

## In This Issue:

- African Women's Decade
- The Decisions from the July Heads of State Summit at Kampala
- The Pre-Summit on Gender
- Gender in the Human Rights Strategy for Africa
- The Year of Peace and Security



A Quarterly Issue presented by the African Union and UNIFEM



# Walking the Talk

Gender Equality in the African Union

October 2010/ Issue Number 2/ Quarterly Publication/ Addis Ababa - Ethiopia



## In the Spotlight:

### African Women's Decade

*In hoping to keep gender issues a priority for Member States of the African Union, the years 2010-2020 have been declared as the African Women's Decade.*

The African Women's Decade will elevate the visibility of women's rights and gender equality, jump start the implementation of relevant programmes in AU member states, as well as to celebrate achievements.

This is a joint publication



United Nations Development Fund for Women

**UNIFEM**  
part of UN Women

## The Vision for African Women

### Achieving the promotion of women's rights for 2020

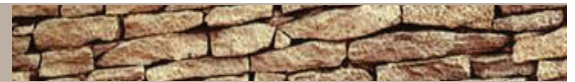


The XII Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union declared 2010—2020, as African Women's Decade. The main goal of the Decade is to enhance the implementation of commitments related to gender equality and women's empowerment. Our vision is that the activities undertaken during the Decade should result in tangible positive change for African Women at all levels, contributing, at the same time, to the achievement of the

Millennium Development Goals.

The theme of the Decade is "Grassroots Approach to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment" which emphasizes a bottom up approach to development. The African Union looks forward to women and entire communities seizing ownership of the Decade and using it to mobilize, to work with their governments and to build institutions that will contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Decade. The Decade should also be an opportunity for sharing strategies that work and the many lessons that Africa has learned in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, for replicating and up-scaling good practices.

H.E. Jean Ping  
African Union Commission Chairperson



By Litha Musyimi - Ogana  
Director AUWGDD

The African Women's Decade will be launched in Nairobi Kenya on October 15, 2010. The overarching objective of AWD 2010-2020 is to review and celebrate progress made towards gender equality and women's empowerment and to articulate concrete actions that should be taken to accelerate momentum in implementation. The Decade provides an opportunity for Africa's global leadership for the rejuvenation of women's movements with a focus on youth and grassroots women leaders; and to maintain the drive for empowering African women, as well as scaling up and ring fence funding for gender equality and women's empowerment programmes in the context of the current financial and economic crisis; finally the Decade aims to mobilize actors for accelerated implementation of the commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment. The Decade will focus on ten themes

### 1. Fighting poverty and Promoting Economic Empowerment and Entrepreneurship:

- Attain decent work for women and equal opportunity in employment, promotion and movement towards parity at the work place
- Create employment and services by supporting Women entrepreneurs particularly in informal sectors, including Small, Medium Enterprise (SME), Medium Enterprise (ME) and grow them to big businesses

### 2. Agriculture and Food Security

- Achieving food security and fighting hunger.
- Increased women's access to agricultural land, farm inputs, credit, technology, extension services, irrigation and water.
- Link women to markets through value addition of their products including agro-based supply chain and creating new markets for their produce including organic food stuffs.

### 3. Health, Maternal Mortality and HIV/AIDS

- Improve women's health,
- Reduce maternal mortality
- Address HIV/AIDS including the disproportionate burden on women and girls through increased infections, spread and increased workload, as well as unequal access medical service including to ARVs and good nutrition.

### 4. Education, Science and Technology

- Achieve parity in education at 2ary and 3ary levels and higher retention rates for girls
- Increased literacy levels for women through adult education
- Contribution of Women Scientists including Information and Communication Technology

### 5. Environment and Climate Change

- Identify women's roles in mitigating climate change, making sure they benefit from the new global, regional and national packages to fight climate change.

### 6. Peace and Security and Violence Against Women

- Promote the implementation of the international and regional commitments on women, peace and security including United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889.
- Work with the African Union Peace and Security Department, The Peace and Security Council and the Panel of the Wise to strengthen responses to violence against women in conflict situations; and to promote a stronger role for women in conflict resolutions and peace processes.

