PAN-AFRICAN CENTER FOR GENDER, PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

Femmes Africa Solidarité

10 ans de pratique

Women Movement for Peace and Security in Africa: 10 years of Practice

UNDP

Regional Bureau for Africa

F A S

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FAS Case Study- Summary of

- **Analysis of the concepts of gender, peace, security and development**

- **Case studies in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Burundi, Rwanda, the DRC and Somalia**

- **A leadership data bank of women**

- **Evaluation of the programs and activities of FAS**

INTRODUCTION

In June 1996, Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) was formed against the backdrop of erupting conflicts in Africa. We came together, empowered by the Beijing Platform for Action, to respond to the needs of women in conflict as well as to promote women's untapped strength in the areas of conflict resolution, management and prevention. Today, ten years after the first brainstorming session that brought FAS to life, it is important for us to both celebrate our accomplishments and reflect on our response to the challenges that face us.

In the most recent activity report, we documented the many achievements of FAS. These achievements highlight what FAS has done to build the capacity of women to mainstream gender into regional and international mechanisms. FAS also supported women's networks, visited refugee camps and shared with its many sisters in the field. These achievements are important to acknowledge and celebrate.

The challenges, however, give cause to pause, reflect and chart a way forward. To this effect, in November 2005, FAS commissioned a four-part study that would give a critical analysis of its work. The four components form the substance of a study that documents the contributions that FAS has made to the international discourse on peace building from a gender perspective. The four components of the study include:

a) an analysis of the concepts of gender, peace, security and development as well as the international mechanisms relating to these concepts and their relevance to African women's lived experiences in the process of peacebuilding.

b) case studies that highlight the successes and challenges faced by women peace builders at the grassroots in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Burundi, Rwanda, the DRC and Somalia. These case studies will be used by the Pan-African Centre for Gender, Peace and Development to illustrate and develop further the concepts on gender and peace building.

c) a leadership data bank of women trained and experienced in conflict resolution and peace building and women entrepreneurs. This leadership bank will serve to promote the development of successful leadership qualities among women and create more opportunities for women to take leadership roles

d) an evaluation of the impact of the programs and activities of FAS. This final stage will contribute to the development of impact assessment measures and procedures that better assess progress and impact of the women's peace movement

To undertake these four aspects of the study, the four consultants conducted desk research and traveled to the field from January to February 2006. They visited Sierra Leone and Liberia, the Great Lakes region and Kenya and Guinea respectively. A debriefing session was held between each mission at the FAS Regional Office to discuss the outcome of the completed missions and prepare for forthcoming deployments. The results of the study are currently being compiled. Initial findings are presented below as summaries of the points to FAS members for their input and comments. To allow an accurate and complete analysis to be made, FAS asks its members and partners to contribute their insights, experiences and expertise by completing the questionnaire found at the end of this paper. Responses given by FAS members will be compiled and added to the existing findings from field missions, for inclusion in the final report.

The report of this study will provide an opportunity to show our immense appreciation to the women peace builders of Africa for setting aside their differences and coming together in solidarity to promote peace in their communities. FAS wishes to thank these women for their tireless work as champions of peace in their countries. FAS also thanks its own members, the leaders who believed in and supported the organization, its partners and donors and, of course the FAS staff for their invaluable efforts in the pursuit of peace and gender equality in Africa. Finally, appreciation goes to the consultants for their contributions to furthering the women's movement in Africa.

Executive Summary:
Executive Summary:
Conceptual Framework

Introduction

In order to study the role of women in the various stages of peace and conflict, we must first understand the underlying concepts inherent in these processes and the ways in which women understand and use these concepts in their work. Also important is how these concepts have been translated into concrete mechanisms for use at the international, regional, national and local levels to promote gender equality in peacebuilding. This paper will first provide a conceptual framework to allow a more thorough understanding of how the concepts of peace and conflict; security and development; and gender are generally understood in the context of this study. It will then examine how these concepts have been transformed into legal mechanisms by the international community. After this overview, the study will examine how women have (or have not) incorporated these mechanisms into their own conflict prevention, management, resolution and peacebuilding activities.

Conceptual Framework

First, when we talk about peace and conflict, we must recognize that there are different forms of peace and different forms of conflict. **Conflict**, broadly understood, is part of human nature and can be a positive source of growth if addressed and dealt with constructively; however, when conflict becomes violent it also becomes a negative force that threatens the potential for human development.

Peace, too, can be positive or negative. When we talk about negative peace, it refers simply to the absence of war. In this context, peace is unlikely to last unless further steps are taken to prevent the resurgence of violence. Positive peace, on the other hand, is not just the absence of conflict but, rather, the presence of mechanisms that allow people to resolve their conflicts using non-violent means.

Within this framework, it is also important to understand that peace and conflict are not static concepts, but rather processes that change, evolve and recycle. Conflict is most often viewed as a cycle, which begins with prevention and then moves through phases of escalation, management, de-escalation, resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction. Each stage of the conflict requires different approaches and different mechanisms at the international, regional, national and local level.

The **conflict prevention** stage relies on mechanisms of early warning and risk analysis as well as on education and community building initiatives aimed at promoting a culture of peace and non-violent mechanisms of conflict resolution. Once conflict has erupted, concerns of **human security and the protection of civilians** must be central to any conflict management strategy. This includes responding to the needs of refugees and internally displaced persons, who are overwhelmingly women and children. In the process of de-escalation, **conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts** must take place in the form of confidence building measures, negotiations and peace talks as well as grassroots efforts to build peace. Traditionally, these processes have focused on warring parties and, thus, have excluded the concerns and contributions of women. However, peacebuilding activities must include all stakeholders to effectively bring lasting peace. It is also important to recognize that the conflict cycle does not stop at a peace negotiations. Rather, **post-conflict reconstruction** efforts that incorporate disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) and promote reconciliation are critical to preventing the resurgence of violence. Thus, conflict prevention is a crucial component of the reconstruction process. Post-conflict reconstruction must also include sustainable development projects that promote the economic empowerment of women and rebuild the war-torn fabric of society.
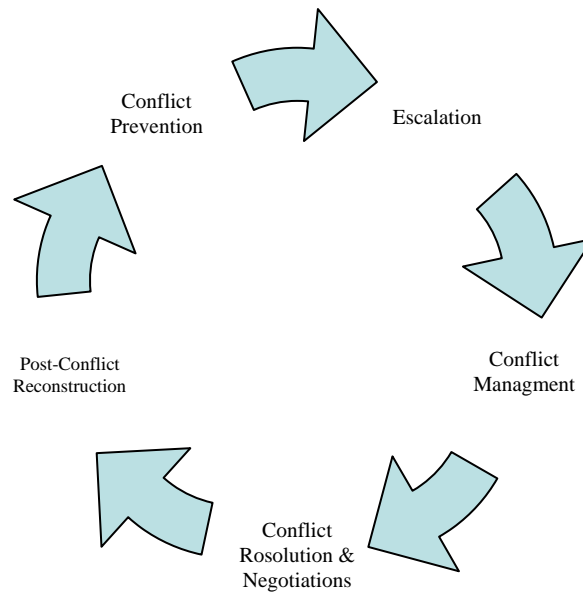
Figure 1: Conflict Life-Cycle

