



PRESS RELEASE

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CIVIL SOCIETY AND DARFUR WOMEN TO GATHER, DRAFT PLAN OF ACTION FOR PEACE

African women and international experts will meet with Darfur's women in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, at the African Women's Consultation on Darfur, to draft a plan of action aimed at decision-makers in the Darfur peace process. Along with this, the legacy of the five women commissioners of the African Union (AU) Commission will be a major topic of debate at the 11th AU Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting on gender mainstreaming in the AU.

On 24-25 January, 2008, Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) is hosting the African Women's Consultation on Darfur. Sixty civil society representatives and experts from Sudan will meet to speak on the conditions and violence faced by women in the Darfur conflict.

The objective of the two-day meeting is to draft a Darfuri Women's Plan of Action for Peace. The Plan of Action will become a major advocacy instrument at the AU, the United Nations' Committee on the Status of Women, Human Rights Council and Security Council. The African Women's Consultation on Darfur will also allow women from other conflict areas in Africa to share their experiences and to help emphasize the gender perspective in the Darfur peace process.

This Consultation follows the September 2007 fact-finding mission to eastern Chad led by Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland. The mission included seven other prominent women leaders, among them the Executive Director of FAS, Bineta Diop, who went to gather first-hand accounts of the violence faced by refugee women.

Prior to the African Women's Consultation on Darfur, on 22-23 January, FAS will host the 11th AU Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting. FAS and women's civil society networks in Africa are holding this meeting in Addis Ababa as part of the ongoing Gender is My Agenda campaign, aiming to mainstream gender in the African Union (AU).

The 11th AU Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting precedes the 10th regular session of the AU that will run from 31 January-2 February. The AU Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting will focus on the legacy of the AU Commission, particularly the achievements of the five women commissioners, whose mandates will expire this year. A second major topic for debate will be the evaluation of women's economic empowerment in Africa.

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FAS is an international women's organisation working to empower African women to assume a leadership role in peace building, and conflict resolution.

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