



African Union



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Resilient nations.*



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality  
and the Empowerment of Women



Economic Commission for Africa



**STAKEHOLDERS' CONSULTATION ON THE "YEAR OF WOMEN'S  
EMPOWERMENT AND DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS  
AFRICA'S AGENDA 2063"**

*20-23 January 2015  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*

**JOINT COMMUNIQUE**

1. We, the Ministers of the African Union (AU) in charge of Gender and Women's Affairs, members of the Gender is my Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) network and other civil society organizations, gender focal points of Regional Economic Communities (RECs), UN Agencies and other development partners, meeting at the AU Stakeholder Consultation under the AU 2015 Theme "**Year of Women's Empowerment and Development Towards Africa's Agenda 2063**" held from 20 to 23 January 2015 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia at the Headquarters of the African Union Commission (AUC) on the margins of the 24<sup>th</sup> AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

2. Utilizing the "**Year of Women's Empowerment and Development Towards Africa's Agenda 2063**" and the African Women's Decade (2010–2020), the Stakeholders' Consultation provided an opportunity for stakeholders and women's Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to reflect and propose concrete actions on the implementation of Africa's Agenda 2063, as well as the Beijing Declaration of Action, the Post-2015 Agenda, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, and other policies and frameworks and we:

- a) Appreciate the commitment by AU Member States to declare 2015 as "the Year of Women's Empowerment and Development Towards Africa's Agenda 2063";
- b) Congratulate the African Union Commission (AUC) under the leadership of the Chairperson H.E. Dr.Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma for the development of Agenda 2063 and its 10 Year Action Plan, which recognizes Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment as a critical driver for the transformation and development of Africa in all seven (7) Aspirations of Africa's Agenda 2063;
- c) Reiterate and recommit to the "*Addis Ababa Declaration on Accelerating the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action - Towards a Transformational Change for Women and Girls in Africa*";
- d) Welcome the mandate of the AUC Chairperson's Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security to promote the rights of women during conflict, their participation in the prevention and resolution of conflict, and their protection from sexual and gender-based violence;
- e) Take note of the 2015 High-level Review and Global Study on United Nations Security Council resolution 1325;
- f) Recall the civil society consultative meeting on Agenda 2063 in Addis Ababa in 2013, the meeting of Gender Ministers and Civil Society Organizations in Malabo 2014 and the 9<sup>th</sup> African Women Regional Conference in Addis Ababa in 2014;

- g) Acknowledge existing frameworks on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment from the continent and beyond and recommit to the implementation and mutual accountability of those existing frameworks without renegotiating their content;
- h) Note that the implementation of existing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment frameworks has been painfully slow due to lack of financial inclusion and limited financial resources allocated for women's entrepreneurship, women's ownership and control of assets, women's financial literacy and women's agency;
- i) Recognize the existing and emerging threats to Africa's development, including climate change, conflicts, terrorism and health pandemics (Ebola, HIV/AIDS) and the disproportionately negative impact they have on women's lives and well-being;
- j) Realize the urgent need for a mindset change which allows culture as a driving force for change that does not serve as a constraint to women's rights and empowerment;
- k) Appreciate the institutionalization of a joint Stakeholders' Consultation between Ministers of Gender and Women's Affairs, RECs, CSOs, Gender Machineries, the UN System and other Development/Investment Partners; and,
- l) Strive towards an integrated, peaceful, prosperous and dynamic continent, for all.

3. The Stakeholders' Consultation therefore commits to:

- a) Working hand-in-hand in achieving Agenda 2063 through engagement and coordination in the longer term, so that collaborative efforts and mobilization continue to bear fruits that accelerates transformation and resonates throughout the entire next 50 years;
- b) Advocating for legislative instruments and policy tools to promote and protect access to, and control of, land rights for women across Africa;
- c) Ensuring that national, and REC, policies are in line with Agenda 2063 and its 10-Year Action Plan;
- d) Contributing substantively to development of indicators that build on the Solemn Declaration Index (SDI), that has been developed by the GIMAC and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and monitoring progress of the implementation of Agenda 2063 and its 10-Year Action Plan;
- e) Providing progress-monitoring systems, in order to ensure mutual accountability in achieving the Gender Equality Goals in Agenda 2063 and its 10-Year Action Plan.