Like conflict, peace too is a process that requires not simply the absence of war (though that is indeed a prerequisite), but also human security, good governance, equality, and justice. The concept of **human security** transcends traditional military-centered notions of security to include a concern for the welfare of vulnerable groups in society, particularly women and children. **Good governance** does not simply mean elections or even democratization, but includes an emphasis on transparency and accountability as well as building institutions that give a voice to women and other traditionally underrepresented groups. **Equality** suggests equal access to resources and opportunities and equal participation in all realms of society for women and men but also for members of different races, ethnic groups, and religions. **Justice** refers to the development of a system of laws and procedures that do not discriminate against any members of society, particularly women. It also includes the responsibility of members of society to respect the rule of law and of the government to fairly apply the law without discrimination or favoritism. In addition to these elements, lasting peace also requires **sustainable development** that not only builds the infrastructure and capacity of the state, but that also builds relationships among people and addresses human needs and human dignity.

Since we are concerned with the role of women in these processes of peace and conflict, it is important to understand how **gender** fits into this picture. All of these concepts are gendered, meaning they necessarily affect men and women differently. The concept of gender refers to the different roles and responsibilities attributed to men and women in a society. It goes beyond the biological definition of sex as male and female to the ways in which these biological definitions are constructed in a social context and are historically and culturally contingent. In each stage of peace and conflict, men and women more often than not have different roles, concerns and priorities. It is clear that women are affected very differently than men in times of war. The negative effects of war on women have been well-documented and include displacement, HIV/AIDS, sexual violence and poverty. (See Box below).

In recent years, efforts have been made at the international, regional, national and local levels to address these effects; however, there has yet to be a true shift in the way the concepts of conflict prevention, management, and resolution or peace, security and development are understood. If we examine these processes through a gender lens, we begin to see how each suggests different challenges and opportunities for women's involvement.

All of the above concepts are critical to understanding the role of women in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. The remainder of this analysis will address examine these concepts within the framework of the "three p's": conflict prevention; participation of women in peacebuilding initiatives; and the security and protection of civilians. In each component of this framework, particular consideration is given to the needs of women and children.

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The Effects of War on Women and Children

- Three out of every four fatalities of war are women and children. (UN World Food Programme, 1998.)

- Out of the global refugee population of some 20 million, nearly 35 % are in Africa. Women constitute approximately 80 per cent of the population of **refugees** and **internally displaced people** globally. (http://www.femnet.or.ke/documents/csw_2002_women_conflict.pdf.)

- Of the estimated 300,000 **child soldiers** around the world, about 40 percent of them are girls. (Save the Children 2006)

- More than two-thirds (70%) of the world population living with **HIV** are in Sub-Saharan Africa. The majority of those infected are women (55%). Half of the HIV infections occur in people under the age of 25. In addition to women and youths, there is yet another group that is highly at risk. Soldiers are said to have up to 5 times higher rates of infection than the population at large. During conflict, the rates are much higher. (http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/hivaids/kristoffersson.htm)

- Armed conflict exacerbates many forms of **gender-based violence**, including sexual violence. In the DRC in 2004, the WHO estimated there the have been 25,000 cases of sexual violence recorded in South Kivu Province, 11,350 in Maniema Province, 1,625 cases in Goma, and 3,250 cases in the southeastern town of Kalemie since the beginning of the war in 1998. WHO reported the ages of victims to be between four and eighty. (www.womenwarpeace.org:drc:drc.htm)

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Instruments

Millennium Development Goals (MGDs)
In the face of increasing levels of global poverty, disease, hunger and inequality and with the arrival of the new millennium, world leaders adopted the Millennium Declaration in September 2000 to fight world poverty and ensure a better life for all by the year 2015. Member-states of the United Nations developed the eight MGDs, in which they confirmed a commitment to reducing extreme poverty by half, ensuring every child has access to primary education, ending gender discrimination, reducing child mortality due to childbirth, controlling the spread of deadly diseases, and protecting the environment.

Security Council Resolution 1325
In October 2000, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1325, which called on all actors involved in peace negotiations and conflict resolution activities to include a gender perspective in their approach. The Resolution focused on addressing the needs of women in all stages of peace and conflict and placed particular emphasis on including women in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding activities. It called for the representation of women at all decision-making levels and the expansion of the role of women in UN field based operations. Since its adoption, women activists, NGOs and other international agencies are now using 1325 as their mobilizing and negotiating platform to monitor peace negotiations and agreements and other post-conflict programs and activities.

The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (The Protocol)
At the regional level, African NGOs have successfully lobbied and advocated for greater recognition of women's rights at the African Union (AU). As a result of their efforts, the Protocol was adopted at the second Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union in Maputo in 2003 and contains 32 articles relating to the protection of women's human rights in Africa. Included in this Protocol are specific protections for women in armed conflicts and provisions for women's rights to peace and sustainable development, among others. The Protocol entered into force in 2005 after being ratified by 16 member-states. The Protocol has been described by Human Rights Watch as "breaking new ground in international law" because of its comprehensive coverage of women's human rights issues.

Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA)
In 2004, the African Union adopted the SDGEA, which affirmed the commitment of member-states to the task of mainstreaming gender into its approach to issues of health, human rights, education, economic development,

governance and peace and security. SDGEA prioritizes the implementation of gender-specific economic, social, and legal measures to achieve gender equality at the national and regional levels. Since its adoption, signatories and civil society organizations have developed a process to monitor and evaluate the progress made on these commitments in countries across Africa. FAS and ACCORD, in together with other organizations working for peace in Africa, have undertaken the role of monitoring the progress made by governments and civil society organizations on Objective 2, which "ensures the full and effective participation and representation of women in peace processes including the prevention, resolution, management of conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction in Africa as stipulated in UN Resolution 1325 and to also appoint women as Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the African Union."

