currently beginning to gain more representation in government, both at local and national levels. An example is the appointment of Christina Thorpe in the Electoral Commission, in sight of 2007 elections. The Government is trying to establish the National Human Rights Commission. In addition, with the assistance of UNICEF, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender, Women's and Children's Affairs "launched the Inter Ministerial Committee to boost the implementation of the anti-human trafficking legislation."<sup>58</sup> The Network of Women Ministers and Parliamentarians (NEWMAP) in Sierra Leone is making significant strides to improve the welfare and status of women in the country: they are also currently collaborating with the Mano River Peace Network (MARWOPNET) that involves Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea.<sup>59</sup>

Excluded from the peace process culminated in the signing of the Lusaka Accord, in 2002, **Angolan** women are still facing high marginalization in political life. They cover only 15% of the National Assembly elected in 2002 and, as recently pointed out by the National Director for Women's Rights, they are under-represented in decision-making bodies: only 2 Ministerial Department are chaired by women, out of 29; and among the 45 deputy minister post, only 10 are occupied by women.<sup>60</sup> In July 2006, the Ministry of Family and Promotion of Women (Minfam) promoted a two-days seminar for discussing and analysing the UN CEDAW. The event has seen the participation of representatives of political parties, female wings, religious organisation, civic association, NGOs.<sup>61</sup>

## EVALUATION OF CSOs TARGETS, ACTIONS, AND INDICATORS

### Targets:

- ✓ *A group of women mediators and Special Envoys and representatives is established for an effective and equal participation in peace processes*

| <b>Country or Region</b>     | <b>Civil Society Organisation</b>                               |
|------------------------------|---|
| Burundi                      | Collectif des Associations et ONGs Feminines du Burundi (CAFOB) |
| Democratic Republic of Congo | Cadre Permanent de Concertation de la Femme Congolaise (CAFCCO) |
| Mano River region            | Mano River Women's Peace Network (MARWOPNET)                    |
| Somalia                      | Save Somali Women and Children (SSWC)                           |

- ✓ *Partnership between the AU Peace and Security Council and Civil Society.*  
UNIFEM and the Gender Directorate have built this partnership.
- ✓ *The Resolution 1325 (2000) of the UN Security Council is popularized among grassroots populations*  
Several efforts have been put in place for popularize Resolution 1325 (2000). In states where the UN Peacekeeping mission has a Gender Unit, popularization is strongly carried out by them. Otherwise, CSOs have a great role.

As popularization means sometimes facilitate the comprehension of the document, translation in local languages is essential. Up to now, Resolution 1325 has been translated into the following African languages: Fongbe (Benin), Amharic (Ethiopia), Hausa, Ibo, Ijaw, Tiv and Yoruba (Nigeria),

<sup>56</sup> [http://www.peacewomen.org/news/Liberia/Jan06/AWID\\_Sirleaf.html](http://www.peacewomen.org/news/Liberia/Jan06/AWID_Sirleaf.html)

<sup>57</sup> [http://womenwarpeace.org/sierra\\_leone/sierra\\_leone.htm](http://womenwarpeace.org/sierra_leone/sierra_leone.htm)

<sup>58</sup> Ibid

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.peacewomen.org/news/SierraLeone/July05/NEWMAP.html>

<sup>60</sup> <http://all'africa.com/stories/200610200281.html>

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.angolapress-angop.ao/noticia-e.asp?ID=458033>

Ciluba, Kikongo, Kiswahili, Lingala (DRC), Wolof, Diola (Senegal), Shona (Zimbabwe), Ndebele (South Africa and Zimbabwe), Kirundi and Kinyarwanda (Rwanda, Burundi), Swahili, Somali.

✓ *Public awareness on humanitarian laws is increased*

The International Committee of the Red Cross, the guardian of the main humanitarian laws, conducted a study entitled "Women Facing War". The challenge now is how to put this tool to use.

Actions

✓ *Organize training for women peace builders and peacekeeping forces*

Training of peacekeeping forces is part of the mandate of Peacekeeping Gender Units: they organize training sessions for military, police and civilian personnel in order to make them ready to initiate activities integrating the gender approach in their areas of activities.

