

Colloquium

International Colloquium on Women's
Empowerment, Leadership Development,
International Peace and Security 2009

Femmes Africa Solidarité

Vice-Chair for Africa

REPORT

Monrovia, 7-8 March 2009



*President Tarja Halonen of the Republic of Finland and Liberian President Ellen Sirleaf Johnson (centre)
co-convenors of the International Colloquium and
President Abdoulaye Wade of the Republic of Senegal*

INTRODUCTION

Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) was designated to be vice-chair for Africa at the International Colloquium and to lead the theme on the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325. This was in recognition of FAS' commitment and continued engagement in women's empowerment for peace and security in Africa.

FAS has been engaged in enhancing women's participation in peace processes and ensuring their inclusion during the peace building phase since its formation in the year 1996. The organisation has worked in the Mano River (Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea) and the Great Lakes (Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC).

The International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security is being co-convened by the President of Liberia, H.E Ellen Sirleaf-Johnson and the President of Finland, H.E Tarja Halonen.

BRIEF BACKGROUND

In the year 2006, just before the Inauguration of President Sirleaf-Johnson, a few African women leaders including the FAS Executive Director, Ms. Bineta Diop had a pre-session with President Sirleaf-Johnson and discussed how best to support Liberia, a post-conflict country, undergoing a peace building phase and most importantly with the first Woman President in Africa. It is during this meeting that the idea of the International Colloquium was borne.

The International Colloquium aims to create an environment for women and their champions around the world to discuss, learn, demonstrate and act on the benefits and lessons learned from women in leadership.

The Colloquium seeks to realize the aims of **UN Security Council Resolution 1325** on women, peace and security to ensure that women are protected from the worst abuses in times of conflict and empower them to play their rightful and vital role in helping their countries prevent, end and recover from conflict, an agenda at the heart of FAS work since its formation.

The Colloquium will bring together an international group of women leaders to identify the successes and failures of measures adopted for 1325; to serve as a resource base and catalyst for activity worldwide; and to develop and support meaningful strategies and activities for increasing global security.

GOALS AND THEME LEADS OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: Empower women to be more effective leaders by linking them with their peers from around the world and sharing best practices

Theme Leads: African Women's Development Fund (Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi) Partners include TLC Africa, International Trade Centre (Sabine Meitzel); Partners include Cisco Systems; AWDF; ILO; Realizing Rights; Association of Black Charities, World YWCA (Natalie Fisher-Spalton); Partners include World Association of Girl Guides/Girl Scouts; UNICEF; UNFPA; ILO, UNIFEM Partners include Femmes Africa Solidarite; Sudanese Women's Forum; Kenyan Women's Coalition; Government of Norway; UNIFEM Regional Director in Rwanda and others.



Presidents Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal and Paul Kagame of Rwanda pose for a picture with Ms Diop and other delegates at the African Gender Award ceremony in Dakar in 2007

Goal 2: Support the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325

Theme Leads: Femmes Africa Solidarite (Bineta Diop) Partners include Liberian Ministry of Gender and Development; Government of Iceland; Realizing Rights; UNIFEM; UNMIL and other UN agencies; Mano River Union and others.

Goal 3: Contribute to the achievement of Millennium Development Goal #3 on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, including building capacity and resources of government and non-governmental institutions to work for women's rights and economic empowerment.

Theme Leads: Rachel Mayanja, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Secretary General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women; Liberian Minister of Gender and Development Varbah Gayflor, supported by Colloquium Secretariat Partners include UNIFEM; Women, Faith and Development Alliance.



Ms Diop, Liberian Minister of Gender and Development Hon. Varbah Gayflor and H.E. Ms Elisabeth Rehn at the International Colloquium Expert Group Meeting in January 2009, Liberia

Goal 4: Demonstrate the clear gender dimensions of climate change, environment protection and sustainable development.