Application and understanding of concepts
Through interviews and discussions with women in the field, this report aimed to identify how women peacebuilders understand the concepts of peace, security, gender and development and how they used the mechanisms described above to promote peace in their communities. From the interviews, it is clear that women share the perspective that peace is a process. Indeed, although they may not use the same vocabulary used above, the women illustrated that they are intimately aware of the different cycles of conflict and the stages of peace as well as the importance of sustainable development. For example, one women was quoted as saying,

> "There is no peace if the children have no food, school fees, medicine, clothing or shelter. If there is gender-based violence, there can be no peace. Peace is there when a human being has all the necessary things that make life worth living. Therefore, we must always thing about peace in a holistic manner."

And another:

> "Peace is living in harmony, working together, sharing and helping one another. It involves resolving conflicts, sending children to school, both boys and girls, and other children having the opportunity to realize their dreams. Peace is there when we don't have to sleep in the bush and when we can live with our family happily. Peace is the ability to sleep in one's own house without fear and when there is an end to displacement."

Women in Sierra Leone expressed fears that the TRC recommendations were not being used, and that the peace that had been established there was not sustainable because key issues are not being addressed. One women was quoted as saying,

> "What kind of peace is it? People are boiling inside and we could have an explosion anytime! Issues have not been well addressed….maybe we can go out at night, but is that enough?"

From these few examples, it is apparent that the women peacebuilders interviewed understood the complexities of the process of peace and the different elements of human security and development that are critical to this process. Further work is still required to determine what concepts are most highly valued by the women and how they rate the importance of different types of security (military, human, political, environmental), development (economic, political, community, personal) and sustained livelihoods. However, from the case studies one of the strongest themes that women stressed in Sierra Leone, Burundi, the DRC and several other cases was the problem of impunity and the lack of justice for crimes committed against women and children during the wars. One woman from Burundi was quoted as saying:

> "There is still insecurity. The lack of cease-fire with the last rebel group (FNL) had made Bujumbura Rural still unsafe. The impunity with which crimes were committed before and after 1993 crisis causes people to want to take the law into their own hands and revenge, and this makes society violent."

Another sister in Sierra Leone was also concerned with justice. For her,

> "There is need to carry out sensitization and ensure that the effect of TRC goes beyond forgive and forget."

These comments indicate how the role of justice in the pursuit of peace is strongly felt by women involved in peacebuilding activities.

In terms of the different stages of conflict, it is clear that the women interviewed understood that different actions and mechanisms are required at different stages in conflict. For example, the women of Guinea focused on conflict prevention by setting up offices on the borders with Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone in order to prevent the overflow of conflict into their country. In the DRC and Somalia, women are active in ongoing attempts to manage and resolve the conflict through the building of coalitions and continued efforts to participate in negotiations. In Rwanda and Sierra Leone, women have been critical in the process of transitional justice through their participation in the *gacaca* system in Rwanda and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Sierra Leone. In Liberia and Burundi, women have shown a commitment to the processes of post-conflict reconstruction and have taken active roles in ensuring equal representation in the government and rebuilding their war-torn societies.

Application and understanding of international and regional mechanisms
Within these different activities, it is possible to determine the extent to which women peacebuilders in Africa have understood and used the international and regional mechanisms described above.

In Guinea, women relied on the media to disseminate information about legal mechanisms and protocols that related to their peacebuilding activities. MARWOPNET used training sessions to ensure that members of the Guinean population, especially grassroots women and men, understand and own the different instruments and incorporate them into their activities.

In Liberia, after the signing of the peace accord women were trained in how to use Resolution 1325 to demand that they be involved in the DDR processes. They took the peace accord and put it into language that could be understood by the masses and set benchmarks on what was supposed to be done during the reconstruction process as a means of holding their leaders accountable.

In Sierra Leone, women expressed frustration that the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) had not been implemented and that women did not really know about international instruments like CEDAW and Resolution 1325. Women expressed the need for more trainings to allow women to be more active in guarding peace and ensuring that the violations they had experienced would never happen again. They also expressed the importance of teaching women about their rights before trying to train them in the use of international mechanisms to protect those rights. The need for law reform to domesticate international mechanism was stressed by many women.

In Burundi, Resolution 1325 was not in existence when women were trying to get a place at the Arusha peace talks. Rather, they were emboldened to demand a place at the talks after FAS's training during its solidarity mission. However they noted that they still received criticisms from men that they did not belong there. Thus, there was recognition that even though women have rights, they still have to demand that these rights should be respected.

In Somalia, there was little discussion of the use of international mechanisms to promote the inclusion of women in peace processes. The women had to find creative ways to have their voices heard, including the establishment of at 6th clan to ensure that their voices were heard.

In the DRC, women were trained to use Resolution 1325 in order to better equip them to lobby for participation in the Sun City talks and to help them find a common agenda as well as see the opportunities created by the existing regional and international mechanisms for participating in peacebuilding. The use of these mechanisms allowed them to focus more on what united them rather than on what divided them.

The women of Rwanda have been instrumental in the reconstruction of their country after the genocide of 1994. They organized an international women's conference to highlight the role effects of the genocide on the role of women. However, they have not placed significant emphasis on the use of international mechanisms to promote their agenda. The situation in Rwanda illustrates how women can take advantage of a post-conflict situation to have a more active role in all levels of society, particularly in decision-making processes. However, more research must be done to determine how Rwandan women can more effectively use international and regional mechanisms to promote their agenda

Conclusion

What these findings indicate is that in many cases, UNSC Resolution 1325 has been used as a tool to train women, but that does not necessarily mean that it has been fully implemented. Rather, it has been a way to unify women and allow them to develop a common agenda as well as to illustrate to them that they are entitled to an equal role in society. The Protocol and SDGEA did not come up in the case study, which indicates that they are less highly used by women organizing at the grassroots level. This is understandable, given that these are new mechanisms. However, given that they are regional in focus, they are important tools and more efforts must be taken to educate and train women on how to use these mechanisms to lobby for their rights and inclusion in the peace and development process. Key among the findings is the level of self-awareness of women of their own rights and of the ways in which they can use international and regional mechanism to promote their advocacy at the grassroots level. However, it is not simply a matter of women at local levels being more self-aware; more efforts must be made to ensure that their actions are supported and recognized at the higher levels as well so that their activities are both effective and sustainable.

Introduction

The case studies summarized below were undertaken to highlight the successes of the women's peace movement, to build on the lessons learned by women peacemakers in the field, and to develop a training curriculum for scholars of peace building. This curriculum will allow scholars to use real examples in their reflections on the African women's peace movement. These same case studies can also be used to highlight best practices in women's peace building across Africa which may be used as a guideline in managing future situations throughout the continent.