Moreover, CSOs have organized several training programmes; among the most recent there are:

- "Short course on Gender and Peacebuilding", held in Senegal, 16-21 July 2006: FAS in partnership with University for Peace (UPEACE) organized this first workshop attended by practitioners, researchers and individuals from institutes, regional and international organisations and CSOs in order to broaden their skills of gender and peacebuilding. Through workshops, lectures, discussions and field visits, the short course intended to discuss specific aspects of gender and peacebuilding; analyse gender relations during peace and conflict; empower women as actors of change.
- "Gender Equity in the Defence Forces in the SADC Region", held in Johannesburg, 27-29 November 2006: it was organized by the Chief Director Transformation Management of the South African Department of Defence in collaboration with SaferAfrica. This 5<sup>th</sup> African Women's Peace Table Seminar brought together approximately 120 representatives of the Department of Defence and members of armed forces from other SADC member states. The overall objective was to facilitate the alignment of national policies and practice on gender equity with regional standards and benchmarks. The outcome of the seminar was a comprehensive action plan that outlined a broad range of activities aimed at accelerating gender mainstreaming in the defence forces and enhancing regional cohesion in the promotion of gender equity across SADC countries.

✓ *Develop a comparative database on gender participation in peace processes at national and regional levels*

Within its "10 Years of Best Practices Study", FAS included a Leadership Bank section, for showcasing leadership roles played by women in organisations or as individuals in the peace, political and economic advancement processes. Drawing from personal stories of women, the study analyses and portrays the challenges and successes of women's leadership in their efforts to transform conflict and sustain peace in conflict-ridden zones.

✓ *Organize advocacy visits to appropriate governance institutions in order to increase women's participation in peace processes*

In an effort to enhance the role of women from the DRC in the process of peace in their nation, in general, and to support their effective participation in the inter-Congolese Dialogue, in particular, a delegation composed of eminent African women members of the AWCPD as well as members of FAS, participated in a mission of peace and solidarity to the DRC in December 2001. Led by Ms Ruth Sando Perry with the African Women's Development Committee for Peace and Development (AWCPD) and supported by UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR and UNESCO, the mission gave visibility to the grassroots initiatives of Congolese women, helping them to draft their agenda in preparation for the elections.

In February 2004, a delegation of FAS members visited the three countries of the Great Lakes region, the DRC, Rwanda and Burundi in the context of the International Conference on the Great Lakes jointly organized by the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN). Serving as a follow-up to the different activities initiated in the Great Lakes region, the delegation visited FAS members and partners in the field including the Collectif des Associations et Organisations Féminines du Burundi (CAFOB) in Burundi and ProFemmes in Rwanda to assess the level of women's participation in regional initiatives such as the AU/UN International Conference on the Great Lakes. It also

allowed for an overall assessment of their needs and priorities. Consequently, FAS was able to support CAFOB's preparation and participation in the AU/UN Conference.

- ✓ Share best practices and success stories of women in peace building and conflict resolutions  
"Women's Peace Movement for Peace and Security in Africa: 10 years of practice": a FAS publication, this study outlines how peace processes have been positively engendered using a multi-faceted strategy inclusive of peace and solidarity missions; training sessions in the realm of capacity building and democracy and, finally, advocacy efforts.

From the various activities implemented by Isis-WICCE, many experiences and much knowledge and literature have been generated. This information is packaged in numerous forms of publications and disseminated to diverse activists, researchers, policy makers, academic and research institutions, and development partners at the national, regional and international levels. The regular publications include Women's World/Mondes Des Femmes, Women's Peace Monitor, and Impact Magazine. Other publications include research reports, training reports, position papers and advocacy materials.<sup>62</sup>

#### Indicators:

- ✓ Number of women appointed as Special envoys, Representatives and Rapporteurs for the AU on prevention, resolution, management of conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction  
Mrs. Angela Melo serves as Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa
- ✓ Number of women appointed as head of peace negotiators by 2007  
There are no African Union initiatives for appointment of women peace negotiators; however, the initiative of Ms Betty Bigombe, chief mediator in 2005 between LRA and the Government of Uganda must be recognized.
- ✓ Increased level of gender parity and participation reflected at the national and regional initiatives, dialogues and actions on peace
- ✓ Inclusion of Gender Unit in Peacekeeping Missions  
African Union Mission In Sudan (AMIS) has a Gender Senior Advisor.  
Five of eight UN peacekeeping missions around the continent have a Gender Unit.

