



**10th Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting on Gender Mainstreaming in
the African Union
Accra, Ghana
23-24 June 2007**

**ACCRA INPUTS TO THE GRAND DEBATE ON UNION GOVERNMENT
AND
IMPLEMENTATION OF SOLEMN DECLARATION ON GENDER EQUALITY IN
AFRICA (SDGEA)**

We, the Civil Society Organisations working across Africa, meeting at the 10th Pre Summit Consultative Meeting on Gender Mainstreaming in the African Union (AU) in Accra, Ghana from 23 to 24 June 2007, prior to the 9th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, to follow-up on the “Gender Is My Agenda” Campaign on the Implementation of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA), co- organised by Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS), and the AU Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD), supported by Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), African Women Development Fund (AWDF), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and GTZ, chaired by the Minister of Women and Children Affairs of the Government of Ghana,

Building upon the important work and achievements accomplished by the African women’s networks under the initiative of the defunct African Women’s Committee for Peace and Development (AWCPD) and FAS during the previous Consultative meetings in Durban, June 2002 hosted by the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD); in Dakar, April 2003 hosted by FAS; in Maputo, June 2003 hosted by the Foundation for Community Development (FDC); in Addis Ababa, June 2004 hosted by the AU Gender Directorate; in Abuja, January 2005 hosted by the Africa Leadership Forum (ALF); in Tripoli, July 2005 hosted by the Ministry of Social Affairs; in Dakar, October 2005 hosted by FAS; in Banjul, June 2006 hosted by African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights (ACDHRS) and in Addis Ababa, January 2007 hosted by the African Centre for Gender and Development of United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA),

Appreciating the various initiatives which have been put in place by the Assembly of Heads of State towards the empowerment of women and attainment of gender equality, including:

- The Gender Parity Principle in the Statutes of the African Union;
- The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa; as well as the
- The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women of Africa

Noting that the 9th Summit of the African Union is dedicated to the Grand Debate on the Union Government,

Also noting the documents on the Union Government, as well as different proposals on the issue including the recommendations of the Chairperson of AUC on the need to strengthen the African Union Commission,

Determined to contribute to the debate and conscious of the implication of the Union Government for African Women,

Concerned with the ongoing conflicts, in particular their impact on women of Somalia, Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo as well as the Mano River Countries,

Aware that the establishment of the Union Government will fast track the political, economic and social integration in Africa and provide better framework for resolution of conflicts in Africa,

A. On the Union Government:

We urge the Assembly of Heads of State and Government to:

1. Include the gender parity principle in the new Constitutive Act of the Union Government and maintain it in all the Organs, structures and programmes of the African Union Government, Regional Economic Communities and National Governments as stated in the SDGEA;
2. Ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all the proposed 16 strategic focus areas and the eventual community domain of the Union Government;
3. Separate the existing Gender and Youth joint strategic area of focus in the Study on an African Union Government to become two separate and distinct areas of focus;
4. Give priority to women and gender issues by ensuring that it becomes the first strategic area of focus for the Union Government;
5. Establish a Gender and Women's Council as part of the Council in Configuration as proposed in the study on the Union Government;
6. Use the opportunity of the establishment of the Union Government to review compliance with the AU Gender Parity Principle in the protocol setting up the Pan African Parliament in addition to the Commission on Human and People's Rights and the African Court on Human Rights;
7. Make the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the AUWC be observers at meetings of the Peace and Security Council, and also ensure that this advisory body regularly report to the AUC Chairperson on progress made in the implementation of the SDGEA;

8. Strengthen the position of ECOSOCC by changing its status from that of an Advisory body to a Consultative Organ of the Union while the PAP should be upgraded to become the legislative organ of the Union Government as proposed in the study on Union Government;
9. Support the proposal of the Chairperson of AUC on the need to strengthen the African Union Commission as the driving force of the Union Government;
10. Create greater opportunities for the empowerment of African women within the proposed Specialised Financial Institutions to be established under the Union Government;
11. Adopt the proposal to impose five US Dollars on each ticket bought for interstate travels in Africa and ten US Dollars on each tickets between Africa and other continents as viable funding mechanism for the Union Government;
12. Finally, ensure that the New Union Government strengthen all existing African institutions; making them accountable and responsive to the needs of African People and in reporting on their commitments to the African Women;

B. On the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA), and the Gender is My Agenda Network

1. Notes with concern the non submission by several Member States of their baseline reports on the implementation of the provisions of the SDGEA and calls upon the remaining 40 Member States who have not submitted their reports to do so on time for the next Summit in January 2008;
2. Reiterate our earlier call to the Assembly to give prominence to Women's empowerment and gender equality as espoused in the SDGEA;
3. Ensure that all Member States create and maintain all necessary structures and adequate reportorial arrangements, while adequate budgetary allocations are put in place for the implementation of the SDGEA;
4. Urge Member States that have not ratified and domesticated the Protocol to the Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa to do so immediately;
5. Also urge Member States to contribute to the establishment of the African Trust Fund for Women as agreed within the SDGEA;
6. Furthermore, we commit ourselves with our partners to ensure that this consultative process trickle down to our various constituencies under the Gender Is My Agenda campaign.