Methodology

Qualitative data was gathered through an interactive process in each of the countries visited. Specific questionnaires and interview schedules were prepared and used in individual interviews, focus group discussions, and round table meetings to formalize the process. In all these processes, open-ended questions were favored to encourage women to speak at length about their experiences. The aim was to hear the stories of the women active in local, national, and regional women's peace organizations regarding their role in the specific issue of interest in their country/ Further, it was important to assess their appreciation of the role played by the international peace building organizations working in Africa, such as Femmes Africa Solidarité.

Data was gathered through on-site visits in the Mano River Region (Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone), and the Great Lakes Region (Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda). As a reflection of the intractable nature of the on-going conflict in Somalia, the members of the Save Somali Women and Children (SSWC) had to be interviewed in Nairobi, Kenya.

Focus of the Study

In Guinea, the focus was on the role of women in conflict prevention. In Liberia, we specifically examined the value added by women's participation in formal peace processes, and the effect of this participation on women's organizing and leadership. In Sierra Leone we were interested in finding out women's own evaluation of their participation in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that was set up for the country as part of the Lomé Peace Accord, and whether they believed this had made a contribution towards sustainable peace in the country.

In Burundi, we heard from the women their specific understanding of peace and security. Their comments focused on the effect of the embargo on the people of the country as well as on the effects of HIV/AIDS, a pandemic that is often exacerbated by violent conflict, on women and men of Burundi. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, we heard the women's stories about the nature and extent of gender based violence that had resulted from the tragedy of armed conflict in the country. We also heard women recounting their journey to the Sun City peace talks, and the value they added to the process. It was also necessary to document whether the unity of purpose that had been exhibited at Sun City was translated into the greater unity needed to strengthen the women's participation in the transition process of the DRC. In Rwanda, we heard from the women on how they have organized themselves to achieve the greatest percentage of women's representation at parliamentary level in the world. It was impossible to visit Rwanda without hearing from the women on their post-genocide organizing, as well as their participation in the *gacaca* justice system.

Because of the great instability still persisting in Somalia in the Horn of Africa, representatives of the Save Somali Women and Children were met in Nairobi, Kenya. Also interviewed were the senior members of the staff of the Nairobi Peace Initiative-Africa, a capacity building organization in the area of peace that has collaborated with Femmes Africa Solidarité on different occasions to build the skills of women and enable them to be effective in the different initiatives.

The case testimonies provided considerable insight into the different issues that were being investigated in each country. In addition, relevant literature on the countries visited was also reviewed to provide extra information for a detailed analysis of the situation in each country.

Case Summaries

Liberia
Successes
- The conflict opened up political space for women to take leadership roles at the local and national levels
- Women had an influence on the Accra Peace process thanks to the leadership and unity promoted by partnerships among several grassroots peace building organizations.
- There was effective collaboration of women's organizations and use of Resolution 1325
- The greatest achievement of the women's movement in Liberia has been the election of Ms. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf elected as the first female Head of State in Africa.

Challenges
- There remains a lack of outreach and mentoring of young women to participate in the peace processes
- Conflict prevention mechanisms that take into account the contributions of women have yet to be effectively implemented in Liberia
- There remain significant challenges in gaining adequate resources to keep conflict prevention measures and post-conflict reconstruction activities afloat
- There have been challenges to post-conflict unity among women

Sierra Leone
Successes
- There is a long history of women's involvement in peacebuilding and peace processes in Sierra Leone
- Women have become increasingly active in political life in Sierra Leone and, in 2002, Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura was one of the Presidential candidates.
- Women actively participated in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Sierra Leone

Challenges
- Recommendations of the TRC have yet to be publicized or implemented
- Sustainable peace has not yet been achieved because TRC recommendations are not being implemented and people do not feel that justice has been served
- There is need for trauma healing for women and men in the post-conflict reconstruction process.

Guinea:
Successes
- MARWOPNET has been largely successful in training women in conflict resolution skills to prevent the outbreak of violence in the country
- Offices were established on the border with Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia to manage conflicts at the local level and avoid the escalation or spillover of conflict into Guinea.
- The media was used as an effective tool for promoting nonviolent conflict resolution and transmitting information about international and regional mechanisms that promote conflict prevention and gender equality

Challenges
- Prevention efforts have focused on conflicts outside the borders of Guinea without addressing the problems of governance that exist within the country
- The study did not survey or interview a wide range of women around Guinea, which limits our ability to draw conclusions about prevention efforts in the country

Burundi
Successes
- Despite not being invited to the Arusha peace talks, women effectively lobbied and were recognized as permanent observers in the negotiations
- 80% of women's recommendations were included in the final peace accord
- 30% of the seats in parliament are reserved for women
- Ten of the 1000 women around the world nominated for the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize were from Burundi

Challenges
- The embargo in the early 1990s imposed significant hardships on women and children of Burundi
- Initially, women were not invited to the peace talks in Arusha; once they were allowed to participate, they were not immediately accepted as equal participants in the process

- The prevailing peace is fragile because the differences that still prevail.
- Poverty, hunger, disease and violence continue to threaten lasting peace in Burundi

Democratic Republic of Congo
Successes
- Women participated in the Nairobi conference and were able to develop a common agenda that made their subsequent participation in the Sun City Talks more effective
- Women were very successful in sensitizing the men at the Sun City talks to make them recognize the devastating impact the war was having on women and children
- The new Constitution recognizes sexual violence as a crime (Articles 14 and 15)
- Women's lobbying efforts at Sun City paved the way for the creation of a Ministry of Gender and Family in the DRC
- The Women's Caucus has adopted a common platform that has allowed women from different ethnic groups and political parties to continue to pursue a common agenda for peace in the DRC

Challenges
- Sexual violence against women remains prevalent in the DRC and has significantly endangered the lives of women in the country and compromised efforts at peace building
- Justice for crimes of a sexual nature and other crimes against women and children remains elusive
- The potential for divisions among women along party lines remains a threat to the unity and common agenda of women
- There is a lack of mentoring taking place between older women and female youth to continue the peace building efforts in the younger generation
- Women still have had difficulty achieving a critical mass to ensure representation in the government

Rwanda
Successes
- Because of women's leadership in post-genocide Rwanda, a gender policy has now been put in place in the country
- Rwandan women make up over 48% of the Members of Parliament, which is the highest number in the world
- At the community level, women have been active in formalizing participation through women's councils
- Women hold 4 of the 7 seats on the Constitutional Commission

Challenges
- Implementation of policies of gender equality has been more limited at the local level
- A lot of the successes are dependent on "the gender sensitive President"
- The idea of there being no "Tutsi" or "Hutu" but "Rwandans" does not appear to be genuine, and might escalate conflicts in future
- Poverty, insufficient land, and the large population of prisoners are still major challenges

Somalia
Successes
- Women were invited by the President of Djibouti to participate in the peace talks from peace talks
- Women successfully formed a sixth clan in order to ensure that they had a voice in the negotiations
- Despite constraints at the peace talks in Kenya, Ms. Asha Hagi Elmi was tireless in her crusade for the inclusion of women in post-conflict governance processes and signed the peace accord in 2004 on behalf of civil society
- The spirit of the 6th Clan influenced women's participation in the Kenya peace talks on Somalia

Challenges
- Although women were invited to the peace talks, they were still marginalized by the men of their own clans
- After the peace talks, divisions arose among women and they were unable to unite under a common agenda due to infighting
- The lack of law and order makes the work of women's groups and other groups working for peace in Somalia difficult and dangerous
- Despite the signing of the peace accord, peace still eludes Somalia.