#### **FINAL REMARK**

The present report has been prepared by the civil society according its monitoring framework. A particular attention has been placed on civil society initiatives in the realm of peace and security but the engagement of Member States is the ultimate target, as they have the most of the responsibility in implementing the SDGEA.

This civil society monitoring exercise comprise even their engagement in reporting about the DEGEA, as agreed in the Guidelines for Reporting adopted in 2005. Nevertheless, up to now only 9 states have presented their report. Among them, seven states have reported about Peace and Security: Algeria and Ethiopia have not treated the issue in their report. This is worrying particularly considering the Ethiopian involvement in the dispute with Eritrea and its recent escalation. Moreover, the other states have been not exhaustive in their reports, and more generally, they have not complied with the agreed Guidelines for Reporting.

Reports on Peace and Security have listed constitutional and legal framework, but anything has been said about "practical measures taken to ensure effective implementation of instruments and policies that promote women's empowerment and the protection of women's rights [...], information about national institutions or machineries that exercise responsibility[...], the factual and practical situation[...], measures taken to implement each operative paragraph [...], any constraints, restrictions or limitations[...]"<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> <http://www.isis.or.ug/publications.php>

<sup>63</sup> "Guidelines for Reporting on the AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa", adopted at The First African Union Conference of Ministers Responsible for Women and Gender, Dakar, Senegal, 12-15 October 2005

Finally, no African countries have developed a National Action Plan for the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Security Council Resolution 1325 and other international mechanisms, including the SDGEA must be domesticated and countries should develop National Actions Plans to implement these mechanisms and ensure the participation of women in conflict prevention, management and resolution processes and in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding activities
- Early action mechanisms must be put into place that promote the participation of women in conflict prevention and management activities in these countries
- Governments, international and regional bodies and NGOs must work to ensure that the needs and contributions of women are included in the processes of post-conflict reconstruction to promote sustainable development and lasting peace
- Further efforts must be made to establish a partnership with the AU Peace and Security Council and to ensure that more women are appointed as Envoys, Representatives, Rapporteurs and head peace negotiators
- Inclusion of women's need in DDR programmes, in particular by a revision of the consolidated formula "one man, one gun" and the inclusion of combatant associates and followers.
- Ensure impunity for gender-based violence committed during conflict and post-conflict situations, through the adoption of appropriate legislation, its timely application and the creation of special Police Unit.
- Ensure protection and empowerment of internally displaced women: Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement should be promoted and taken into account by all stakeholders involved, that is, national governments, peacekeepers operations and civil society organisations.
- Ensure active women's participation in peace processes and commissions established for dealing with its implementation;

# THE AFRICAN CENTRE FOR THE CONSTRUCTIVE RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES (ACCORD)

## CONTRIBUTION TO SHADOW REPORT ON SDGEA

### I. TRAINING WORKSHOPS HELD FOR AFRICAN WOMEN PEACEBUILDERS AND PEACEKEEPERS

#### *a) Examples of Workshops held for African Women Peace builders*

- **Conflict Mediation Training for Women Leaders in Bujumbura - July 2004**

ACCORD's Burundi Programme hosted a three-day conflict mediation workshop for Women Leaders in Burundi in July 2004. Participants included the Office of the President, Vice President, Ministry of Women's Affairs, President of the Constitutional Court, Members of Parliament, leaders in civil society and the corporate sector. The training enabled the women to share their anxieties in preparation for the forthcoming elections initially scheduled for October 2004. The women were willing to work together and overcome their perceptions and become mediators in bridging the conflict divide in their country. The women recognised their role as a pressure group to ensure Parliament set in place structures towards hosting elections in their country, such as electoral and constitutional commissions, electoral code of conduct, voters' register, electoral systems and reform.

- **Workshop for Sudanese Women, Oslo - March 2005**

Based on the spirit of the SC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, which call for the equal participation and full involvement of women in peace-building processes, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs called on the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) to organise and facilitate a conference on Sudanese women and the peace process. The workshop reflected the different priorities and recommendations presented by the participants regarding women's inclusion and empowerment in the Sudanese peace process. Women from South Sudan with representatives from UNIFEM, Norwegian NGOs working in the Sudan, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, The Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, and two members from the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) attended the workshop.

