



GIMAC Recommendations Are Reflected in Decisions Taken at 23rd African Union Summit

Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) is pleased to share important outcomes of the advocacy undertaken by the Gender is my Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) during the African Union (AU) Summit of Heads and Government held in June 2014 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. A network of more than 55 organizations from African civil society, the GIMAC meets twice a year ahead of AU Summits to advocate for gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa, and to hold African Union member states accountable to their commitments on these issues.

Meeting for the 24th time since the formation of the network, the GIMAC meeting in June 2014 in Malabo brought together more than 70 African women of diverse backgrounds from across the continent and the diaspora. Participants deliberated on prevailing and emerging issues affecting women and girls in Africa on agriculture, food security and economic livelihoods, women's participation in ongoing peace processes, violence against women and girls, education, and the need to strengthen the inclusion of women's rights and development in the post-2015 agenda and Agenda 2063. A set of key GIMAC recommendations to AU Heads of State and Government was developed and advocacy was conducted with key stakeholders urging swift action on the concerns identified.

The success of advocacy efforts of the GIMAC network was reflected in the final outcomes of the AU Summit, namely the Decisions of the 25th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, the Decisions, Declarations and Resolution of the 23rd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, and the Communiqué of Gender Ministers, and the Gender Focal Persons of Regional Economic Communities and the UNECA and the NEPAD Agency. These include positive outcomes for gender and women's rights on the thematic areas listed below.

Agriculture and Food Security

The Executive Council reiterated the GIMAC's stance on the need to recognize the critical role of smallholder farmers, *of which 80% are women*, in Africa's agricultural growth by calling on member states to place smallholder farmers at the centre of decision making and implementation of the agricultural transformation agenda.

The Assembly reaffirmed commitment towards ensuring all inclusive and participatory agricultural growth and transformation by creating the necessary appropriate policy, institutional and budgetary support and conditions to support and facilitate preferential entry and participation for women and youth in gainful and attractive agri-business opportunities.

AU Heads of State and Government also committed to end hunger by facilitating suitable, reliable and affordable mechanization and energy supplies, amongst others.

They further reiterated the importance of investing on multi-sectoral engagement and co-ownership of the agricultural transformation agenda with different public sectors, including infrastructure, energy, trade, industry, health, science and technology, education, in order to optimize outcome, resource use, synergy and impact.

Education

AU Heads of State and Government declared readiness to effectively invest on the education of girls and boys. Reflecting the GIMAC's recommendation on girls' rights, Heads of State and Government urged Member States to take necessary measures to eliminate child marriage, and strongly condemned the kidnapping, by Boko Haram, of over two hundred young girls in northern Nigeria.

Peace and Security

The Assembly highlighted the GIMAC's call for the urgent resolution of ongoing conflicts by expressing concern about the persistent insecurity in the Central African Republic (CAR) and the resulting humanitarian and human rights consequences. Furthermore, AU Heads of State and Government urged political and other CAR stakeholders to demonstrate the required political will and determination for the promotion of lasting peace and reconciliation in their country.

The Assembly encouraged all Malian stakeholders concerned to work towards the speedy convening of the inclusive peace talks. AU Heads of State and Government expressed disappointment at the failure of South Sudanese conflict parties to honor their commitments to date, and called on them to live up to their commitments and the expectations of their people.

Agenda 2063

The Executive Council showed commitment towards the inclusion of women's experience and perspectives in Agenda 2063 by reiterating its call to all African stakeholders, particularly youth, women and the diaspora, to provide their support and contributions with a view to consolidating the draft Agenda 2063.

Gender Equality

AU Heads of State and Government encouraged all Member States to submit their annual reports on the implementation of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, which reinforced the GIMAC's recommendation on the need for better tracking and implementation of gender equality and women's rights.

The GIMAC network particularly welcomes the decision of AU Heads of State and Government to hold the January 2015 AU Summit under the theme "***Year of Women Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063.***" The network also welcomes the decision of Gender Ministers and Gender Focal Points of RECs, UNECA and NEPAD Agency to consider continuation of joint meetings with the GIMAC on the margins of AU Summits.

About the Gender Is My Agenda Campaign

The GIMAC network uses regional instruments, including the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa to monitor implementation of gender equality and women's human rights by African Union member states. The network is coordinated by Femmes Africa Solidarité.

For more information: www.genderismyagenda.com