Summary of Findings

That women have borne the brunt of the violent conflicts of Africa today has almost become a cliché. However, in the different countries visited, women have refused to be paralyzed in the role of victims of conflict. Instead, there was evidence of efforts to be involved in the various initiatives to bring about sustainable peace in all of the countries studied. The case studies indicated that women's leadership at the local and national levels, in partnership with NGOs and unifying organizations, was instrumental in giving women more of a voice in all stages of conflict. The number of women in government (see table below) in each of the countries studied illustrates that women have made significant gains in leadership; however, they still have a long way to go to achieving true equality in decision-making at the national level. Numbers for women in leadership at local levels are not easily traced, but are equally as important in assessing the progress of women in these countries.

Post-Conflict Achievements of Women in Leadership Positions

	Rwanda	Burundi	DRC	Somalia	Liberia	Sierra Leone
Transitional Government	25.7%	18.4%	12%	Not Available	5.3%	Not Available
Post - Transitional Government	48.8%	30.5%	Elections Scheduled for 2006	7.8%	12.5%	14.5%

Sources; Field Survey and Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) – Situation as of April 30, 2006

The case studies illustrate that women have made significant strides towards a more inclusive peace process in many instances; however, it was clear from the women's responses that they are still operating within patriarchal institutions and that these affect the quality of their contribution. In the DRC, Somalia and Liberia, women successfully organized and formed a critical mass that demanded for inclusion, but were undermined by petty rivalries and patriarchal machinations, thus preventing a long term positive effect. Women in Burundi indicated that there is still the tendency to belittle women's contributions, or to look on them condescendingly. Women in all of the countries continue to work hard to overcome these hurdles, and are forging strategic alliances at the national, regional and international level to ensure more fundamental change in future.

Conclusion

The important contributions made by women in the pursuit of sustainable peace are widely recognizable across the African continent. Although women have made significant strides in gaining more of a voice in each stage of conflict, there remain significant barriers to their full integration into the peace processes in all countries. It is critical that women's perspectives are integrated fully into any pre-conflict, conflict, and post-conflict peace process. Women are important stakeholders their continent; there is thus a need to continually invest in their talents and abilities as the continent forges ahead in search of a peace that is stronger than the paper on which the agreements are written.

Introduction
The Leadership Bank portion of this study was undertaken to showcase leadership roles played by women in organizations or as individuals in the peace, political and economic advancement processes. It explores the dimensions of women's leadership within and beyond the women's peace movements in the targeted regions especially within the ambit of FAS's work with and for women in the region. Drawing from the personal stories of women, the study analyzes and portrays the challenges and successes of women's leadership in their efforts to transform conflict and sustain peace in these conflict ridden zones.

This portion of the overall study is important not only to highlight effective women leaders at the local, national and regional levels in Africa, but also to illustrate the viability and importance of women leaders in promoting peace and rebuilding societies after conflict. Given the continued dominance of patriarchal structures in Africa (and, indeed, around the world), it is critical to document the stories and experiences of successful women leaders to promote the recognition that women have an important role to play in the public realm of life. It is clear that there remains a significant gender gap in leadership roles in societies around the world; however, the women profiled in this study have opened the door for more women to step up and command leadership roles in their own communities.

Conceptual Framework
The most simplistic definition of leadership defines a leader as someone who has followers and recognizes that to obtain followers requires influence. The literature surveyed for this study however, classifies leadership into two different types: transactional and transformational leadership. Transactional leadership stresses the behavioral aspects of the individual including the authority and personal characteristics of the leader. In contrast, transformational leadership refers to a much more complex set of values reaching beyond a single leader's ability, behaviors, styles or charisma. In this definition, the essence of leadership is not the leader themselves, but their relationships with others. This new form of leadership has been called transformational because is has emphasized visionary thinking, development of the individual, and empowerment. While transformational leaders focus on the ends, transactional leaders spend their time negotiating and bargaining over the means.

Within this framework, several studies have been performed to determine whether gender influences the type of leadership exhibited by men and women. The results of these studies have been mixed. There has been some evidence that women tend to exhibit characteristics of transformational leadership and place more emphasis on relationship-building and common goals, while men tend to derive power from personal authority and achieved goals through rewards and punishments. In some cases, women have been shown to use a more participatory and inclusive style of leadership, while men were more likely to use a directive, controlling style. However, other studies have shown no gender difference in measures of transformational leadership.

The study juxtaposes the indispensable and unique roles of women in the process of peace and development against their interpretation and understanding of gender, peace and security in an effort to contextualize women's own perceptions of leadership as derived from their actions. It conducts a brief analysis of women's understanding of leadership as compared with notable theoretical and empirical annotations/investigations on: (a) the concept of leadership; and (b) gender differentials in leadership styles especially within the concept of transformational leadership. It also identifies strengths and limitations to women's leadership in the different regions and draws several lessons about how to promote effective leadership among women in areas of conflict.

Methodology
The main process used to collect information for this study was personal interactive interviews. This process allowed women to tell their own stories showing particular circumstances, trails, challenges and success. However, a structured questionnaire was also used when time and literacy levels allowed the opportunity.

Women interviewed and profiled in this study were mostly women that FAS had supported through capacity building for advocacy and building partnerships with national and international organizations who are major stakeholders and actors in the process of building peace within their communities. In addition, the sample size also included individual women activists, members of regional networks, and human rights organizations. A

sample size of female entrepreneurs was also interviewed to showcase the viability of women's enterprise in re-building and reconnecting relationships and societies for effective re-construction of post conflict societies.

Women of all ages and from different strata were interviewed during the field mission. Deliberate efforts were made to target younger women who had also excelled in their different endeavors with commendable impact on the lives men and women in their countries. The efforts of these women become unique in the manner with which they played and continue to play an effective part in building peace in these regions. A total of 170 individuals (out of which 165 were women) were interviewed all together from the six countries visited (Rwanda, Burundi, Congo DRC, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea). These included individual women, women parliamentarians, women ministers, women academics, human rights organizations, women's organizations, rural women's peace groups, officials of gender machineries, international and regional FAS partners with mandate on women's rights and gender equality.