The purpose of the workshop was to gather women from South Sudan, representing various women's organisations and districts, in order for them to voice their priorities for sustainable peace in their country and how they envisage that the international community can support them to this end. The workshop took place less than a week after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in Nairobi on 9 January, the atmosphere was marked by optimism, but also awareness of the fact that winning the peace is highly dependent on the implementation of the agreement. The women acknowledged that although they were excluded from the negotiations, the successful implementation of the agreement demands the active participation of women, known to be the backbone of local communities. The women expressed great solidarity with the women of Darfur, as well as a desire to meet with women of North Sudan. For more information please visit [http://www.nupi.no/IPS/filestore/Sudan\\_confpro.pdf](http://www.nupi.no/IPS/filestore/Sudan_confpro.pdf)

- **"Inclusive Security - Sustainable Peace" Workshop for Sudanese Women - May 2005**

Women activists demanded more involvement in the implementation of the southern Sudanese peace process that followed the 9 January comprehensive peace agreement reached between Khartoum and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). The activists attended a workshop entitled "Inclusive

Security - Sustainable Peace" which was organised by International Alert and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), from 11–13 May 2005 in Nairobi, Kenya. The workshop was attended by representatives of women's organisations from across East Africa who shared their experiences in conflicts in the region. For more information please visit <http://www.peacewomen.org/news/Sudan/May05/inclusion.html>

- **South African Women in Dialogue (SAWID), Johannesburg - July 2005**

ACCORD's Deputy Director facilitated training sessions on the Role of Women in Conflict Transformation in Africa, in July 2005. SAWID is hosted by the Spousal Office of South Africa, Mrs. Zanele Mbeki.

- **Policy Seminar on Women and Peace building in Africa, Cape Town - October 2005**

The Centre for Conflict Resolution, Cape Town, and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), Southern Africa and Central African Regional Offices, co-hosted a policy advisory group meeting on "The Impact of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in Africa" from 27 – 28 October 2005. For more information please visit <http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za>

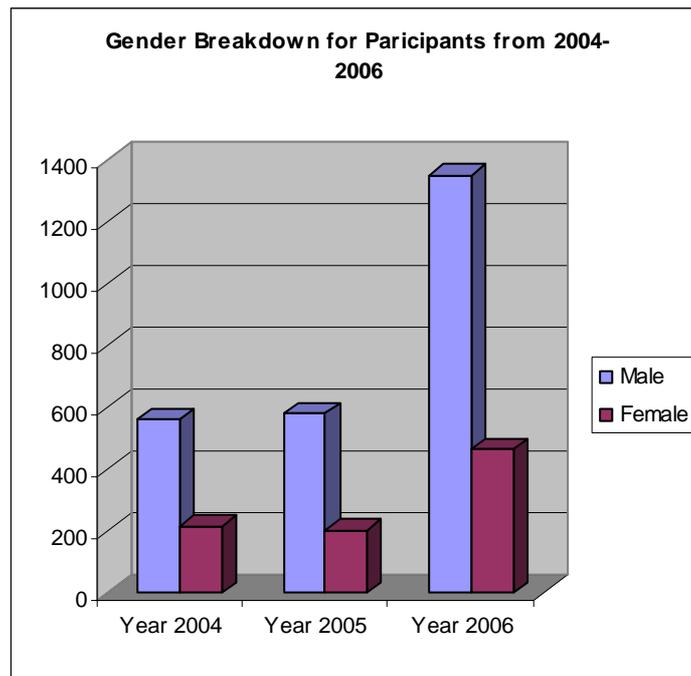
### ***b) Examples of Workshops held for Women Peacekeepers***

ACCORD's Peace and Security Unit host a series of training workshops for peacekeepers in Africa and strive to attain 50 per cent participation of women at all workshops and incorporate into all courses, modules on Women as Peacekeepers, and Gender Mainstreaming in Policy-Making.

- **CIMIC Course for Female Peacekeepers (CCFP) - December 2006**

The African Civil Military Coordination (ACMC) Programme at ACCORD, in partnership with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), conducted a Civil Military Coordination (CIMIC) Course exclusively for female military, police, and civilian personnel who were serving or intending to serve in African peace operations. The CIMIC Course for Female Peacekeepers (CCFP), which was held from 11-15 December 2006, was a response to the fact that there exists a tendency for Troop Contributing Countries to under-nominate female peacekeepers for training courses. This may be attributed in part to the fact that there is a higher proportion of male peacekeepers serving in the field. Thus the CCFP initiative was in large part aimed at creating a momentum towards a general increase in the deployment of female peacekeepers to peacekeeping operations. The CIMIC function is an ideal vehicle through which to increase female representation as CIMIC is not necessarily a function that needs to be carried out by uniformed personnel, the majority of which are male.