### 7. Governance and Legal Protection

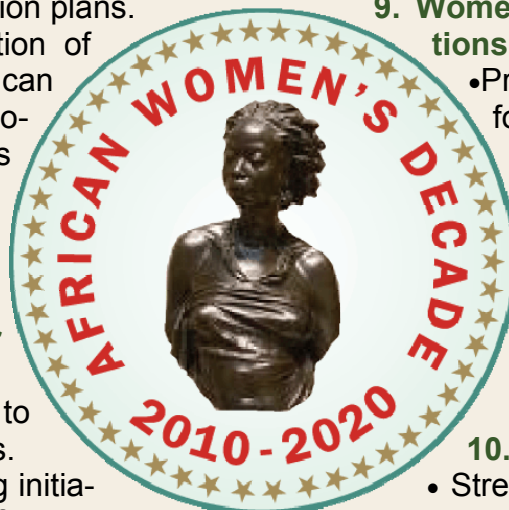
- Support the participation in political and electoral processes at national and local levels.



- Promote the integration of gender equality issues in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and in national action plans.
- Promote universal ratification of the protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.
- Enhance women's access to justice.

### 8. Finance and Gender Budgets

- Increased women access to finance and financial markets.
- Strengthen gender budgeting initiatives to promote allocation of resources to gender equality targets including through economic stimulus packages.
- Establish specialized funds to support women's projects aimed at empowering women economically, and for the implemen-



### 9. Women In Decision Making Positions

- Promote the equal opportunities for women's participation in decision making position the legislature, judiciary and the executive arms the government.
- Implement the AU parity principle in line with AU gender policy.

### 10. Young Women Movement

- Strengthening young women leadership.
- Energize the African Women's movement by promoting intergenerational approaches to movement building and mentoring young women leaders and professionals.

(CONTINUE IN PAGE 4)

## Kenya's Vision for African Women's Decade

### A historical opportunity to build on the political momentum in the promotion of women's rights



Her Excellency, Dr. Monica K. Juma, Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya in Addis Ababa, as an opportunity for her country and all Africa to promote a more equal society where women's rights are respected and where women participate actively in all spheres of society. In the particular case of Kenya, Ambassador Juma believes that the Decade is an opportunity for the country to build on the momentum created by the recent adoption of a new Constitution for Kenya following the traumatic post-election violence in 2009. The constitution for the first time in the history of the country entrenches a 30% minimum representation by women in the national legislature and in local government structures. It protects women's rights land ownership and control among other rights. By hosting the

launch of the African Women's Decade the government of Kenya is very publicly affirming the commitments in the constitution, while mobilizing women and men to convert the energy generated by the referendum and the constitution into real gains for women and communities throughout the country.

The Ambassador also highlighted the historical significance of the launch of the Decade in Nairobi. She recalled that Kenya hosted the World Conference to review and appraise the achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (15-26 July 1985). This conference and the outcome document – the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women – galvanized the women's movement in Kenya. The launch of an Africa specific women's decade is an important opportunity for women in Kenya to reflect on the achievements of the last two decades, and to mobilize for further achievements during the next 10 years.

# Coordination Mechanisms for the African Women's Decade

## National Committees

National Committees of at least 10 members with each member representing each of the thematic areas of the Decade to:

- Mobilize women's movements and coordinate stakeholders at all levels (governments, CSOs and other organized groups) including development partners at grassroots and National levels
- Select projects for implementation
- Ensure gender responsive budgeting through the allocation of funds to women-specific activities in National budgets
- Engage young women and men in the proposed actions.
- Launch the implementation of national and grass roots projects and monitor them
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of internationally agreed commitments on gender equality e.g. the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women, the SDGEA, the MDGs at all levels
- Develop annual Work Plan and Budget for the Committees at all levels
- Prepare Annual Reports.