Findings

The findings of this paper suggest that, although literature and prior studies suggest that women's leadership tends to be more transformatory in nature, this does not pre-suppose that leadership brilliance necessarily comes naturally to women. Rather, the study showed that ability of women to be effective and transformative leaders is as a result of their committed and unified response to the developmental challenges posed by violence and conflict.

Some key findings from the study include:

- A majority of respondents (65%) indicated that women's leadership emerged out of the volatility of situations that put women's and children's lives in danger. These circumstances forced women to take leadership roles in search of peace after having witnessed collective suffering, loss and destruction.

- Personal experiences of loss and war influenced leadership roles. Therefore, leadership was more circumstantial, informal and adaptive rather than formal and procedural.

- Almost every respondent (94%) noted that success was achieved because of the importance of every woman's contributions to the process. Thus, it was inclusive and not exclusive. Women were their own "sister's keepers"

- Approximately 83% of respondents highlighted the importance of a common agenda to ensure that leadership among women was vibrant, vocal and resilient

In addition to these findings, we have also identified major challenges to women's leadership during the peace movement at both the individual and organizational levels. Some of the difficulties women faced were: strained interpersonal relations, accountability issues, sustainability, lack of capacity and authority relations. There remain many mechanisms in place at the international, regional, national and local levels that do not include women leaders or that act as barriers to their inclusion. Despite these challenges, the women profiled in this study have remained committed to overcoming obstacles and leading their counties and communities towards lasting peace.

Overall, the key lessons learned from this study are:
- Women play a transformatory role in peace initiatives
- Women's organizing is unique and viable
- Women's peace advocacy humanizes conflict
- Commonality of identity and agenda are key to successful advocacy
- Partnering with non-governmental organizations such as FAS to build capacity for negotiations and open up space for women's participation in formal peace talks and agreement increases the viability of women's leadership

Executive Summary:
Executive Summary:
Impact Assessment Evaluation Report

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Introduction

This final section of this document offers a ten-year assessment of Femmes Africa Solidarité's (FAS) activities. Using data from the field, it will highlight the concrete lessons we can learn from the past ten years of the women's peace movement in Africa. From a practical perspective, it will respond to the following questions:

- In what practical ways, have women's experiences in peacebuilding processes been significant to the women themselves and the societies) at large; and, how have these experiences been eventually translated into social gains for a redefinition of gender roles that would be non-oppressive for women and girls?
- What institutional and social structures have been created/are being created to support the new roles that women have to play in post conflict periods?
- Who was/is responsible for promoting women's empowerment in these countries and what international instruments/strategies have been/are being used in the promotion?
- What tangible measures have been taken in these contexts to redress the specific war crimes suffered by women/girls during the crisis period?

Attempting to answer these questions in reference to selected countries will provide the broad framework for evaluating the achievements, pitfalls and lessons learned by FAS. It is from the perspective of peacebuilding activities by women in countries with recent histories of armed conflicts (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Somali, Burundi, DRC and to a lesser extent, Guinea) that we will go on to explore into FAS's activities of advocacy within Africa and beyond. The study will also look at the application of Security Council Resolution 1325 and the recent Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa by women peacebuilders in the field. We will be looking at the significance of the role that FAS and other NGOS have played in supporting peace/democratization initiatives from the local actors' points of view and asking if there is any specific impact(s) that this type of intervention has had in promoting women agenda in these settings. What role can and should FAS play in the promotion of sustainable peace and human security within these socio-political contexts?

Objectives

- To determine the significance of the interventions of Femmes Africa Solidarité and determine lessons learned from the roles played by women participating in the peacebuilding processes in their respective countries

- To find out the methods used, achievements made and constraints faced by women through peacebuilding activities during the crisis period in their respective countries, and how this has affected the status of women in these settings

- To assess what the women learned from their roles during the crisis period and how they are taking advantage of the reconstruction phase to push for the establishment of structures, attitudes and a culture of gender equity as a vital part of consolidating peace and ensuring a state of human security

- To conceptualize a workable methodology for evaluating peacebuilding activities and post conflict reconstruction by African women

Framework

In the conceptual framework established in the first section of this study, we determined that peacebuilding is rooted in human experiences with conflict. The main focus is on relationships, trust, and the partnerships between oneself and others -- all of which are vital aspects to the process. It follows logically that the process of peacebuilding should start with an "awareness" of the process by the people affected by conflict who will collectively draw from their own experiences, questions and visions. Understanding what the different phases signify to this group is a crucial part of evaluating the peacebuilding process. This implies two things: 1) that the focus during the evaluation process should be on the actual processes towards peace rather than just on the result and; 2) that in this case, evaluation should be seen as a learning process where lessons are drawn from practices and incorporated in new planning and thinking.

The present paper on the engagement of women in peacebuilding processes incorporates these ideas and uses the "learning paradigm" approach to draw lessons from practices already underway in order to validate best

practices and offer suggestions for improvements in future peacebuilding efforts. We postulate that the "learning paradigm" approach has much more to offer to the stakeholders within this process than any other conventionally known approach. But this view necessarily implies that the learning is not only limited to successful experiences, it must also draw lessons from failures.

Apart from being an opportunity for women peacebuilders to actively participate in the evaluation process and draw lessons from their own experiences, this methodological approach is also beneficial at another level. In our increasingly globalized world, contributions from the grassroots level are often ignored despite their valuable contribution to peacebuilding. If we are thinking in terms of a more secure world, we must compile lessons from local actors on what works and does not work in their communities and share stories between different local contexts in order to have a truly contextualized approach to issues of human security. It is within this conceptual framework that we have undertaken this evaluation of FAS's intervention in both the Mano River sub-region and the Great Lakes sub-region.

The data used in the study was drawn from a wide range of stakeholders from the above mentioned regions, through the use of interviews, group focus discussions, official documents and questionnaires.

