



Newsletter

Dear FAS Members, Networks and Friends,

March 2010

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Since its inception in 1996, FAS has worked to strengthen and promote the leading role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts on the African continent. In last three months, a number of events were organized by FAS, such as the 15th Pre-summit Consultative Meeting on Gender Mainstreaming in AU, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. In the coming month, we are organizing several events, such as the side event during the 13th HRC -- "Women in the DRC", and African Gender Forum Award Ceremony in Dakar, Senegal. We would like to share our activities with you in this latest issue of FAS' Newsletter.

Yours in solidarity,

Bineta Diop, Executive Director

FAS HAS BEEN GRANTED ECOSOC GENERAL STATUS

On 29th of January, 2010, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) recommended the reclassification of Femmes Africa Solidarité from special to general status in the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The general status will allow FAS to address meetings and propose agenda items. Since being granted back in 2000 with the ECOSOC Special Status now in 2010 FAS has been granted the ECOSOC General Status and will continue to work in collaboration with African women's organizations across all levels to empower African women to bring their unique perspective in politics and peace issues.

15TH PRE-SUMMIT CONSULTATION MEETING



The 15th Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting on Gender Mainstreaming in the African Union took place at the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) Conference Center in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 21st-22nd January, 2010. The meeting was organized by the Gender is my Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) network and coordinated by Femmes Africa Solidarité

(FAS), in partnership with the Government of Finland, AWDF, OSI and DFID. The overriding purpose of the meeting was to discuss the changing environment at the regional and international level and elaborate a new paradigm in the work of CSOs advocating for effective gender parity policies and practice. The following issues were discussed in the meeting: Information and Communication Technologies in Africa, Beijing + 15 review, launching of the Shadow report on the implementation of the SDGEA, Women's Reproductive rights, AU decision to institute 2010-2020 as the "Decade for African Women", including the Caravan across East African "From the Womb to the Tomb", mobilizing the youth and women's grassroots, as well as advocacy work around the AU heads of states and government summit. The Key outcome document of the meeting appreciated the willingness of the Heads of State and Governments to continuously improve the livelihood of African citizens through various landmark initiatives, policies and programmes at the continental, regional and national levels; and recalled the commitments of the AU Heads of State and Government to gender equality and women's empowerment.

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FAS Board Meeting in Addis Ababa

African Union Assembly Decisions in the 14th Ordinary Session

LINK

Africa Union Press Release

<http://www.africa-union.org/root/AU/Conferences/2010/january/summit/14thsummit.html>

FAS EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING



Following the Pre-Summit Consultation Meeting, FAS Executive Board Meeting took place on 24th January 2010, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where Ms Marie-Louise Baricako chaired the meeting. FAS Board Members Present included: Ms Thelma Awori, Ms Marie-Louise Baricako, Ms Bineta Diop, Ms Yasmine Jusu-Sheriff, Ms Soyata Maiga, Ms Ticky Monekosso, Ms Thandi Orelyn. One of the Advisory Board Members Ms Hon. Saida Agrebi also attended this meeting. During the meeting, programs and activities of FAS were re-

viewed. Among many issues discussed, FAS Re-structuring was highlighted.

The 14TH AU SUMMIT



The 14th ordinary summit of the African Union (AU) was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The official theme of the summit was: "Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in Africa: Challenges and Prospects for Development". The meeting were scheduled as follows: Permanent Representative Committee of Ambassadors (PRC): 25th-26th January 2010; 16th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council: 28th-29th January 2010; 14th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of States and Governments: 31st

January to 2nd February 2010. Mme Maiga and Mme Diop led the GIMAC Advocacy Delegation in the 14th Ordinary Session, the Assembly of the African Union Heads of State and Government adopted the following Decisions:

- **On the situation of peace and security in Africa**, the Summit expressed satisfaction with the efforts by the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs).
- **With regard to unconstitutional changes of government**, the Assembly reiterated the AU's rejection of unconstitutional changes of Government, and its determination to put a definitive end to this scourge.
- **On the Year of Peace and Security in Africa**, the Assembly stressed that the Year of Peace and Security will be an opportunity for African people and leaders, as well as African institutions, in partnership with the international community, to review current efforts towards peace on the continent.
- **On the African Common position on the review of the implementation of the Beijing+15 platform**, the Assembly took note of the Report on the African Common Position on the Fifteen Year Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action, and the recommendations contained therein.
- **Regarding the establishment of the Fund for African Women**, the Assembly decided to launch the Fund for African Women in accordance with Assembly Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.143 (VIII) .