Below is a bar graph of the representation of women in workshops hosted by ACCORD in the past three years: 2004 - 2006.



## **II. ADVOCACY TO INCREASE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PEACE PROCESSES**

### **▪ Sudanese Peace Process in Darfur, 2004**

From 8–15 October 2004, Women Waging Peace hosted 16 Sudanese women peace builders for meetings, presentations, and events in New York and Washington, DC. The purpose of this conference was to raise the voices of women peace builders and urge the US government, the UN, other international governmental and non-governmental organizations, and think tanks to promote the inclusion of women in all efforts to bring peace to this troubled country. Recommendations were formulated by the delegation which they would advocate to the Government for, which can be accessed from:

<http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/doc/Sudan%20Recommendations%20final3.pdf>

### **▪ Peace Negotiations in Northern Uganda, 2006**

The peace talks in Juba between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Ugandan government have made great progress, with a formal cessation of hostilities, and an agreement signed on 26 August 2006. The Vice President of the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) and Chief Mediator, Riek Machar, has played a critical role in bringing both sides to the negotiating table. The negotiations which evolved rapidly over five months, offers the best chance to end a twenty-year civil war that has ravaged the north of the country and spilled into Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Former President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique has recently been appointed as the UN Envoy for the LRA affected areas, which is seen as a positive step towards getting more high-level involvement in the talks and to play a more prominent role in the negotiations.

One of the criticisms of the talks has been that the women of Northern Uganda are not truly represented. Women are largely absent from the Government of Uganda and LRA official delegations. In light of this, Ugandan women lit the Torch for Peace in Kampala in October 2006, supported by UNIFEM and women leaders from Uganda and Kenya. The torch was presented to Uganda's Minister of Gender Affairs and entrusted to Parliament after a march through the streets of Kampala. The women took a five-day solidarity journey to the southern Sudan capital city of Juba, to present the Peace torch to negotiators. The recent decision by Riek Machar to allow women from conflict areas to act as observers was welcomed. However, it is essential that the issues concerning the violations of women's rights and their needs for peace and reconciliation are raised and discussed at the negotiations. For more information please visit

→ <http://www.refugeesinternational.org/content/article/detail/9732/?PHPSESSID=5cfliegen3C;>

- <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4374&l=1>;  
 → <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article18573>.

### **III. BEST PRACTICES AND SUCCESS STORIES OF WOMEN IN PEACEBUILDING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

#### ***a) Women at the Peace Tables***

Women are highly invested in preventing and resolving conflict, and have the capability to effect change, pave the way for peace, work across conflict divides, and act as agents in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction.<sup>64</sup> While women are not allowed in specific situations to sit at the peace tables, they have become an effective part of peacebuilding initiatives, engaging in post-conflict reconciliation and playing active roles in the peace processes in Burundi, DRC, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Uganda and the Mano River Union from Liberia and Guinea. Examples include:

1. ***Burundi Peace Negotiations, Arusha 2000:*** Burundi women were recognised as 'Observers' in the Burundi peace process, mediated by former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa.
2. ***Burundi Peace Negotiations from 2002–2005,*** mediated by former Deputy President Jacob Zuma and President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, saw the full participation of women in the mediation proceedings that eventually led to the democratic transition of the country after 12 years of civil war.
3. ***Inter-Congolese Dialogue, Sun City 2002:*** DRC Women were received as 'Advisors' to the Inter-Congolese Dialogue in South Africa, in which they presented declarations and urged their men to end the conflict in their country. The women were trained by ACCORD and the training served as a platform for the women to collaborate efforts and set plans for action to sustain the peace agreement in their country.
4. ***Inter-Congolese Dialogue, Sun City 2003:*** Women and civil society organisations were incorporated in the all-inclusive peace agreement reached between contending parties, that saw a power-sharing agreement of four vice-presidents and President Joseph Kabila heading the Transitional Government.