## "The Committee of 30"

Fed by the national committees, the Committee of 30 is assigned to:

- Provide overall guidance for the implementation of activities
- Promote male involvement and collaboration in the activities of the African Women's Decade at all levels
- Mobilize resources for the implementation of the AWD activities at the Continental and Regional levels
- Promote the establishment of effective lobby groups on key gender thematic areas.
- Launch the Decade at the Continental level
- Support projects selected for implementation

during the Decade

- Develop annual Work Plan for the Committee at the National level
- Prepare Annual Reports on the Activities on the Implementation of the Decade

The Committee is composed 30 people representing the following groups (5 each):

- AU Member States
- Regional Economic Commissions (RECs)
- ECOSOC
- African Union Women's Committee
- Pan African Parliament
- Civil Society Organizations

## "The Committee of 10"

### Ministerial Working Group

As a Ministerial Working Committee, each region will have two themes championed by two Ministers. These Ministers are rotated every two years so that all 53 Member States will have contributed to the Committee by the end of the Decade. This Committee will be supported by Experts to:

- Set up the Working Committees at the Regional level
- Organize the launching of the Decade at the Regional level and support advocacy campaigns
- Organize the mobilization of resources for coordination of activities at the National and Regional levels and assist Member States to mobilize resources at the National level
- Compile country reports into regional reports on the activities of the African Women's Decade
- Convene meetings of the Working Committee to approve the Thematic Projects per Region
- Mobilize resources for the implementation of the AWD activities at the Regional level
- Promote the establishment of effective lobby groups on key gender thematic areas for the African Women's Decade at the Regional level
- Develop annual Work Plan for the Committee at the Regional level
- Prepare Annual Reports on the Activities on the Implementation of the Decade

For further information on the African Women's Decade:

[www.africanwomendecade.org](http://www.africanwomendecade.org) / [www.africa-union.org](http://www.africa-union.org) / [MusyimiOganaL@africa-union.org](mailto:MusyimiOganaL@africa-union.org)

# Women's Rights Advocates Seek to Influence the Human Rights Strategy for Africa



The African Union is in the process of developing a Human Rights Strategy for Africa with the aim of consolidating and strengthening the regional human rights system which currently has numerous duplication of mandates and powers without clarity on linkages. The strategy also aims to strengthen states' commitments to respect human rights as well as to strengthen the capacity of AU organs with human rights mandates. The human rights strategy is further designed to define more clearly the linkages between the regional human rights system and sub-regional and national human rights institutions and mandates. The evolving process of developing the strategy among others emphasized the need for ensuring the participation of CSOs in the formulation of the strategy. To this end, the AU Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) convened a CSOs forum on 9-11 August 2010 in Accra, Ghana creating an opportunity for African human rights CSOs to discuss and agree on their consolidated input into the human rights strategy.

On this occasion, UNIFEM organized a forum for CSOs working on women's human rights prior to the ECOSOCC forum on 6-8 August 2010 to ensure that CSOs working on women's human rights participate and enrich the process and outcome document, which will be the CSO input into the human rights strategy. The forum aimed to ensure that the new strategy guarantees women's human rights and responds to women's rights issues on the continent. The experts meeting brought together participants from various African women's rights CSOs such as Akina Mama wa Afrika (AmWA), Alliances for Africa (AfA), Equality Now/Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SAWR), OXFAM, African Women's Association and Communication Network (FEMNET), Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF) Ghana and West Africa offices as well as representatives from the AU WGDD and UNIFEM who contribute to the three days

deliberations on the proposed human rights strategy for Africa.

The discussions revolved around the appraisal of the current human rights system, its gaps and its implication on the rights of women and an in-depth assessment of the draft human rights strategy developed by the consultant commissioned by the AUC. The experts also discussed the way forward in ensuring sustained engagement of women's rights civil society organizations towards the formulation of a gender sensitive Human Rights Strategy for Africa and proposed action plan which would highlight the role of women's organizations and the partners.

Following the discussions consensus was reached on the need for support from UNIFEM in facilitating continued engagement of broad range of women's rights CSOs towards the finalization of the strategy. It was also agreed that organisations represented at the meeting will facilitate the creation of the a link between the regional and country level processes by ensuring that information is shared and hence broader engagement is achieved. An agreement was reached on the important role the AUC WGDD can play in channeling inputs from CSOs to the key driver of the process within the AUC namely the Department of Political Affairs at the AUC.

