

THE DURBAN DECLARATION



OAU

AFRICAN WOMEN COMMITTEE ON PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT



ECA

DURBAN DECLARATION ON MAINSTREAMING GENDER AND WOMEN'S EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE AFRICAN UNION

We, representatives of African civil society organisations, working on gender and development issues and meeting on the eve of the launch of the African Union, in a consultation on *Mainstreaming African Women's Vision and Effective Participation in the African Union*, organised by the African Women's Committee for Peace and Development (AWCPD) in collaboration with Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) and the facilitation by the African Centre for Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) held in Durban, South Africa, from 28 to 30 June 2002, in accordance with the Council of Ministers Resolution CM/Dec.579 (LXXIII 3) (February 2001, Tripoli, Libya);

Welcoming and Congratulating our Heads of State and Government on their decision and commitment to establish the African Union, to adopt the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) and the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) programmes, as well as the efforts made towards the elaboration of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa;

Recognising African governments' commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment as enshrined in the Constitutive Act of the African Union (Article 4(1); in national, regional and international instruments – particularly the *Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action*, the *Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)* – and other relevant decisions of the OAU Council of Ministers calling for consultation on the participation of women in the African Union;

Acknowledging the commitment of OAU/AU to involve African Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Africa's development, which led to the OAU/CSOs meetings in June 2001 and June 2002;

Building upon the OAU Workshop on Gender Mainstreaming in the African Union, held at the OAU General Secretariat from 25 to 27 May 2002;

Convinced that African women must seize the opportunity provided by the historical moment of the launching of the African Union to ensure their full and effective participation in its operationalisation;

Reaffirming African women's commitment to building strategic partnerships at all levels in these processes;

Reaffirming the importance of integrating a gender perspective in all policies, programmes and projects in line with Article 4 (1) of The Constitutive Act of the African Union;

Hereby urge the 76th Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers to consider and recommend to the 38th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU to adopt the following:

I- On the African Union (AU):

1. Appointment of a Commissioner with an exclusive mandate on gender issues, equipped with adequate financial, human and material resources, for effective gender mainstreaming in the African Union;
2. Establishment of a specialised Technical Committee on Gender in accordance with Article 14 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union;
3. Operationalization of the African Women's Committee on Peace and Development (AWCPD), established by the OAU in 1998, in the African Union, given its strategic role in Peace and Security in Africa;
4. Inclusion of a pan African women's network in the Working Group for the elaboration of the ECOSOCC Protocol; and,
5. Guarantee a gender balance in all the organs of the African Union within a reasonable timeframe.

II- On the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD):

1. Establishment of a clearly defined mechanism for African women's representation within the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of NEPAD;
2. Creation and the operationalisation of a Gender Technical Committee under the activities of the Programme;
3. Incorporation of a primary focus on eliminating all forms of discrimination against women in Africa under the section on "Conditions for Sustainable Development" of the Programme; and,
4. Incorporation of gender mainstreaming in sectorial priorities, goals and strategies of the NEPAD in line with the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action and the CEDAW;

III- On The Conference On Security, Stability, Development And Cooperation In Africa (CSSDCA)

1. Development of an appropriate framework for African women's participation in the monitoring and evaluation mechanism of the CSSDCA;
2. Incorporation of gender mainstreaming in the conceptualisation and gender balance in the composition and operational modalities of the CSSDCA Unit and in the identification of national and regional focal points; and,
3. Adoption of a systematic monitoring mechanism as a means for ensuring compliance of African States with the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action, CEDAW and the United Nations Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, Security and HIV/AIDS.

IV- On the Draft Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on The Rights of women in Africa

1. Adoption of appropriate measures to ensure the effective participation of appropriate Government experts, with legal background including women, in the Second Experts Meeting on the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa;
2. Adoption of strategic measures to ensure the effective participation of appropriate Ministers at the Ministerial Meeting on the Protocol following the Experts Meeting;
3. Ensure the conformity of the Protocol with existing standards set in regional and international instruments on gender equality and women empowerment; and,
4. Expedient adoption, ratification and enforcement of the Draft Protocol.

In the light of the foregoing, we, the representatives here present, hereby

PLEDGE our commitment to fully support these commendable initiatives of the OAU and to work in strategic partnership to promote the ideals and principles of The African Union (AU); and,

RESOLVE to disseminate and popularise the provisions of the African Union, NEPAD, CSSDCA, the Protocol and other African political, economic, social and cultural development initiatives.

DONE IN DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA ON 30 JUNE 2002

PARTICIPANTS

1. AFRICAN CENTRE FOR CONSTRUCTIVE RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES (ACCORD)
2. AFRICAN CENTRE FOR DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS STUDIES (ACDHRS)
3. AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS (ACHPR)
4. AFRICA LEADERSHIP FORUM (ALF)
5. AFRICAN WOMEN'S COMMITTEE ON PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT (AWCPD)
6. AFRICAN WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATION NETWORK (FEMNET)
7. COMMISSION ON GENDER EQUALITY – SOUTH AFRICA (CGE)
8. COMITE NATIONAL FEMMES ET DEVELOPPEMENT – DRC (CONAFED)
9. FEMMES AFRICA SOLIDARITE (FAS)
10. OAU WOMEN, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
11. WOMEN IN LAW AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA (WILDAF)