#### ***b) Women as Successful Negotiators***

Women are successful negotiators, very active in proposing constructive solutions, action-oriented and often willing to take innovative approaches to establish dialogue between polarised groups. They sometimes use unorthodox means such as singing to diffuse potentially violent situations. Examples include:

1. ***Women of the DRC:*** DRC women held one of the biggest rallies in the country, of over 10000 women and men, advocating for 30 per cent representation of women at all levels of decision-making in the constitution, according to the Beijing Platform for Action, 1995. The constitution of DRC now incorporates equitable representation of women at all levels of decision-making in the country, and this was clearly depicted with 33 per cent of women Presidential candidates during the first multi-party elections ever held in the country in over 40 years.
2. ***Women of Rwanda:*** Twelve years after the end of the 1994 genocide, Rwanda still faces challenges such as poverty, illiteracy and HIV/AIDS. However the country has made significant strides towards establishing a democratic society. Having made several important contributions to their country's political system, women are at the forefront of post-genocide Rwandan public life. They are present in government at record levels with 49 per cent at all levels of governance, the highest in the world followed by Sweden's 44 per cent. Women's accomplishment include initiating reconciliation efforts, participating in drafting a new constitution, exercising influence in

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<sup>64</sup> Swanee Hunt 'The Critical Role of Women Waging Peace' 2003:106. Columbia Transnational Law Journal April 14 2003.

decentralization policies, and forming a cross party caucus in Parliament to continue to work on security issues.<sup>65</sup>

3. **Women of Sierra Leone:** Women of Sierra Leone fought on both sides of the Sierra Leone civil war. Although large numbers of women entered the war after being abducted, many also fought or received weapons training. Women have often led the reintegration process, accepting ex-combatants back into society and spearheaded the rehabilitation process for these former fighters.<sup>66</sup>

Women of Sierra Leone, through their diplomatic efforts, contributed to brokering peace between the government of Sierra Leone and RUF leaders, which were both complemented and preceded by women's civil society groups and national networks in Sierra Leone.<sup>67</sup>

Civil society initiatives during the peace process in the early 1990s in Sierra Leone laid the foundation for the creation of the civil society movement, the Mano River Women Peace Networks in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea (MARWOPNET). The women lobbied regional security organisations such as ECOWAS for the participation of women in peace processes, and trained women in negotiation and mediation skills within communities to facilitate their participation in peace processes in the region. They also issued public declarations, organised protests, and directly met with leaders across the region. In recognition of their important role in bringing warring parties to the table, MARWOPNET was a signatory to the August 2003 peace agreement in Liberia. The Union was awarded the United Nations annual human rights prize for their efforts in peacemaking in December 2003.<sup>68</sup>

4. **Women of Somalia:** Women in Somalia have played an important role in conflict resolution and have maintained close relationships, and have been able to facilitate peace processes by interceding between combatants and carrying messages of peace. The women united to oppose the war and formed the 'Sixth Clan' out of the five major clans in Somalia to pressurise their men and warlords to reach a peace agreement and set up an interim national government during the peace negotiations in Djibouti, after 10 years of a no-state government in Somalia. The role of the women was appreciated with political participation in peace and political processes.<sup>69</sup>
5. **Women of South Africa:** South African women were able to diffuse violence during Apartheid, and have continued to reconcile different interest groups in the new democratic South Africa, through the South African Women in Dialogue (SAWID), hosted by the Spousal Office of South Africa, Mrs. Zanele Mbeki.

Women contributed immensely to South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to address apartheid-era human rights abuses. Two important goals of the TRC were to grant amnesty to perpetrators of human rights abuses who disclosed the atrocities they committed; and to break the country's cycle of violence. Women were nurturing and compassionate commissioners and staff, and were emotional witnesses who addressed the suffering of others in their testimonies. They displayed the epitome of 'Ubuntu' – respect for humanity.<sup>70</sup>

Vital contributions of South African women were made in negotiating the transition to democracy and reforming the security sector as South Africa abandoned its policy of apartheid for a democratic state. Women from all walks of life – including anti-apartheid activists, African National Congress members and Umkhonto we Sizwe fighters, and women at the grassroots level – contributed to advancing a holistic comprehensive, and democratized "human security" framework. Other notable achievements include providing gender-based training to all defence Ministry personnel, appointing women to senior positions in the Ministry of Defence, and holding an annual gathering called "Women at the Peace table".<sup>71</sup>