The participation of the women's rights CSOs in the ECOSOCC forum was highly commended and welcomed as an organized effort that aims to ensure the inclusivity of the process to address issues of women in the continent. The collaboration between ECOSOCC, UNIFEM, AUC Department of Political Affairs was appreciated by women's rights advocates.

Contact: Ms. Tikikel Tadele Alemu  
[tikikel.alemu@unifem.org](mailto:tikikel.alemu@unifem.org)

# Gender Related Decisions Taken During the July 2010 Summit in Kampala



At the XV Session of the July Heads of State African Union Summit, the African Union reaffirmed its commitments to gender issues with the adoption of several decisions.

## ACCELERATED ACTION TOWARDS UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO HIV, MALARIA AND TB SERVICES

The Assembly urged Member States to accelerate implementation of universal access to these serious transmittable diseases by strengthening their health systems, financing health research, partnering with relevant stakeholders, and integrated approaches to disease control. It also called for development partners at all levels to pitch in and help with these issues. The Assembly decided to extend the Abuja Call for Accelerated Action towards Universal Access to HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria Services in Africa to 2015 to coincide with the MDGs.

## AFRICAN COURT OF JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The Assembly requested the Commission to finalize its study on the implications of empowering the African Court of Justice and Human Rights to try international crimes, to be submitted by the Executive Council to the Assembly at the January/February 2011 Ordinary Session.

This decision has significant implications for women's rights in the context of war crimes committed during armed conflict. In implementing the Assembly decision, the AUC must ensure that international standards and jurisprudence, particularly those relating to war crimes against women, inform its work. This is an opportunity for women's rights advocates and stakeholders to contribute to the dialogue and redefinition of the powers to the African Court of Justice and Human Rights.

## MATERNAL, NEWBORN, AND CHILD HEALTH

The Assembly undertook the commitment to launch a campaign to prevent maternal mortality in (CARMMA); strengthen the health system to provide comprehensive, integrated maternal and new born health care services; provide leadership and policy coherence by developing integrated health plans and to provide sustainable financing by enhancing domestic resource mobilization including meeting the 15% Abuja target.

The Assembly also called on the Global Fund for fighting against HIV/AIDS, Malaria and TB, to create a new window to fund maternal, newborn and child health.

## NEW MEMBERS APPOINTED TO THE PANEL OF THE WISE

The following people were appointed as new members of the panel of the wise:

- President Kenneth Kaunda (Southern Africa),
- Mrs. Marie Madeleine Kalala-Ngoy (CAR), and
- Mrs. Mary Chinery Hesse (West Africa)

Reappointed for a final term were:

- President Ahmed Ben Bella (North Africa)
- Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim (East Africa)

The Panel of the Wise is a consultative body that offers advice to the Peace and Security Council on peace and security issues by five esteemed persons, appointed for a three-year term.

## JULY 2011 SUMMIT THEME: YOUTH FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Assembly decided that the theme for the July 2011 Summit will be "Accelerating Youth empowerment for sustainable development". African Women in particular young women have

the opportunity to start preparing to engage with their governments and the AU on issues of concern to young people.

Within the context of the African Women's Decade, all ten themes have perspectives of relevance to young people. It should also be recalled that one of the focus areas of the decade is young women movement which aims to energize the African women movement and mentor young women leaders.