Theme Lead: Government of Finland (Aira Kalela)

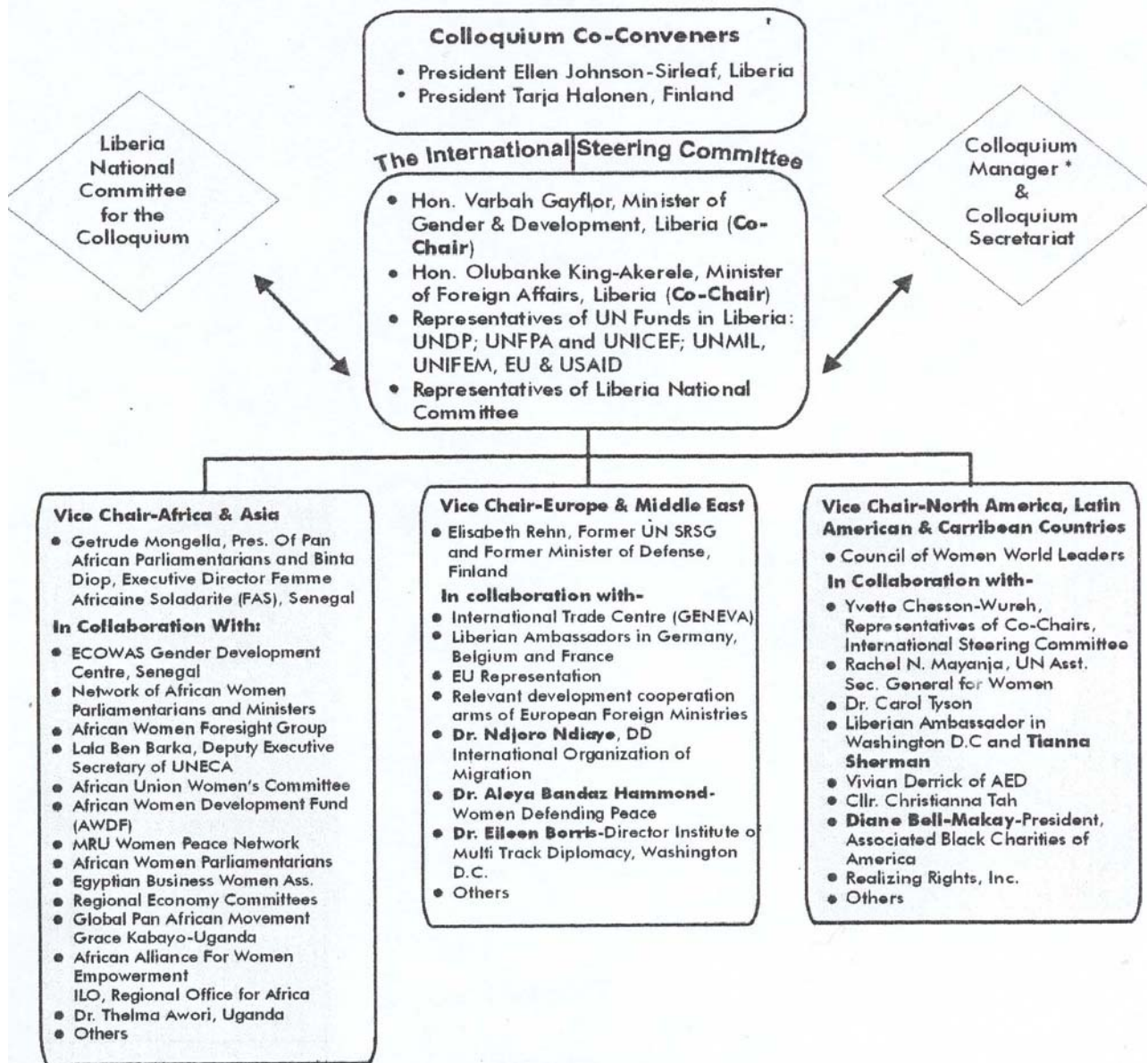
Goal 5: Launch the Angie Brooks International Centre on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security, in Monrovia to support the implementation of action emerging from the Colloquium through, inter alia, training and research.