6. **Women of Wajir, Northern Kenya:** The subtle persuasion of women from the Wajir Peace Group of Northern Kenya assisted in diffusing conflicts between ethnic groups, partially by keeping careful track of tensions in the market place and rumours.<sup>72</sup> The women formed the Wajir Women's

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<sup>65</sup> [http://www.huntalternatives.org/pages/32\\_case\\_studies.cfm](http://www.huntalternatives.org/pages/32_case_studies.cfm)

<sup>66</sup> [http://www.huntalternatives.org/pages/32\\_case\\_studies.cfm](http://www.huntalternatives.org/pages/32_case_studies.cfm)

<sup>67</sup> Civil Society Perspectives from the Mano River Union 2002:7, published by the International Peace Academy, New York, New York.

<sup>68</sup> "Civil Society Perspectives from the Mano River Union" 2002:7.

<sup>69</sup> Zakia Alim "The Sixth Clan" 2002, unpublished article by Member of Parliament, Somalia.

<sup>70</sup> [http://www.huntalternatives.org/pages/32\\_case\\_studies.cfm](http://www.huntalternatives.org/pages/32_case_studies.cfm)

<sup>71</sup> [http://www.huntalternatives.org/pages/32\\_case\\_studies.cfm](http://www.huntalternatives.org/pages/32_case_studies.cfm)

<sup>72</sup> S Anderson *op cit.* 1999: 230

Association for Peace, and realised they had to involve the Elders if the wider conflict was to be addressed. Their influence with concerned men led to the eventual resolution of the conflict for the benefit of all stakeholders.

#### **IV. NUMBER OF WOMEN APPOINTED AS SPECIAL ENVOYS, REPRESENTATIVES AND RAPORTEURS FOR THE AU ON PREVENTION, RESOLUTION AND MANAGEMENT OF CONFLICTS AND POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION**

There is no record of appointments by the African Union (AU) to these positions, but details exist for the role of African women in the United Nations:

- **Special Representatives of the Secretary General (SRSG)**

Out of **27** peace operations (peacekeeping and political and peacebuilding missions), there are currently no women appointed as Heads of Mission or as SRSG and there is only **1** woman in the position of DSRSG: In Afghanistan (UNAMA): DSRSG Ameerah Haq (Bangladesh), since June 2004. She was preceded by Eva Margareta Wahlstrom (Sweden)

Up to 2000, only 4 women had ever served as SRSGs.

- **Other Appointments**

There have been a number of women selected for high level and other appointments and African women, in particular, include:

- UN Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women – Rachel N Mayanja (Uganda);
- Gender Advisor in the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations – Comfort Lamptey (Ghana);
- Gender consultant with the office of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for the Great lakes Region - Mary Okumu (Kenya);
- Gender Advisor in Sierra Leone - Theresa Kambobe (Zambian); and
- Gender Advisor at the UN Mission in the DRC - Amy Smythe (Sierra Leone).

- **Deputy Heads in AU Missions**

The Deputy Head of Mission for the AU mission in Sudan (now Acting Head of Mission) is Mrs. Monique Mukaruriza from Rwanda.

#### **V. NUMBER OF WOMEN APPOINTED AS HEAD PEACE NEGOTIATORS**

**Betty Oyella Bigombe** - Betty Bigombe has been involved in peace negotiations in Uganda to end the Lord's Resistance Army's (LRA) insurgency since the early 1990s. Prior to taking on these negotiation initiatives, she was appointed cabinet minister in Yoweri Museveni's government for pacification of North and North-Eastern Uganda, resident in the North. She also was tasked with seeking a peaceful means to end the war in north and North-Eastern Uganda. Following the failure of a military solution, Bigombe initiated contact with rebel leader Joseph Kony. This initiative gave birth to what would become known as the "Bigombe 1 Initiative." Bigombe returned in 2004 for the "Bigombe 2 Initiative" that for the first time brought the LRA and government ministers face to face.

In 1994 Bigombe was named "Uganda's Woman of the Year" for her efforts to end the violence. She spent time providing technical support to the Carter Centre in the peace efforts between the governments of Uganda and Sudan. She then held a fellowship at Harvard University's Institute for International Development in Public Policy in 1997. Bigombe joined the World Bank in 1997 as a senior social scientist at the Bank's newly created Post-Conflict Unit and also worked with the Social Protection and Human Development Units.