



**11th Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting on Gender Mainstreaming
in the African Union
22-23 January 2008**

Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**11TH PRE –SUMMIT CONSULTATIVE MEETING
SOLEMN STATEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Preamble

We, members of the African Civil Society and Women’s Movement meeting under the aegis of “Gender is My Agenda Campaign” on the occasion of the 11th Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 22nd to 23 rd January 2008, on the theme “ Industrial Development for Africa: The Gender Perspective ”, with the support of the Commission of the African Union (AUC), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the United Kingdom Department for International Development(DFID) and Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA);

Building on the important achievements made by the African women during the last 10 pre-summit meetings;

Welcoming the decision of the Heads of State and Government to take a critical look at the operations and activities of the AU through the setting up of the High Panel on the Audit of the AU organs;

Recalling the decision of the Heads of State and Government on ensuring that Gender equality remains at the forefront of Africa’s development agenda in accordance with their commitment to ensure gender equality in the appointments at the AU organs/structures at all levels;

Recalling the decision of the Heads of State and Government to establish the African Women's Fund as provided for in the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA);

Thanking His Excellency, Alpha Omar Konare, Chairperson of the African Union Commission for his commitment to gender equality during his tenure, especially for spearheading the adoption of the SGDEA;

Appreciating the decision of the Heads of State and Government to devote their 11th Summit to Industrial Development in Africa and cognizant of the role women should play in this process;

Bearing in mind the key issues contained in the SDGEA and our commitment to monitor, evaluate and report on its implementation;

Recommend the following:

On Industrialization

- Member States should increase their budgetary allocation to research and development as a key support to industrial development;
- Appropriate legislation should be enacted in order to protect the intellectual property rights in Africa, especially women inventions in various field;
- Women associations should be set up to promote industrialization in Africa, especially in rural areas;
- An industrial Transformation Fund should be established to assist in developing and implementing various programs relating to industrialization in Africa;
- Women should be supported to engage in the industrialization programs and to ensure their economic self-sufficiency;

On SDGEA Reporting Obligation

- AU Member States should continue to honor their commitments in reporting on their achievements and setbacks relating to gender mainstreaming in programs and activities at national, regional and continental levels ;
- AU Member States should also endeavor to promote and coordinate national public and private initiatives on gender equality and integrate such a component in their periodic reports on the SDGEA;

- AU Gender Directorate should be adequately empowered to play its pivotal role in monitoring national and regional initiatives to ensure the implementation of the gender parity principle.

On Good Governance

i) *Panafrican Parliament (PAP)*

- While appreciating the involvement of a few women in the Panafrican Parliament (PAP), it is strongly recommended that all Member States should ensure respect for the Gender Parity Principle.

ii) *Economic, social and cultural Council (ECOSOC)*

- The participants welcome the achievements made at national, regional and continental levels with regard to the integration of Civil Society Organizations in the process of establishing the ECOSOCC and recommend that the Gender parity principle be respected in the nomination of the candidates and in the subsequent election of the ECOSOCC members.

ii) *The African Commission on Human and People's Rights and the African Court on Human and People's Rights*

- The participants note with great satisfaction the new composition of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights with seven (7) Women Commissioners out of eleven (11) members as well as the Bureau composed of Women.

Nevertheless, they deplore the lack of Gender balance in the composition of the African Court on Human and People's Rights and recommend that this principle be strictly respected in the future.

On Peace and Security:

- Women should be appointed as Special Representatives and Envoys included in fact finding missions;
- Women Peace advocacy groups should be given appropriate support for early response to crisis situations such as in Kenya;

- The action and leadership role of Mrs Graça Machel in her mediation efforts in Kenya should be recognized and fully supported by appointing her as a Special Envoy;
- The African women consultation on Darfur, organized by Femmes Africa Solidarite (FAS) and its partners, should be fully supported.

On Human Rights

- The Human Rights bodies existing on the African continent should be reinforced by providing them adequate resources and political support;
- The Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) should establish networks in order to better monitor human rights situations in the continent and cooperate effectively with the AU Commission, the human rights bodies as well as other relevant institutions.

On Education

- African Governments should consider as a priority free access to education for all as reflected in the MDGs;
- Necessary legislative measures should be taken for the promotion of girls education, particularly through gender sensitive budgeting;
- Appropriate measures should be taken to introduce as quickly as possible IT programs in school curricula.

On Health

- African Governments should ensure availability of resources for the access of women to health care and their access to ARV treatment in case of HIV/AIDS;
- Communication strategies should be devised to ensure sexual education at secondary school level and to promote behavior changing in the communities;
- PMTCT (Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission) should be considered as an important challenge in AIDS control;
- Health and poverty issues should be managed in an integrated approach so as to find a lasting solution to the recurring health problems in the continent.

On Economic empowerment

Considering that women are the majority of the population of Africa and that they are also the primary economic producers :

- Member States should continue to develop infrastructures (water, electricity, roads, etc.) in rural areas with a special focus on their access to women entrepreneurs who are the backbone of SME development in Africa;
- Member States should support all the public and private actors involved in women economic empowerment programs;
- Member States should adopt appropriate regulations to give women access to finance and loan facilities;
- The AU Commission should speed up action toward the establishment of the African Women's Fund as adopted in the SDGEA.

On African Union Government

The participants to the 11th Pre-Summit Consultative meeting, building on the extensive debate on the African Union Government which started in Accra, Ghana, in July 2007, recognized that the Union Government will be an adequate tool for effective African integration as well as for conflict resolution and peace building. Furthermore, the participants recommend the following :

- The African women should be given enough room for effective contribution to the debate on and the establishment of the Union Government;
- The process leading to the formation of the United States of Africa should be expedited;

As African Women Networks, united in the “Gender is my Agenda Campaign”, we reaffirm our strong commitment to struggle for a United Africa where the rights of men and women will be guaranteed at all levels.

Done in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 23 rd January 2008

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