



## Femmes Africa Solidarité

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## *PRESS RELEASE*



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### **BAMAKO MALI: FEMMES AFRICA SOLIDARITÉ HOSTS CONFERENCE CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF THE WOMEN'S PEACE MOVEMENT IN AFRICA**

Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) is pleased to announce the successful completion of its ten year anniversary conference entitled, **“Gender, Peace and Security in Africa: Capitalizing on Ten Years of Women’s Experience”** from June 11-15 in Bamako, Mali, hosted by H.E. Amadou Toumani Touré, President of Mali.

The event was attended by a number of distinguished guests including H.E. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President of Liberia; Mrs. Toure Lobbo Traore, first lady of Mali; Dr. Dlamini Zuma, Minister of Foreign Affairs, South Africa; Ms. Aminata Tall, Minister of State, Senegal; and Mrs. Ruth Sando Perry, former Head of State, Liberia.

The conference was an opportunity to unite African women working for peace and to review ten years of activities in order to further enhance the participation of women in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa.

Further, the conference provided an avenue in which to identify the best practices of female peace leaders and to define strategies for future action. Participants evaluated successes and failures, shared knowledge about increasing the role of women in conflict resolution and

peace reconstruction, and defined new orientations for the future of the women's peace movement.

One of the highlights of the conference was the evening gala and presentation of the Tombouctou Award. Several eminent personalities, including the President of Mali, received this distinction in recognition of their efforts and contributions in the pursuit of peace and stability in Africa.

The selection of President Toumani Touré as a recipient of the Tombouctou Award, recognizes the wisdom and resolve of Malians in ending the "Rebellion of Touareg" conflict on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 1996. As such, the location of the conference in Mali and the award logo entitled "the Flame of Tombouctou" were chosen to symbolize the efforts of the Malian people towards peace and reconciliation.

The Bamako conference also provided a forum for unveiling the results of a study commissioned by FAS of its activities over the past ten years. The study was carried out between January and February, 2006 by four external consultants with an aim to examine FAS's contributions to the women's peace movement thus far. The lessons learned from this study will allow FAS to review its programs in order to create a clearer picture of the processes of prevention and peacebuilding currently in place, and to arrive at better strategies and approaches in the future.

In addition to the launch of the study, the conference was also an opportunity to discuss new tools for action, including the creation of a Leadership Bank of African Women, and case studies and instruments of monitoring and evaluation that will now be available as a resource for women invested in promoting peace and stability on the continent.

After examining the results of the ten year study, members and networks of FAS enshrined the "Bamako Commitment" in which they made several commitments for the future of the women's peace movement. Among them, were the imperatives to: foster knowledge in youth to assume the legacy of leadership for peace; advocate for implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325; reinforce traditional mechanisms for conflict management rooted in African social values, and contribute to the transformation of the Pan-African Organization of Women.

FAS is pleased with the outcome of the conference and looks forward to continuing its work in engendering the peace process in Africa.

For more details about FAS, please visit our website [www.fasngo.org](http://www.fasngo.org).

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*FAS is an international women's organisation with the ECOSOC Consultative Status working to empower African women to assume a leadership role in peace building, and conflict resolution. FAS programmes operate mainly in war-torn countries such as the Mano River and the Great Lakes regions. As well, FAS works closely with African sub-regional and regional organs such as ECOWAS and the African Union to ensure greater involvement of women in decision-making processes for peace and development*