FAS PRESENTATION TO CEDAW (SIDE EVENT)



On 1st of February, a side-event on widowhood issues of discrimination on the occasion of CEDAW 45th session was organized by Widows for Peace through Democracy (WPD) in Palais des Nations, Geneva. It aimed to address this neglected gender/human rights subject to CEDAW committee members and subsequently to persuade the Committee to consider developing a General Recommendation to States Parties to act upon this issue.

FAS supported the concerns and requests uttered by Widows for Peace. FAS presented a statement on widowhood issues with regards to conflict and post conflict issues. She

highlighted the fact that FAS just attended the African Union Summit in Ethiopia and that the given statement presents an urgent call from African women towards the CEDAW committee. FAS called for identifying and recognizing the required inclusion of widowhood issues, and further request a General Recommendation that addresses assistance needed by widows and wives of the missing in conflict and post-conflict situations.

SUPPORTING WOMEN IN PEACE AND SECURITY - A DECADE + IN THE MAKING

During 54th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York, 1st-12th March 2010, FAS organized three panels in collaboration with several of its regional partners and members from the Great Lakes Region, the Mano River, and Sudan.

Being one of the few regional African NGO represented in New York at the UN and having already played an active role in the Beijing + 15 process by promoting women's role in sustaining peace and security in Africa, FAS aimed to engender the peace process for the attainment of human security and durable peace in Africa, a critical part of the implementation of the Beijing + 15 Review. The three panels were assigned as below:

- Beijing +15: An Assessment of Challenges, Successes&Way Forward to Sustainable Peace in Africa, 4th March
- UNSCR1325: A Regional Perspective for Effective Implementation, 5th March
- Violence Against Women: Linking SCR1325 and SCR1820, 5th March

The outcomes of the panels include: Defining achievements, gaps and challenges in the implementation of national programs, and the direction for actions for further implementation.

UN APPOINTED CSAG

The Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) was appointed by the United Nations as the landmark Security Council resolution 1325 on the role of women in peace and security marks its tenth anniversary in 2010.

Co-chaired by former Irish President and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, and Executive Director of Femmes Africa Solidarité, Bineta Diop, the Advisory group will advise a UN High-Level Steering Committee set up by Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro, which is tasked with enhancing the UN system's efforts to implement the resolution 1325 in the context of armed conflict over the past decade.

Other members of the group are: Salim Ahmed Salim (Tanzania), Elisabeth Rehn (Finland), Lahkdar Brahimi (Algeria), Hina Jilani (Pakistan), Sanam Aderlini (Iran/UK), Thelma Awori (Liberia/Uganda), Swanee Hunt (US), Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls (Fiji), Susana Villaran De La Puente (Peru), Nyaradzai Gumbonzvanda (Zimbabwe), Zainab Salbi (Iraq/US) and Donald Steinberg (US). The full advisory group has met on 6th March, and will meet again in June and in September 2010 to present recommendations to the Secretary-General.

**Widowhood Issues of
Discrimination: Pres-
entation to the CE-
DAW**

LINK

WPD Publication

[http://
www.widowsforpeace.org/
Pages/852794994/
publications.asp](http://www.widowsforpeace.org/Pages/852794994/publications.asp)

**Panels Organized
During 54th Session of
CSW in New York**

LINK

**CSW Session Parallel
Events**

[http://www.ngocsw.org/en/
main](http://www.ngocsw.org/en/main)

**The Civil Society
Advisory Group**



2009 AFRICAN GENDER AWARD TO GRANTED TO MOZAMBIQUE



PROJECTS PROCEEDING

2009 African Gender Award

LINK

African Gender Forum and Award

<http://www.fasngo.org/african-gender-award-2007.html>

Master Degree on Gender and Peacebuilding

Women-led Businesses in Five Selected Countries

LINK

Brochure

<http://fsf-ngo.org/drupal/sites/default/files/Final%20Reviewed%20Brochure%20copia.doc>

The 2009 African Gender Award will be granted to President Armando E. Guebuza of Mozambique in Dakar, Senegal, April of 2010.