4. Taking into account national and socio-cultural background, the Ministers of Gender and Women's Affairs, the AUC, RECs, GIMAC and members of Civil Society Organizations, the UN System and development/investment partners recommend the following **Priority Actions** in implementing the 2015 Year for Women's Empowerment Towards Africa's Agenda 2063:

- a) Member States should popularize and implement Agenda 2063 to ensure broad participation at all levels, especially at the community level and in rural areas;
- b) The AUC should take leadership in harmonizing implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and mechanisms for all years of Agenda 2063;
- c) Heads of State to endorse the *Addis Ababa Declaration on Accelerating the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action Towards a transformational change for women and girls in Africa* (Beijing+20);
- d) Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) should enhance efforts to promote participation of women in judicial processes and Institutions, especially in governance and at decision-making levels, such as the Supreme Court, Constitutional Courts, Regional Courts;
- e) Member States should take into account Women sensitive issues to emerging threats such as Ebola, Terrorism and other impediments to Africa's development;
- f) Member States should develop, implement and report on National and Regional Action Plans to accelerate the Women, Peace and Security Agenda referencing the continental implementation Framework on Women, Peace and Security;
- g) Member States should share high-impact best practices and solutions that can be scaled up and replicated to improve the lives of women;
- h) Member States should develop and implement the 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Africa Agricultural Growth and Transformation (3AGT) for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, where gender is a cross-cutting issue of all seven (7) goals;
- i) Member States should develop a Plan of Action towards Silencing the Guns by 2020, to promote women's participation in conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict rebuilding, and a particular focus on ending violence against women and girls eliminating impunity and ensuring access to justice, rehabilitation and recovery, especially for child soldiers, and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.
- j) Member States should ensure that women are part of the electoral machinery, including Institutions that address violence during elections;

- k) Member States should establish mechanisms to identify survivors of sexual and gender-based abuses and provide psychosocial and economic care during conflict and post-conflict situations;
- l) Member States should enhance women's contribution, and benefit from formal agriculture/agribusiness value-chains by improving their access to, and control over land, improving access to, and training in, new environmentally friendly technologies, which also reduce women burden of work, while also improving access to markets;
- k) Member States should establish mechanisms for business women to transition from small-, to large-scale corporations, with particular focus on women's innovative ventures and enterprises, that promote the economic empowerment and resilience of women;
- l) Member States should establish a Special Fund for Women and young girls in collaboration with the Africa Development Bank and the private sector; and a Trust Fund and supporting institutions, for investing throughout the five (5) stages of venture capital financing, in early stage, high potential and growth companies while paying special attention to enterprises that strengthen the capacity of women;
- m) Governments should allocate targeted and enhanced funding towards institutions working on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, including African headquartered Women's Organizations and UN Women;
- n) Member States should ensure that sexual and reproductive health and rights of African women in the existing commitments to women's reproductive health and rights, as adopted by African Heads of State in the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women (Maputo Protocol) in 2003, and the Maputo Plan of Action on Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights in 2006, are implemented and mutual accountability of those existing commitments, without renegotiating their content;
- o) Member States should ensure ending of the AIDS Epidemic by 2030, is part of the Agenda 2063, has an inclusive human rights approach that leaves no-one behind; including children, adolescents, women of child bearing age, female key populations, such as women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings;
- p) Governments should increase education and training investment that is accredited for quality, in science and technology (S&T), information and communications technology (ICT), engineering, mathematics and agriculture/agribusiness and nutrition innovation with a focus on young women;
- q) Governments should commit to ending child marriage in Africa through adoption of the Common Africa Position on Ending Child Marriage; development and implementation of comprehensive action plans, and inclusion of ending child marriage as an indicator for monitoring Agenda 2063 for the empowerment and well-being of girls;

- r) Member States should install a monument at the Africa Union Headquarters honoring women who have contributed to the African anti-colonial and anti-apartheid liberation movements, and the resolution of conflicts on the continent; and,
- s) The AUC Chairperson should share the outcomes of the Stakeholder' Consultation to the Council of Ministers and the Summit of Heads of State.

5. The meeting thanked the Chairperson of the AU Commission for convening this meeting and the support of the GIMAC, UNDP, UN Women, UNECA for their contribution, and the Government of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia for the hospitality.

*Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 23 January 2015*