**Taken from:**

AU Assembly Decisions, 15th Ordinary Session, 25-27 July 2010, available [here](#)

## Gender Equality Advocates at the AU Summit - July 2010

### WGDD EXPLORES MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH ALONG WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

**Kampala, July 19-21, 2010.** AU Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD) organized the IV Pre Summit Gender Forum as a means to bring representatives from civil society organizations, representatives from governments, and development partners to discuss critical issues relating to maternal and child health. It is to be recalled that the theme of the summit was "Promoting Maternal, infant and child health and development in Africa". Participating at the meeting were the Minister for Gender, Labour and Social Welfare from the Republic of Uganda, the AU Commissioner for Social Affairs, the Director of the AU Women, Gender and Development Directorate and the Chief of the Africa Section of UNIFEM. The following recommendations to AU member states were adopted:

- In line with the Declaration of Abuja 2001, Member States should dedicate 15% of the public budget to health agreeing that one-third of such should be set aside for maternal and infant healthcare;
- That certain maternal and infant health medical procedures e.g. caesarean sections, pregnancy care, and fistula surgical procedures and treatments should be offer free of charge.
- That provisions be made for the treatment of cancer associated with maternal health.
- Governments should improve the quality and accessibility of maternal and child healthcare

in rural and urban areas.

- That doctor's competency be systematically monitored; and
- That further commitments be made by Member States to pursue gender equality in healthcare and treatment.

Finally it was agreed that Civil Society Organizations should strengthen their role in the battle against infant and maternal mortality. The Pre-Summit also called upon the private sector and development partners to enhance their support to programmes for maternal and infant health.

### CSOs ASSESS IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTION 1325

October 2010 marks 10 years since the adoption of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. At the margin of the 16<sup>th</sup> Pre-Summit of the Gender Is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC), the Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) on women, peace and security chaired by Ms Mary Robinson President of Realizing Rights and former Irish President and co-chaired by Ms Bineta Diop, Executive Director of Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) met with Civil Society to assess the level of implementation of the Resolution by AU member states.

The meeting agreed upon the following recommendations:

- AU should establish a Special Representative on Women, Peace and Security
- AU should identify new resources and new

funding mechanism. Specifically the AU Peace Fund and Trust Fund should have specific components for Women, Peace and Security

- AU should encourage active Member States to adopt and implement national action plans for the implementation of the resolution 1325
- AU should incorporate gender considerations to mainstream gender in peace activities
- The AU-EU partnership should be strengthened in addressing women, peace and security issues in accordance with Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889

\*Taken from "CSAG Advocacy Message for the AU: Background and Talking Points", July 2010, Kampala, Uganda; provided for by: Femmes Africa Solidarité



### Ms. Tamala Andsen

On behalf of the WGDD, I wish to express our profound sadness on Tamala's passing away on August 26 2010.

Late Tamala, joined AUC, Gender Directorate in August 2009 as a Programme Officer, Gender Coordination and Outreach. We all know how much we cherished her strong character, positive attitude to work, her volunteering spirit, hardwork, efficiency, charm, drive, will, commitment and all.

**Litha Musyimi-Ogana**  
Director, AU-WGDD

## Photo Exhibition at AU Raises Awareness on Violence Against Women

Within the framework of the Year of Peace and Security in Africa, UNIFEM (part of UN Women) in partnership with the AUC held a photo exhibition displayed during the AU Summit in Kampala, Uganda in July and during the commemoration of the International Day of Peace in Addis Ababa, on September 2010. Under the theme "Make Peace Happen: Prevent Violence against Women and Girls", the exhibition featured a series of pictures that aimed to raise awareness on the ruthless reality faced by women in conflict situations.

**MAKE  
PEACE  
HAPPEN** | **WOMEN & GIRLS  
IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS**



girls. Furthermore, by presenting the stories of women, children and communities affected by armed conflict, the thirty images conveyed the message that peace is only possible through ending violence against women and girls, thereby reinforcing the linkages between women's rights and peace.

The exhibition was made possible through the collaboration of the AU, UNIFEM, UNHCR, UNICEF, OCHA and Isis-WICCE.

Contact: Mr. Daniel Almeida [daniel.almeida@unifem.org](mailto:daniel.almeida@unifem.org)

### Comments / Suggestions

Mrs. Yetunde Teriba  
[TeribaY@africa-union.org](mailto:TeribaY@africa-union.org)  
(+251-11) 551 77 00

Mr. Daniel Almeida  
[Daniel.Almeida@unifem.org](mailto:Daniel.Almeida@unifem.org)  
(251-11) 663 27 20