Annual discussion on the integration of a gender perspective with country mandate holders

Ms. Bineta Diop, President of Femmes Africa Solidarité and Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, outlined the threats and risks faced by women in Africa and called for the Council mandate-holders to integrate the women, peace and security agenda into their work. She stressed the importance of consultation with civil society, communities and women’s organizations as the crucial link between policy and action. She also emphasized the need to give human rights defenders the opportunity to speak, and to include women in peace, security and human rights processes.

Advocacy on South Sudan

> FAS President briefed European Union Members States on her mandate as Special Envoy on Women Peace and Security of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and presented her work with the AU Commission of Enquiry on human rights in South Sudan.

> FAS, together with the World YWCA, invited two women of the civil society in South Sudan to support their advocacy at the HRC. We organised bilateral meetings and a private briefing with Members States to call them to support the inclusion of South Sudanese women as rightful stakeholders in peace talks.

> Sadly, only the United Kingdom delegation made reference to the UN Resolution 1325 in their statement during the panel discussion on human rights in South Sudan which took place the next day.

> During this panel, FAS and World YWCA made a joint statement to urge the parties to the conflict to end the lack of accountability for sexual and gender violence and
Advocacy on the Central African Republic

> Since 2013, FAS has been bringing women human rights defenders to speak at the Council, advocate for the adoption of resolutions leading to the appointment of an independent expert on the country, ensure continued work in the field by mobilizing women’s groups and provided technical support to a joint UN-AU solidarity mission. By doing so, FAS succeeded to bring a strong gender dimensions into discussions on the human rights situation in CAR.

> At the 27HRC, FAS advocacy directly contributed to the adoption of a new resolution on technical assistance in the field of human rights in the Central African Republic.

> FAS addressed the Council during the Interactive dialogue with the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in the Central African Republic to call for the renewal of the mandate of the Independent Expert for another year, underlined the importance that perpetrators be held accountable and encouraged the international community to remain strongly mobilized.

> Ms Keita Bocoum, the independent expert, in concluding remarks responded to FAS mentioning that recommendations will be made to include women’s participation in the peace process and ensure a gender perspective be reflected in all of the work carried out in the Central African Republic.

Remaining challenges

> The role of women in peace processes continues to be poorly recognized in HRC resolutions.

> South Sudan and CAR: Ensuring that the human rights situation is given the seriousness it deserves at all levels of national and international decision-making is an ongoing challenge.

> During negotiations with governments on formal texts, there remains a gap in involving civil society in decisions agreed upon by governments and ensuring that accountability on implementation occurs at the local level.

> Securing resources to mobilize African women and grant them access to the HRC is a permanent challenge.