Incepted by FAS, in partnership with AWDF, AU, UNECA, GIMAC and the government of Senegal, the African Gender Award is a celebration to recognize and reward African Leaders who have demonstrated outstanding achievements in gender mainstreaming and women's advancement. Guided by specific criteria and indicators monitoring the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, the Committee decided to confer the 2009 African Gender Award to the political will of the Mozambique leadership, as a performance award recompensing Governments accountability towards the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality.

MASTER DEGREE PROGRAMME ON GENDER AND PEACEBUILDING

FAS is going to launch a Master degree programme on gender and peacebuilding in Senegal, in partnership with Upeace and Université Cheikh Anta Diop of Senegal. Academic agreements, Masters' curriculum and Project Proposal budget will be defined and finalized. The programme is expected to start in September 2010 with 30 participants from Africa and abroad.

WOMEN LED BUSINESSES

The "Training and Mentoring Program for Women-Led Business" has been developed by FAS together with the Center for Diversity in Global Management at the Instituto de Empresa (IE) and submitted to the Government of Spain to target and work with 25 business women entrepreneurs from 5 African countries, including Mozambique, Senegal, and South Africa in 2007. It aims to assist in the transformation and expansion of their businesses into consolidated mid-sized enterprises, generating employment and economic benefits. The participants will be equipped with the skills, content knowledge and ICT (Information and communication technology). The preparation and pre-course training were processed in 1st phase and 2nd phase of the project. In the 3rd phase, the 10 best business plans selected by the panel of experts will be presented to a panel of potential investors.



EVENTS DURING 13TH HRC SESSION

PANELS

Panels on International Women's Day

LINK

NGO CSW Events

<http://ngocsw-geneva.ch/>

Women in the DRC: the Contexts of Abuse

FAS PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



On 8th March 2010, the COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN(NGO CSW) in Geneva organized two panels. The theme of the first one was "Watershed for Women's Human Rights and Empowerment", focusing on the integration of women's rights in the UN System with reference to innovative ideas, such as a better co-ordination between CEDAW and the UPR of the Human Rights Council. The theme of second panel was "Beijing + 15: Creating New Mechanisms to Accelerate the Implementation of the Platform for Action", considering the effectiveness of some of the emerging mechanisms such as

the recently adopted UNGA resolution to set up a composite entity in the UN on women, implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on "Women, Peace and Security", as well as SCR 1820, 1888 and 1889.

Ms. Bineta Diop participated in the Second Session as a panelist, where she expressed her concern about the slow progress for Implementation of 1325, due to lack of the accountability. She summarized although those National action plan have been launched in some countries, such as Burundi, Rwanda, and DRC, there is no indicator to measure these action plans. Regarding the escalation of violence against women in Guinea and the DRC she stated that training should be arranged for military and peace keepers. Another problem should be paid attention to is that women are not aware of their own rights and there are very few judges or courts in this field. In the end Ms. Diop highlighted: "We do not need another Resolution. In this 10th Anniversary , in fact, we need a trustable fund to send women to the table to participate in the peace progress."

UPCOMING: HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL PANEL WOMEN IN THE DRC

During the 13th Session of Human rights Council, **FAS** and **WILPF** are organizing a panel discussion in Geneva to link the contexts of human rights abuses faced by women in the DRC to pressing issues surrounding the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Resolutions (SCR1325 & 1889 and SCR1820 & 1888).

The event will take place on 23rd of March from 13:00-15:00 in Room XXII of Palais des Nations, Geneva.

The impact of war and conflict on women in the DRC needs to be discussed in a wider human rights discourse and requires connection to the Security Council obligations to ensure conflict prevention via women's participation, the protection of women against all forms of violence, and women centered national policies.

The special speakers include:

- Mr. Richard Lukunda, Advisor to the Minister of Human Rights
- Ms. Bente Angell-Hansen, Ambassador of the Norwegian Permanent Mission to Geneva
- Ms. Ilse and Femke van Velzen, Independent Filmmakers (IF Productions)
- Mr. Scott Campbell, Head of Africa Field Programs of OHCHR
- Mr. Yao Agbetse, International Advocacy and Training Director, Franciscans International.

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