Theme Leads: Lalla Ben Barka, Deputy Executive Secretary, UN Economic Commission for Africa Partners include Honorable Olubanke King-Akerele, Liberian Minister of Foreign Affairs; Carole Henderson Tyson, Realizing Rights



Hon. Olubanke King-Akerele speaking at the International Colloquium Expert Group Meeting in Monrovia, in January 2009.

COLLOQUIUM'S CO-CONVENERS AND STEERING COMMITTEE



* Reports to Co-chairs while serving as Secretary to the International Steering Committee and managing the Colloquium Secretariat with its various management committees.

N.B. The International Steering Committee consists of the individuals in the centre box reflecting the Co-Chairs as well as Vice Chairs.

WORKING FOR THE COLLOQUIUM...

FAS actively participated in the preparation of the **Steering Committee Meetings**:

2007: The Journey Begins

- 1) **May**, Geneva, Switzerland: the preparation process for the Colloquium was launched on 16th January 2007 in Liberia. This was followed by an International Steering Committee Meeting in Geneva at the International Trade Centre. The meeting set the ball rolling on key preparations to be done prior to the Colloquium and Ms. Diop was an enthusiastic participant at this meeting. Based on the discussions, a format was proposed for the Colloquium as well as suggestions for the role envisaged for Women Presidents and Prime Ministers in 2009.
- 2) **December**, Dakar, Senegal: A second Steering Committee Meeting was held. FAS together with the other members, agreed on the organization of a panel, as well as a workshop on UN SCR 1325 for the Colloquium of which one of the themes would also include peace, security, and economic development.

2008: Getting There

- 3) **January**, Monrovia, Liberia: FAS participated in the development of the objectives and expected outcomes of the Colloquium and offered the collaboration of two people from the FAS staff to assist in the preparation of the colloquium.
- 4) **February- March 2008**, New York, USA: On the margins of the 52nd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), FAS organised and participated in various events and took this opportunity to inform its partners and networks on the Colloquium and way forward.
- 5) **May**, Bruxelles, Belgium: Ms Diop attended the Pre-meeting of the International Steering Board and the Update meeting, organized by Hon. Elizabeth Rehn and attended by members of the Steering Committee and Ambassadors. She stressed upon the importance of the Colloquium for Africa as well as the necessity to move the agenda on women and security forward.
- 6) **September**, Helsinki, Finland: the conference was chaired by Marjatta Rasi, Under Secretary of State, Finland; Olubanke King-Akerele, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Liberia; and Vabah Gayflor, Minister of Gender and Development, Liberia. The conference set organizational and thematic Agenda of the Colloquium. The executive director of FAS emphasized the need to look at gaps and constraints on the implementation of the resolution and touched upon the great deal of work of FAS within the AU to advocate for governments participation to the Colloquium

2009: Final Steps

- 7) **January**, Monrovia, Liberia: During this meeting, the various theme leads reported on the preparatory activities that they had undertaken so far with regard to the International Colloquium. It was also an opportunity to look at the facilities in Liberia and deliberate on what needed to be done by March. FAS shared with the participants it had identified from Africa. Together with UNIFEM, FAS also gave out the draft proposed topics and panellists for the UNSCR 1325 Theme.

- 8) **January**, Monrovia, Liberia: FAS, together with UNIFEM and the Ministry for Women's Affairs of Liberia, due to a number of shortcomings and gaps encountered in the implementation of the UNSCR 1325, organized an expert group meeting particularly focusing on effective engendered monitoring mechanisms and adequate resources to achieve the desired outcomes. Ms Diop stated that in preparation for the UN SCR 1325 theme at the International Colloquium, the EGM would explore the various aspects of the resolution and come up with a statement.