Successes and Best Practices
From the interviews and field missions conducted, we were able to determine several areas where FAS, its network of women peacebuilders and its partners in the field have made been successful in promoting the agenda of gender equality for peacebuilding in Africa:

Solidarity Missions
- Inspired women to take action in their own communities and facilitated their ability to conceptualise what was possible to do in the prevailing circumstances.
- Influenced local women, as the presence of eminent women gave them credibility, made them feel visible, and that their actions would really make a difference at the higher levels of government.
- Encouraged women to come together and form a common agenda for peacebuilding in their countries and regions
- Promoted the ideals of sisterhood and womanhood, which united women from different political parties and ethnic groups under a common identity

Trainings/Capacity Building
- Brought into focus much needed perspectives, techniques and conflict resolution skills as well as prompts for breaking out of traditional gender roles and demanding the right to participate in peace negotiations
- Effectively used international instruments, which served as strong justifications for women's involvement.
- Allowed women in different regions to share experiences and best practices
- Advocated and encouraged more women's leadership at all levels of society which has contributed to an increase in women in leadership positions in nearly all countries studied, particularly Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC, as well as contributed to the election of the first female head of state in Liberia

Negotiations
- Facilitated tangible successes, especially in the area of promoting women's participation in peace negotiations in both the Mano River and Great Lakes Regions.
- Women signed the peace accords in Somalia and Burundi

International Instruments
- Partnerships among women gave the opportunities to learn about relevant international instruments, that were used to advocate for rights and empowered women to participate in the democratization processes of their countries
- While international instruments provided opportunities for women, traditional wisdom about African norms and practices provided the methodology. Generally, women who were the most successful were of a certain age when women are treated with reverence in African society.
- Progress has been made in the domestication of international and regional instruments so that the mechanisms can be understood and used by women at the local and national levels

Post-Conflict Reconstruction
- Women exhibited a commitment to being active participants in the political processes of their countries to further their agenda in the post-conflict stages of peacebuilding
- Women expressed a recognition of the importance of their continued participation in activities to promote sustainable development, particularly in the areas of justice and reconciliation

Constraints and Challenges
In addition to successes, however, women in the interviews also highlighted several important challenges they faced in their work:
- Competition among women in the post-conflict period for political power reduced the power of the common agenda women had achieved during wartime
- There remains a gap between achievements made by women at the elite level and those at the grassroots level: political gains were almost exclusively seen at the elite level and women did not seem to remain committed to advancements at the grassroots level once they had positions in government
- There remains a need for more opportunities for organizations to share their experiences
- Young women are largely absent from peacebuilding activities, which could limit the sustainability of these activities
- There is evidence of over-reliance on FAS by some of its partner organizations, which could lead to dependence
- There is a confusion of roles and responsibilities within some peacebuilding organizations
- There remains a lack of sophisticated early warning and earl response mechanisms to detect and prevent the resurgence of conflict throughout Africa
- Women expressed continued concern that there were inadequate mechanisms to promote justice during the post-conflict reconstruction
- Women continue to face challenges in post-conflict societies in reconstructing the economic and social fabric of society

Recommendations
Taking into account the successes and challenges documented in this paper, the following recommendations should be taken into account and should inform the future activities of FAS and other organizations working to promote women's involvement in peacebuilding in Africa:

- Organize forums for women from around Africa to share their experiences and create structures that would allow the women to network with each other to promote best practices and lessons learned

- Develop strategies to reduce competition among women and promote a shared agenda of sustainable development and a collective commitment of women in the region

- Actively advocate for partnerships between women in the political elite and women at the grassroots levels in post-conflict situations. This ultimately will be the most important indicator of gender equity in any given society

- Work to train and involve younger women in peacebuilding activities to continue the work that the older more prominent women have started

- Ensure clarity of communication, especially when setting agendas, in order to reduce levels of competition and mistrust among women at the grassroots level

- Advocate for the end to impunity for war crimes and actively work to promote the implementation of mechanisms of justice that address injustices perpetrated against women and children both during conflict and in post-conflict situations

- Women must take an active role in promoting the development of early warning and early response systems and initiatives geared towards conflict resolution

- Focus on mainstreaming gender into economic and social reconstruction processes in post-conflict situations and pay particular attention to the needs of women in these processes

- Promote women's leadership in governance structures as well as reform of these structures to ensure women's participation in the future

Conclusion

When all was taken into account, the overall rating for FAS by its local partners was very good. All the partners interviewed, without exception, had extremely positive views about the nobility of FAS's mission and from a practical point of view, the pertinence of the interventions that FAS had taken during the crisis periods. Specifically, most respondents were impressed by the contributions made by FAS through facilitations/encouragement, giving visibility to the women and other much needed support to different groups during the periods in question. No doubt, there have been challenges along the way. To that end, recommendations have been made to FAS and to the relevant partners, to take the necessary measures to keep channels of communication open in order to facilitate dialogue on any emerging issues. It was duly noted, that most of these grievances, were details touching on personality differences and/or organizational/structural procedures etc. which are likely occurrences in any normal organization. Suffice it to say, that they can easily be overcome by creating an open space for "learning" collectively from the already existing experiences and allowing for a continual healthy dialogue among all the local stakeholders. But most important, is the recognition that there is need to greatly mobilize and organize into a network of "learning communities", so that all regional partners and beyond, be brought to share a very clear image of what the common agenda and what must be done by women and men at all levels of society to achieve it.

APPENDIX A:
Questionnaire

Questionnaire: Please respond briefly to each of the following questions to help us compile information for our 10 year evaluation study:

1. Briefly tell us about the conflict in your region.

2. How did it affect women and men? Were these groups affected in the same way?

3. Describe any initiatives undertaken by women in response to this conflict. Were there alliances or collaborations that have strengthened these women's initiatives?

4. What do you consider to be the successes of these initiatives?

5. What were some of the main challenges to these initiatives? How can these challenges be addressed?

6. How do you define gender? Peace? Security? How are these concepts connected to each other?

7. How do you see gender, peace and security in relation to the situation in your country/region?

8. What national, regional or international instruments have assisted women in their efforts to participate in public life in your country?

9. What are the biggest challenges you feel need to be addressed in your community to ensure peace and gender equality?

Resolution 1325 (2000)
Adopted by the Security Council at its 4213th meeting, on
31 October 2000
The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999, 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000 and 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, as well as relevant statements of its President, and *recalling also* the statement of its President to the press on the occasion of the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace (International Women's Day) of 8 March 2000

Recalling also the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231) as well as those contained in the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century" (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), in particular those concerning women and armed conflict,

Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements, and *recognizing* the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and *stressing* the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

Reaffirming also the need to implement fully international humanitarian and human rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts,
Emphasizing the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls,

Recognizing the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard *noting* the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693),

Recognizing *also* the importance of the recommendation contained in the statement of its President to the press of 8 March 2000 for specialized training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations,

Recognizing that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security,
Noting the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls,

1. ***Urges*** Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict;

2. ***Encourages*** the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decisionmaking levels in conflict resolution and peace processes;

3. ***Urges*** the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this regard *calls on* Member States to provide candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster;

4. *Further urges* the Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations, and especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel;

