

FAS HIGHLIGHTS

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS



Capacity Building &
Advocacy Programme in
the Mano River Region

Liberia Peace Accords &
Election of Ellen Johnson

Burundi Peace
Negotiation &
Democratization
Process

Inter-Congolese Dialogue
& Women's Consultation
Framework

Delegation and Needs
Assessment in the Great
Lakes Region

Femmes Africa Solidarité

Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS)

HQ in Geneva, Switzerland

Liaison Office in NY, USA

Regional Office in Dakar, Senegal

- Created in 1996 in Geneva, Switzerland following eruptions of violence in Africa, recurrence of wars and strong concerns for the negative impact on African women's lives.
- Whose main purpose is to promote and strengthen African women leadership in conflict prevention, management and resolution.
- Consultative Status with United Nations ECOSOC and African Union ECOSOCC.
- Observer Status with the African Commission for Human and People's Rights (ACHPR).

SUB-REGIONAL IMPACT

The Mano River Women's Peace Network (MARWOPNET) was borne out of FAS's **capacity building and advocacy programme involving the three countries of the region, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone**. By its early action, it prevented the outbreak of hostilities between the three countries by bringing their leaders back to the negotiating table, and furthered the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. In his report to the Security Council in April 2001, UN Secretary-General, Mr Kofi Annan, commended MARWOPNET's positive contribution to peacebuilding. In December 2003, the UN General Assembly awarded the Network the prestigious UN Prize in the field of Human Rights in recognition of its achievement in this field.

FAS also supported a delegation of women from MARWOPNET Liberia during the June 2003 Akosombo Talks during which the leader of the delegation, Ms Theresa Leigh-Sherman, signed the **peace accords** as a witness. This subsequently brought the transitional government and transitional peace accord into fruition. After the Akosombo Talks of June 2003, Liberian women formed part of the National Transitional Government of Liberia as per the provisions of the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA). Together with MARWOPNET, an election observation mission was organized for the national elections in Liberia in October 2005, which saw the appointment of Liberia's and Africa's first female Head of State with the **election of Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf as President**. Advocacy activities on women's leadership were undertaken in Geneva by FAS and other partners.

In response to an appeal from the women of Burundi, FAS organized training workshops and advocacy missions for about 150 Burundian women who participated in the **Arusha Peace Process & Negotiations** in 1998. In 2000, the Arusha Agreement was signed, offering guidelines for peace building and the reconstruction and democratization of the country. FAS helped CAFOB, a Burundian umbrella NGO, to consolidate its involvement in **Burundi's democratization** through the organization of advocacy missions and training workshops. It also funded CAFOB's preparation and participation in the AU/UN International Conference on the Great Lakes in 2004.

FAS facilitated a consultative process in the DRC and, training workshops and advocacy activities made it possible for women (30% of the participants) to take part in the **Inter-Congolese Dialogue** in Sun City, South Africa, in 2002. The dialogue resulted in the adoption of the Nairobi Declaration and Plan of Action. FAS supported women's groups in establishing a **women's consultation framework** in the country and in ensuring that they contributed to the elections in mid-2005, first free elections held for over 40 years.

In February 2004, a delegation of FAS members visited the three countries of the Great Lakes region, the DRC, Rwanda and Burundi in the context of the **International Conference on the Great Lakes** jointly organized by the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN). Serving as a follow-up to the different activities initiated in the Great Lakes region, the delegation visited FAS members and partners in the field including CAFOB in Burundi and ProFemmes in Rwanda to assess the level of women's participation in regional initiatives such as the AU/UN International Conference on the Great Lakes. It also allowed for an overall **assessment of their needs and priorities**. Consequently, FAS was able to support CAFOB's preparation and participation in the AU/UN Conference.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

Capacity Building & Advocacy Programme in the Great Lakes

Lobby for a Ceasefire in Darfur

AWCPD - AUWC

Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa

Election of AU Women Commissioners – Parity Principle

Adoption of SDGEA

Gender is my Agenda Campaign

Monitoring & Implementation of the SDGEA

Opening of Regional Office in Dakar

Establishment and Courses of the Pan-African Centre for Gender, Peace and Development Dakar, Senegal

SUB-REGIONAL IMPACT (continuation)

In the **Great Lakes region**, FAS has been conducting a **capacity building and advocacy programme** with women's organizations to lay the foundations for a peace initiative involving women from the **Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Burundi**. FAS's work so far has focussed at the national level in order to fully realise women's capacities before developing and implementing joint sub-regional and cross-border advocacy activities in order to build a women's network in the Great Lakes similar to MARWOPNET.

