



## Femmes Africa Solidarité

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### ***PRESS RELEASE***

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### **CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS TO MAKE FIRST EVER REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOLEMN DECLARATION**

9th AU Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting  
January 23-24, 2007 – Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

As part of the ongoing ‘Gender is My Agenda Campaign,’ aiming to mainstream gender in the African Union (AU), Femmes Africa Solidarité and women’s civil society networks in Africa have organized the 9<sup>th</sup> AU Pre-Summit Consultative meeting which will take place from January 23-24, 2007 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The meeting will precede the regular AU sessions, and will be the 9<sup>th</sup> in a series of consultative meetings of civil society networks concerned with gender issues and the promotion of women’s human rights in Africa. The key objective of this year’s meeting is for civil society members of the campaign to evaluate and report on the implementation of the Solemn Declaration for Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) – an instrument adopted by AU Heads of State in July 2004, which calls for gender mainstreaming and the full promotion and protection of women’s rights at the national and regional level.

As a means of monitoring its implementation, organizers of the ‘Gender is My Agenda Campaign’ have defined thematic focal points addressing the various aspects of the SDGEA, asking members of civil society to evaluate and report on the progress of each theme through the presentation of a shadow report. Some of the themes which will be addressed in the context of gender equality are: governance; peace and security; human rights; health; education; and economic empowerment.

The meeting is intended to be an opportunity to build upon the successes of the previous 8<sup>th</sup> consultative meeting which took place June 2006 in Banjul with the official launch of the ‘Gender is My Agenda Campaign’ and the adoption of the Banjul Declaration. The meeting in Addis Ababa will aim to continue facilitating a dialogue amongst civil society members and provide a forum in which to revise future strategies on gender mainstreaming.

The expected outcomes of the meeting are the following: for civil society members to present and distribute their evaluations on each thematic focal point; for the reports of AU Member States to be discussed and recommendations to be offered; for awareness to be raised and dialogue strengthened among women's organizations at all levels; for support to be mobilized around the various thematic focal points; and, for constraints to be identified and the way forward established.

Femmes Africa Solidarité anticipates this meeting to be another opportunity to push forward the gender agenda at the regional level and to strengthen and expand the group of civil society networks working in solidarity for peace, gender equality and justice in Africa.

For more details about Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS), please visit our website at [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. FAS also 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*



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