ADVOCACY

In order to make the International Colloquium a success, FAS engaged in a variety of advocacy activities:

A. PRE-SUMMITS

FAS unfolded its commitment to the preparation of the Colloquium with a profound involvement in advocacy work through the organization of pre-summit meetings:

- 1) **January 2007**, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: 9th Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting on Gender Mainstreaming in the African Union, FAS informed the 34 organisations representing civil society and government officials participating about the Colloquium.
- 2) **June 2007**, Accra, Ghana: 10th Pre-Summit Meeting, FAS shared with the 78 participants who attended the meeting, information on the Colloquium.
- 3) **January 2008**: FAS organised a Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting and informed the 65 participating members of the Gender is My Agenda Network about the Colloquium
- 4) **June 2008**, the "Gender is my Agenda Campaign", coordinated by FAS, funded the participation of two key delegates of the National Steering Committee of the Colloquium to attend the 12th Pre-Summit on Gender Mainstreaming in the AU, in Sharm el Sheikh (Egypt).



Panelists at the 12th Pre Summit in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt, 2008

Thanks to the joint advocacy of Liberian Foreign Affairs H.E. Minister King-Akerele and FAS, a Resolution on the Colloquium was adopted by the AU Members of States.

African Union Executive Council, 13th Ordinary Council Meeting, 24-28 June, Sharm El-Sheikh, Decision no: EX.CL/Dec.447 (XIII) on Women's Pre-Summit:

The Executive Council:

- a) **TAKES NOTE** of the International Colloquium on Women in Peace and Security, under the leadership of H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia, to be held in March 2009;
 - b) **ENCOURAGES** Member States to participate in the International Colloquium;
 - c) **REQUESTS** the Commission to lend its support to the organization of this colloquium.
- 5) **January 2009**, during the 13th Pre summit meeting: FAS supported a member of the Steering Committee to be in Addis Ababa to share on the International colloquium.



H.E. Gracel Machel emphasizing a point at during a meeting at the 13th Pre Summit

B. CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

FAS participated in numerous conferences and meetings at the national and international levels to mobilize the international community on the importance of the Colloquium for women empowerment particularly focusing on the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 for women's peace and security.

FAS will continue to seek support from its numerous partners who share the same commitment towards women's empowerment for peace and security. One of the next steps will be the organization of an African Consultation between women and youth and ECA/AU.

FAS thanks all the contributors to the Colloquium and the support of the Global Fund, AWDF and ECA among others.

THE INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM

A. PRE-EVENTS

1. CELEBRATING WOMEN UNDER THE PEACE TENT

On the 6th of March, 2009, FAS organized a side event which was held under the Peace Tent at the SKD stadium in Monrovia, Liberia.

The event brought together women from diverse backgrounds to share on their experiences and challenges in peace work and in particular their engagement in the implementation of the UNSCR 1325. It gave an opportunity for the women to also share on their expectations from the Colloquium and to plan on how best to have fruitful engagements during the Colloquium.

The peace tent was a space for women to dialogue and reminisce, to catch up with old friends and network with new friends, to speak about their own organizations and activities being undertaken.



Women come together to dialogue

2. YOUTH EVENT

During the pre-Colloquium youth event that was held on the 6th of March, 2009, FAS facilitated a break out group on UNSCR 1325, whose outcomes were shared during the main Colloquium event. Key during the discussions was the need by the youth, in particular young women, to be included at all levels and not just as spectators relegated to the periphery but as active participants.

The youth event was opened by the President of Liberia, H.E Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, who stressed the importance of all the themes to be discussed at the Colloquium including UNSCR 1325. She said they were significant to Liberia's young women in recognition of its post-conflict status and the challenges that the country still faces.

She expressed a need for the UNSCR 1325 to be translated into local languages in order for it to be more accessible to the younger generation and for more strategic advocacy and capacity building programmes to enhance the implementation of the resolution were stressed upon.

B. THE COLLOQUIUM

1. DAY ONE – 7th March, 2009



President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf arrives for the Colloquium Opening

The Colloquium took place on 7-8 March, 2009. FAS was the theme lead on the UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security. Ms. Ines Alberdi of UNIFEM gave an introduction to the theme. She underlined the need for greater accountability on the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 and UNSCR 1820. She stated that eight years after the resolution came into force, sexual violence was still being used as a tactic of war and women still remained on the margins of formal peace processes. She called for more political will and reiterated that women's needs could not wait.