5. *Expresses* its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and *urges* the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide to Member States training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peacebuilding measures, *invites* Member States to incorporate these elements as well as HIV/AIDS awareness training into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment, and *further requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training;

7. *Urges* Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children's Fund, and by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies;

8. *Calls on* all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia:
(a) The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction;
(b) Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements;
(c) Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary;

9. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, especially as civilians, in particular the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 1999 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;

10. *Calls on* all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict;

11. *Emphasizes* the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls, and in this regard *stresses* the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions;

12. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, including in their design, and recalls its resolutions 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998 and 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000;

13. *Encourages* all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants;

14. *Reaffirms* its readiness, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, to give consideration to their potential impact on the civilian population, bearing in mind the special needs of women and girls, in order to consider appropriate humanitarian exemptions;

15. *Expresses* its willingness to ensure that Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including through consultation with local and international women's groups;

16. *Invites* the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peace-building and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution, and *further invites* him to submit a report to the Security Council on the results of this study and to make this available to all Member States of the United Nations;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General, where appropriate, to include in his reporting to the Security Council progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions and all other aspects relating to women and girls;

18. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

We, the Heads of State and Government of Member States of the African Union, meeting in the Third Ordinary Session of our Assembly in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 6-8 July 2004:

Reaffirming our commitment to the principle of gender equality as enshrined in Article 4 (l) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, as well as other existing commitments, principles, goals and actions set out in the various regional, continental and international instruments on human and women's rights, including the Dakar Platform for Action (1994), the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW - 1979), the African Plan of Action to Accelerate the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action for the Advancement of Women (1999); the Outcome Document of the Twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (2000); UN Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security; and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003);

Standing by our Decision on gender parity taken at the Inaugural Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in July 2002 in Durban, South Africa implemented during the Second Ordinary Session of the Assembly in Maputo, Mozambique, 2003 through the election of five female and five male Commissioners;

Noting with satisfaction that our Decision on gender parity is a historic achievement that does not yet exist in any other continent or regional organizations;

Re-affirming our commitment to continue, expand and accelerate efforts to promote gender equality at all levels;

Determined to build on the progress that we have achieved in addressing issues of major concern to the women of Africa;

Taking cognizance of the landmark decision to adopt the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa during the Second Ordinary Session of the Assembly in Maputo, Mozambique, 2003;

Noting the decision of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission to transform the African Women's Committee on Peace and Development (AWCPD) into the African Union Women's Committee (AUWC), which will be located in the Gender Directorate and serve as an Advisory Body to the Chairperson on Gender and Development;

Recognizing that major challenges and obstacles to gender equality still remain and require concerted and collective leadership and efforts from all of us including networks working on gender and development;

Deeply concerned about the status of women and the negative impacts on women of issues such the high incidence of HIV/AIDS among girls and women, conflict, poverty, harmful traditional practices, high population of refugee women and internally displaced women, violence against women, women's exclusion from politics and decision-making, and illiteracy, limited access of girls to education;

Aware of the policies and programmes we have put in place to curb the spread of HIV/AIDS pandemic as well as the current challenges in this campaign;

Concerned that, while women and children bear the brunt of conflicts and internal displacement, including rapes and killings, they are largely excluded from conflict prevention, peace-negotiation, and peace-building processes in spite of African women's experience in peace-building;

Aware of the fact that low levels of women's representation in social, economic and political decision-making structures and feminisation of poverty impact negatively on women's ability to derive full benefit from the economies of their countries and the democratization process;

Aware of the digital divide between the North and the South, men and women and the role of information telecommunication technologies (ICTS) in the advancement of the gender issue as stated in the e-gender Forum Declaration of Tunis, May 2004 in preparation for the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) 2005;

HEREBY AGREE TO:
1. **Accelerate the implementation of** gender specific economic, social, and legal measures aimed at combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic and effectively implement both Abuja and Maputo Declarations on Malaria, HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Disease. More specifically we will ensure that treatment and social services are available to women at the local level making it more responsive to the needs of families that are providing care; enact legislation to end discrimination against women living with HIV/AIDS and for the protection and care for people living with HIV/AIDS, particularly women; increase budgetary allocations in these sectors so as to alleviate women's burden of care;

2. **Ensure** the full and effective participation and representation of women in peace process including the prevention, resolution, management of conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction in Africa as stipulated in UN Resolution 1325 (2000) and to also appoint women as Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the African Union;

3. **Launch**, within the next one year, a campaign for systematic prohibition of the recruitment of child soldiers and abuse of girl children as wives and sex slaves in violation of their Rights as enshrined in the African Charter on Rights of the Child;

4. **Initiate, launch and engage** within two years sustained public campaigns against gender based violence as well as the problem of trafficking in women and girls; Reinforce legal mechanisms that will protect women at the national level and end impunity of crimes committed against women in a manner that will change and positively alter the attitude and behaviour of the African society;

5. **Expand and Promote** the gender parity principle that we have adopted regarding the Commission of the African Union to all the other organs of the African Union, including its NEPAD programme, to the Regional Economic Communities, and to the national and local levels in collaboration with political parties and the National parliaments in our countries;

6. **Ensure** the active promotion and protection of all human rights for women and girls including the right to development by raising awareness or by legislation where necessary;

7. **Actively promote** the implementation of legislation to guarantee women's land, property and inheritance rights including their rights to housing;

8. **Take** specific measures to ensure the education of girls and literacy of women, especially in the rural areas, to achieve the goal of "Education for All" (EFA);

9. **Undertake to Sign and ratify** the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa by the end of 2004 and to support the launching of public campaigns aimed at ensuring its entry into force by 2005 and usher in an era of domesticating and implementing the Protocol as well as other national, regional and international instruments on gender equality by all States Parties;

10. **Establish** AIDS Watch Africa as a unit within the Office of the Chairperson of the Commission who should render annual report on HIV/AIDS situation in the continent during annual Summits; and promote the local production of anti-retroviral drugs in our countries;

11. **Accept** to establish an African Trust Fund for Women for the purpose of building the capacity of African women and further request the African Union Commission to work out the modalities for the operationalisation of the Fund with special focus on women in both urban and rural areas;

12. **Commit** ourselves to report annually on progress made in terms of gender mainstreaming and to support and champion all issues raised in this Declaration, both at the national and regional levels, and regularly provide each other with updates on progress made during our Ordinary Sessions;

13. **We request** the chairperson of the African Union Commission to submit, for our consideration, an annual report, during our ordinary sessions, on measures taken to implement the principle of gender equality and gender mainstreaming, and all issues raised in this Declaration both at the national and regional levels.