



**25th African Union Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting:
What African Women Demand for the Year of Women’s Empowerment and Development**

20-23 January 2015, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Addis Ababa, January 26th, 2015 - This week in Addis Ababa marked the end of the four day *Gender is my Agenda Campaign* (GIMAC) Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting on Mainstreaming Gender in the African Union (AU) and Member States. This 25th session of the GIMAC was special on many accounts. The year 2015 has been designated by the AU as the Year of Women’s Empowerment and Development Towards Africa’s Agenda 2063. The year also marks the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+20) and the 15th anniversary of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325). We are also into the 5th year of the African Women’s Decade (2010-2020) and the finalization of a new post-2015 development framework. The meeting marked the bi-annual consultation between GIMAC members on the one hand, and with the African Union Commission Chairperson, AU ministers of Gender and Women Affairs, gender focal points of Regional Economic Communities and United Nations partners on the other. This follows a key decision adopted during the 24th GIMAC Pre-Summit Meeting, which took place in June 2014 in Malabo for civil society representatives and policy makers to deliberate together before the African Union Summit of Heads of State and Government.

Dedicated to the theme “2015 Year of Women’s Empowerment and Development towards Africa’s Agenda 2063: What is the Change We Want to See?,” the GIMAC meeting gathered about 180 women, men and youth, representing civil society organizations working on women’s rights and gender equality throughout Africa. They examined crosscutting issues related to Governance, Peace and Security, Women’s Human Rights, Health, Education, Agriculture, Climate Change and Women’s Economic Empowerment. Participants also discussed the Solemn Declaration Index (SDI), developed by the GIMAC and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) as the first-ever civil society monitoring tool on the implementation of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa. The consultation called for the inclusion of women’s rights and concerns in Africa’s Agenda 2063, which is to be adopted in January 2015, accelerated implementation of existing human rights instruments, such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Maputo Protocol and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, increased financing for women entrepreneurs and development initiatives for women, as well as for a strengthened and coordinated Africa position on the post-2015 development agenda.

Femmes Africa Solidarité, as GIMAC focal point for Peace and Security, called for the full implementation of UNSCR 1325 as a priority and pledged the commitment of the network to partner with the AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security for a regional acceleration of the implementation of national and regional action plans on UNSCR 1325 in Africa.

In addition to Gender Ministers and their representatives, champions of women’s rights such as Dr. Dlamini-Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Ms. Bineta Diop, Special Envoy for

Women, Peace and Security of the AUC Chairperson and Founder and President of Femmes Africa Solidarité; Ms. Leymah Gbowee, Nobel Peace Prize recipient; Ms. Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, Special Envoy on Gender of the African Development Bank (AfDB); Ms. Soyata Maïga, Commissioner on the Rights of Women in Africa; Amb. Febe Potgieter-Gqubule, Advisor to the Chairperson of the African Union Commission; Ms. Takiywaa Manuh, Director of UNECA Social Development Policy Division, Ms. Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, General Secretary, World Young Women's Christian Association (World YWCA) and Goodwill Ambassador for Ending Child Marriage; Dr. Thelma Awori, Board Chair, Institute for Social Transformation, Ms. Letty Chiwara, UN Women Representative to Ethiopia, AU and UNECA, Dr. Brookman-Amisah, Special Adviser to the Ipas President for African Affairs and Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, Lead Author for the Resolution 1325 Global Study attended the meeting. They were also joined by Ms. Neema Namadamu, Founder and President of Synergy of Congolese Women's Associations, DRC; Ms. Beatrice Gakuba, CEO, Rwanda Flora and Wadada Enterprise, Rwanda; Ms. Yasmin Jusu-Sheriff, Regional President, Mano River Women's Peace Network (MARWOPNET), Sierra Leone; Mrs. Jeanne d'Arc Kankuzwe, President, Pro-Femmes/Twese Hamwe, Rwanda and Mr. Ibrahim Ceesay, Executive Coordinator, African Youth Initiative on Climate Change (AYICC), The Gambia.

The meeting received support from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, UN Women, United Nations Development Programme, the African Union Commission, Ipas Africa Alliance, among others.

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