Ms. Bineta Diop of FAS moderated the first panel on the UNSCR 1325. The panellists were from diverse backgrounds yet all working on gender and peace issues: Ms. Betty Bigombe (Global Peace Ambassador), Ambassador Liberata Mulamula (Executive Director of the Great Lakes Region Secretariat), Dr. Naomi Chazan (International Women's Commission-Israel), Hon. Betty Ogaro (Minister for Agriculture-Sudan), Ms. Amelia Angeline Ward (Mano River Women's Peace Network), Ms. Leymah Gbowee (WIPSEN), Ms. Mavic Cabrera Balleza (International Women's Tribune Centre), Hon. Ursula Plassnik (Former Foreign Minister-Austria), Ms. Isabel Iskins (International Alert) and Mrs. Masire- Mwamba (Commonwealth Secretariat)

Ms. Diop set the agenda for the panel session as follows:

- Review the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 so far
- Identify the challenges faced at the national, regional and international level
- Give concrete recommendations to enhance successful implementation

Some of the highlights from the presentations included:

- 1) The language used in the UNSCR 1325 must be made stronger
- 2) Women needed to learn the art of negotiation in order to be able to make viable contributions and have constructive dialogue during the peace processes
- 3) Awareness raising and sensitization of women on the contents and substance of UNSCR 1325 and how they can engage at their various levels. This may be done through community outreach and mentoring programmes

- 4) Lobbying by women must be done at various levels right from the grassroots to national, regional and international levels including effective use of multi-track diplomacy.
- 5) The need for timely, as required international intervention was stressed upon and the Israel-Palestine conflict was given as a case in point
- 6) Implementation of cross-sectional dialogue of traditionally resistant groups and formation and promotion of international global networks that mobilize resources and concentrate on response to urgent programs

2. DAY TWO – 8th March, 2009



Participants following the discussions

Ms. Diop welcomed the moderator and panellists for the UNSCR 1325 theme. Ms. Thokozile Rudzvidzo of the UNECA moderated the panel whose presenters included Ms. Litha Musyimi Ogana (African Union), Ms. Massa Washington (TRC-Liberia), Cllr. Eva M. Morgan (Ministry of Justice-Liberia) Ms. Paivi Kannisto (Finland), Justice Rose Owusu (Supreme Court of Ghana), Ms. Anja Ebnother (DCAF).

Some of the highlights from the presentations included:

- 1) There should always be a disaggregated approach to post-conflict reconstruction processes that appreciates the different needs of women and men
- 2) During post-conflict periods, it is crucial to have documented accounts of the atrocities suffered by women
- 3) Establishment and recognition of informal judicial structures e.g. the Gacaca courts in Rwanda that would enable more people to have space and access to justice systems
- 4) Gender mainstreaming in security sector reform must be appreciated as being key towards ensuring sustainable peace
- 5) It is essential that at the National Level countries develop National Action Plans that must have the appropriate monitoring mechanisms including annual reviews

C. NATIONAL CELEBRATIONS, 9TH -10TH MARCH 2009-03-16

The Ministry of Gender and Development, Liberia held a two-day post colloquium event, to give an opportunity to the Liberian women from grassroots to national level to participate in the Colloquium. Ms. Diop was invited to be one of the panelists and to share on FAS work in the region and on the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security.

During the panel session, Ms. Diop stated the following:

‘FAS has been in Liberia since 1996 and I am glad to see the UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan launched today. This is a landmark in our journey to bring peace and development in Liberia, in Africa. Liberia has been torn apart by war conducted by men. Now women are picking up the pieces. Madam Ellen J. Sirleaf has taken the leadership in Africa by being the first to launch a National Action Plan.

UNSCR 1325 is an Africa child born in Windhoek Namibia. UNSCR 1325 also has a woman’s face as it reflects the women’s suffering. Fortunately women do not want to be seen as victims only but as powerful actors to peace and security.

In this region we have seen women making a difference; Ms. Theresa Leigh Sherman signed the Liberia Peace Agreement in Akosombo.