In 2007, FAS actively lobbied for the **protection of women in Darfur**, and addressed the UN Security Council on the issue. FAS also participated in the **Eminent Women Mission to Chad**, led by Mary Robinson, which was organized by OXFAM in order to contribute to the UN General Assembly high level meeting on Darfur in New York in September 2007 and to speak to Arria Formula, organized by France on 1st October 2007 during the UN Security Council Session. The mission also met in Paris with French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner and the Secretary of State, Rama Yade.

REGIONAL IMPACT

FAS played an important role in the creation of the **African Women Committee on Peace and Development (AWCPD)** in the African Union, which will become later on the African Union Women's Committee (AUWC). FAS went on to organize an advocacy campaign within the AWCPD that led to the **adoption of the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa** to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the inclusion of a gender parity requirement in the statutes of the African Union (AU). The gender parity requirement, which is the first of its kind in a continent-wide body anywhere in the world, was fulfilled by the AU in July 2003 in Maputo, Mozambique with the **election of five AU women commissioners out of ten**. Thanks to its **gender equality programme in the AU**, FAS also contributed to the **adoption of the AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA)** on 8 July 2004. FAS was selected, by the civil society and the AU, as the Coordinator for the peace component of the monitoring and evaluation programme of the Declaration, known as the **Gender is my Agenda Campaign**. FAS is in charge of tracking the integration of a gender framework into the programmes of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Since the launch of the Gender is my Agenda Campaign, annual **AU Pre-Summit Women's Consultative Meetings facilitated by FAS**, have allowed the women's peace movement to progress significantly on the monitoring and the implementation of the SDGEA, adopting new relevant lobbying instruments for submission to the AU summit.

FAS's Regional Office in Dakar, Senegal was established in May 2003 and operational by March 2005. Following the signing of an agreement with the Government of Senegal providing it with its premises, the Dakar Office has been able to strengthen its institutional support including assuming an increasing amount of operational activities transferred from the Secretariat. The Office has successfully organized two editions of the African Gender Forum & Award.

In addition, FAS Dakar team established and launched the **Pan-African Centre for Gender, Peace and Development** in 2004 in Dakar, Senegal. This project responds to the urgent need for a localised gender training facility in Africa. The Centre prepares African women to take on leadership roles at the national, sub-regional, regional, continental and international levels so that they become full and equal participants in decision making processes. The laying of the Centre's foundational stone took place on the occasion of the first African Gender Forum in May 2005, and already two courses were held in collaboration with the University of Peace (UPEACE, Costa Rica) respectively on "**Gender and Peacebuilding**" and "**Gender and Conflict: Human Rights and Transitional Justice**". In 2007, several women from Sudan were trained to strengthen their capacity in participating in the peace process in their country.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

Study on the Women's
Peace Movement in
Africa

Creation and
Organization of the
African Gender Forum
& Award
(AGFA)

Award to
President Wade of
Senegal
President Mbeki of
South Africa
President
Paul Kagame of Rwanda

After working for ten years to advance the women's peace movement in Africa, FAS has launched "**The Women's Peace Movement in Africa: A study on 10 years of practice towards peace and security-building**" that assesses the impact of its work within the movement. The findings of the study were launched at the *Conference on Gender, Peace and Security in Africa: Capitalizing on 10 years of women's experience* organized by FAS in Bamako, June 2006.

In 2005, FAS and its Pan-African Centre for Gender, Peace and Development (Dakar, Senegal) organized the first edition of the **African Gender Forum and Award (AGFA)** to support both the "Gender is my agenda" campaign and the monitoring of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA). On one hand, the Forum aims to provide a **platform for the exchange of ideas and experiences between women from Africa and other regions of the world**, and also propose strategies and measures for maximizing the effective implementation of women's instruments including the SDGEA. On the other hand, the African Gender Award seeks to celebrate African leaders or government representatives, who have demonstrated **outstanding achievements in gender mainstreaming and social and cultural impediments to women's advancement**.

While the first Forum brought together African and Arab actors to discuss issues of gender, politics, economics and culture, the second edition (2007) featured on "African Women for Africa's Development: Building partnerships with the Diaspora". The 1st Edition of the Gender Award granted **President Wade of Senegal** and **President Mbeki of South Africa** in celebration of their work towards gender equality and mainstreaming in the African Union (AU). **President Paul Kagame of Rwanda** received the 2007 African Gender Award for his exceptional achievements in integrating women into Rwanda's policy making institutions.