MARWOPNET has been recognized by the UN General Assembly for their peace work in this Mano River Region. We also recognize so many other women groups including WIPSEN and WIPNET that are doing great work in this region.

Let us hope that this National Action Plan will help to encourage other countries to launch and implement the UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan. FAS is working in DRC, Rwanda and Burundi to support the development of the UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan. Very soon they will launch their own National Action Plans.

We commit ourselves to continue to support the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan in Liberia.

We congratulate the women of Liberia, the men of Liberia, the Leadership of Liberia for keeping their promises to bring peace and development in Liberia.’

Report from Break-Out Group

After the presentations by the various panelists, each of the groups went into break out sessions. Ms. Diop was called upon to share the outcomes on behalf of the group. She began by stating that during the discussions, they had looked at the importance of the UNSCR 1325 particularly in Liberia. Today, she said, it is indeed a great day seeing the launch of the UNSCR 1325 in Liberia, the first country in Africa to launch it. She went on that Liberia had paved the way and the UNSCR 1325 has the face of a woman because it takes into consideration the women’s suffering.

Some of the issues they highlighted included

- Women should not always be considered to be victims but ardent actors
- The UNSCR 1325 is a weapon for peace and if successfully implemented will lead to social transformation in the lives of people through:
 - a) Reformation of the justice system including Security Sector Reforms, training of judges, community-based policing etc and all these processes should include women.
 - b) Advocacy should be continued at all levels with the support of the Gender Ministry
 - c) Networking and creation of linkages with all the other Ministries with regard to the mainstreaming of the UNSCR 1325.

In conclusion, she said, the group summarized that, ‘If we Lift Liberia, We lift Guinea, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, We lift the Sub-Region, Africa and the World.’

OUTCOME DOCUMENTS

- The Monrovia Declaration
- Call to Action on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325
- Colloquium In Pictures

THE MONROVIA DECLARATION

**A Call to Action from the participants of the International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security
Monrovia, Liberia
International Women's Day, March 8, 2009**

We, who came together for the International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security, have joined together under the inspiring leadership of the co-conveners, **H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf**, President of the Republic of Liberia, and **H.E. Tarja Halonen**, President of the Republic of Finland, to celebrate and draw strength from women's leadership at all levels.

We recall the spirit of women's conferences, started in Mexico City and continuing through Copenhagen, Nairobi, and Beijing, and other African regional and global gatherings, and the reaffirmation of women's rights exemplified in the Beijing Platform of Action, African regional instruments and CEDAW.

We honor the great strides women have made since then to achieve leadership positions in international arenas and close to home.

We note that women in the 21st century hold high-level positions and at the same time do extraordinary work at the community level.

We came together as leaders celebrating our achievements, solidifying our commitment to work together for change, reassessing our efforts, and strategizing to achieve greater success.

We stand in solidarity with our sisters in Darfur, Zimbabwe, and conflict areas around the world.

We commit our energies to accelerating the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. The aspirations we hold as women and men coming together in Monrovia are not satisfied by the policies and practices we see all around us.

We therefore shaped the Colloquium around thematic priorities that, if acted upon, would make a fundamental and sustained improvement in the lives of women and girls and their communities. Having convened this historic event, we now make a collective call for profound changes in the priorities that shape policies and resource allocations from the global to the local level, and demand accountability from the institutions and individuals who must effect these changes.

We recognize that we are living through multiple global crises that are threatening our security at all levels and have a devastating impact on the lives of girls and women all over the world. What is now required is a paradigm shift in our approach to global security and development that puts women at the center of social and economic policies and political change. It has been demonstrated that women are particularly vulnerable to reductions in exports, foreign direct investment and remittances. As countries put in place their economic stimulus packages for development, we call on governments to target women's economic empowerment.

Specifically, we urge leaders of the G20 countries who will be meeting in London on 2 April 2009 to agree on coordinated action aimed at reviving the global economy to:

- Earmark funds for women in all responses to the financial crisis including recovery and stimulus packages; and

- Ensure appropriate delivery mechanisms are in place and functioning to channel trade financing to women.

We call for full implementation of **UN Security Council Resolution 1325** for the protection, participation and promotion of women's rights and their involvement in peace processes, and the adoption of **UN Security Council Resolution 1820** that addresses sexual violence as a tactic of war.

We call for greater accountability and an end to impunity – only this will accelerate implementation by all stakeholders, principally the UN Member States, the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General.

We call on them to present their plans of action and accomplishments at the 2010 Ministerial Review Conference of UNSCR 1325.

We further encourage countries to collaborate creatively and support each other on the development and implementation of National Action Plans on SCR 1325.

We commit to honor **women's leadership** at all levels of community and public life, and through our actions and decisions to enable women leaders, in particular young women, to take up roles of leadership and responsibility.

We call for greater numbers of women in positions of leadership – we have witnessed that more women results in better decision-making by governments and communities. It has been demonstrated that the discourse changes with their involvement, and we want to see these changes sustained. In this context, we support initiatives to increase women's representation in the European Union to 50 percent of decision-makers. Liberia and Finland, the co-conveners of the Colloquium, exemplify women's supportive leadership.

We call for greater efforts to enable and **empower women to participate fully and on fair terms in the economic life** of their communities, removing barriers and increasing their capacity in trade and business activity from the local to the global level. Women need better access to information and to improvements in infrastructure and services, particularly for women with disabilities, as well as social protection systems, especially in times of economic crisis and recession. Women and men deserve the right to **decent work** opportunities in the formal and informal economy. Women's rights must be respected in the workplace and within value chains, in companies of all sizes, and no matter how far across the world they reach.

We commit to ensure that women will be present, and their voices heard, in all debates concerning **climate change**, with a particular commitment to women's participation in the global climate change summit in Copenhagen in December 2009.

We call for far greater urgency in addressing the mitigation and adaptation aspects of climate change – otherwise we risk undermining all our efforts to date on eradicating poverty and suffering. An acknowledgement of women's roles as powerful agents of change, and their greater vulnerability to climate change impacts in many societies, must be demonstrated through women's greater role in climate change negotiations and incorporation of gender considerations in the new agreement, as well as in international, national, and local strategies and programmes implementing this agreement.

To better protect women and girls who are displaced, to uphold the dignity of **migrants**, and to enhance the social and economic integration of migrant women and men alike, we call for a gender equality approach to migration management. Policies and programs must integrate the needs of migrant women and support migrant women in diaspora communities to engage in development efforts through their skills, knowledge, and financial resources.

The leadership of **young people**, and especially young women, is critical to advancing development, peace and security. The participation of young people is a prerequisite to the development of communities and nations. Young people are the inheritors of decisions made today which affect the future.

We commit to the inclusion of young women and young men in decision-making processes and leadership and in all processes that work towards the achievement of the MDGs.

We therefore call for:

- Urgent investment to support young women and young men in the achievement of the MDGs including women's sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- The creation of supportive spaces which enable the leadership development of young women.

We further commit to unite and mobilize our collective leadership to end violence against women and especially young women. We call for safe environments for women and girls who have experienced violence and abuse.

We commit to work collaboratively with women's organizations and networks.

Lastly, through the launch of the **Angie Brooks International Center on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security** on 8 March 2009, the Colloquium has put in place a mechanism of follow-up action to the Colloquium.

We thank participants for the recommendations that came out of the thematic discussions and working groups which will be passed to the Angie Brooks International Center for implementation.

We call on potential collaborators and institutions to partner with us in the programs and activities of the Center.

If these calls are met with action, not empty promises, the future will be brighter for every girl, every woman, every grandmother, and for the men who share their aspirations and their life journeys.

CALL TO ACTION ON THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325

Call To Action On The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security; Monrovia, Liberia: 7-8 March 2009

We participants in the UNSCR 1325 sessions representing women's organizations from around the world, UN Member States, the UN Secretariat and its agencies, academe, media and other institutions, thank Her Excellencies, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of the Republic of Liberia, and President Tarja Halonen of the Republic of Finland, for convening the International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security which took place from 7-8 March 2009 in Liberia.

The Colloquium provided the forum for advocates of the UNSCR 1325 to reflect on the practical gains made, as well as the gaps that still exist in relation to the implementation of the UNSCR 1325.

In this regard, and in light of the continuous violations of women's rights in armed conflict, we request UN Member States to take special measures to ensure the full and effective implementation of the UNSCR 1325 and we recommend the following:

On the representation and participation of women and men at all levels of decision-making

The UN and its Member states must go beyond establishing a database and nominate women in decision making positions; ensure equal representation and participation of women and men in all activities related to the UNSCR 1325 and put in place measures including education and mentoring systems.

On the Peace Keeping Operations

The UN Security Council (UNSC) must incorporate UNSCR 1325 provisions in all peacekeeping mandates. It should strengthen measures to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) The UNSC should also require all troop contributing countries to increase the number of female civilian and military personnel in peacekeeping missions. In addition, more women must be appointed to serve as Special Representatives and Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary General.

The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations should require all peacekeeping, military and civilian personnel to undergo comprehensive and relevant pre-deployment and in-mission gender training.

We also demand that the UN recognize and develop strategies to address the complex legal issues relating to the obligations of peacekeepers in relation to custody, maintenance, transfer and citizenship of children born during conflict and displacement.

On Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration, Resettlement and Repatriation (DDRRR)

The UN, Member States and Agencies are urged to recognize local communities as leaders in DDRRR processes. Women should be involved in every aspect of the DDRRR process and special measures should be taken to ensure that long term needs of female ex-combatants, including their access, eligibility and protection from stigmatization, are considered.

The UN, Member States and Agencies are requested to consider declaring systematic rape and sexual violence in conflict a weapon of war that needs to be part of the disarmament process. Thus, if rape and sexual violence continues, reintegration compensation should not be

processed. The climate of impunity that still persists in many countries must be brought to an end.

The UN, Member States and Agencies are also urged to respect the human rights of returnees, especially women and children, and to ensure that adequate support is provided for their reintegration into the community and ensure their sustainable livelihoods.

On National Level Implementation of UNSCR 1325

Member States must develop, implement and monitor UNSCR 1325 National Action Plans; and strengthen the capacities of their national gender machineries to take an active role in the full and effective implementation of the UNSCR 1325.

On Women at the Peace Table

The UNSG must nominate a gender adviser to UN mediation teams and demand that all parties in negotiation have women in their delegations and ensure that peace agreements are gender responsive.

On the UN Secretary-General's Reports

The UN Secretary-General's report on UNSCR 1325 must reflect the voices of women in local communities. Women's groups and NGOs advocating for women's participation in all aspects of peace building and conflict resolution must be fully consulted during UNSC missions.

We mandate President Halonen and President Sirleaf to:

Take our voices to the UN General Assembly to demand a General Assembly Resolution calling on all Member States to fully and effectively implement UNSCR 1325 at the national level through the development of UNSCR 1325 National Action Plans with a definite budget line amongst other measures;

Call upon the SC to enforce UNSCR 1325 by creating a permanent working group on women and armed conflict and adopting additional resolutions to strengthen it further by the year 2010;

Call on the UN Secretary General to appoint a Special Representative for Women and Armed Conflict, accompanied by adequate resources, who will further raise awareness on the differential impact of violent conflicts on women and men and the key roles women play in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peace building and decision-making; and

Present the implementation of these recommendations at the 2010 Ministerial Review Conference of Resolution 1325.

Adopted in Monrovia, Liberia; 8th March, 2009

COLLOQUIUM IN PICTURES



Liberian delegates following the proceedings

Children welcoming delegates to the International Colloquium



Celebrating on completion of a job well done



Femmes Africa Solidarité

WITH the support of:



African Women's
Development Fund



Economic Commission for Africa



the
GLOBAL FUND
for
WOMEN

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