

## THE MAPUTO DECLARATION

### MAPUTO DECLARATION ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND THE EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE AFRICAN UNION

#### *Preamble*

We, the representatives of African women's organisations and networks working on gender and development issues, gathered on the eve of the 2nd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of States and Government, at a women's pre-summit meeting, convened by the Foundation for Community Development (FDC) in collaboration with UNIFEM (Southern Africa Regional Office), Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS), African Centre for Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), Centre for Human Rights – University of Pretoria, Southern African Development Community (SADC) Gender Unit, Forum Mulher, Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) - Mozambique, African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), in Maputo, Mozambique from 23 to 24 June 2003

#### *Applauding*

- The recognition of the promotion of gender equality as a key principle and goal of the African Union; and
- The adoption, by Heads of States and Government, of the principle of 50% gender representation in the African Union

Reaffirming our support for the outcomes of meetings as embodied in the:

- Durban Declaration on Gender and Mainstreaming and the Effective Participation of Women in the African Union (30 June 2002); and
- Dakar Strategy on Mainstreaming Gender and Women's Effective Participation in the African Union (26 April 2003)

**Appreciating** the role and contributions of the African Women's Committee on Peace and Development on the continent

#### *Acknowledging*

- The establishment of the Women, Gender and Development Directorate in office of the Chairperson of the African Union ;
- The entrenchment in the Statutes of the African Union Commission, of the principle of gender equality in the recruitment of the Commission's senior staff and top management;

- The opportunity for civil society participation in the activities of the African Union through the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOC); and
- The efforts of Heads of States and Government in their endeavour to address poverty through the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

### **Welcoming**

- The progress made in the elaboration of the Draft Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa; and
- The openness of the NEPAD Secretariat to the secondment of gender specialists and opportunities for gender mainstreaming

### **Concerned that:**

- Despite commendable action by Heads of States and Government in mainstreaming gender, there is need for concerted acceleration of the process;
- There is yet no provision for a Specialised Technical Committee on Gender;
- The Women, Gender and Development Directorate is severely under-resourced;
- There is no mechanism for dialogue between women's organisations and networks and the key decision-making structures of the African Union;
- The Pan African Parliament Protocol provision that at least one of the five representatives from each member state must be a women, is inadequate;
- There is an acute under-representation of women ambassadors and other plenipotentiaries accredited to the African Union;
- Despite the continent having the highest incidence of maternal mortality in the world; legal, policy and programmatic interventions are not commensurate with the gravity of the challenge;
- Discriminatory laws and harmful traditional practices continue to exacerbate the high incidence of HIV/AIDS, particularly among women and girls;
- Women in agriculture face many constraints, inadequate access to land, credit, information and the acquisition of skills; and
- War and conflict negatively impact on women in that among other things, it disrupts women's major source of livelihood and food security

### **Recognising the need:**

- To elaborate and implement an African Union Gender Policy and Declaration;
- For an effective gender mainstreaming strategy and efficient co-ordinating framework for managing gender issues on the continent;
- For sensitisation on gender issues throughout the African Union; and
- To clarify the status and role of the African Women's Committee on Peace and Development

**Reaffirming** our commitment to building strategic partnerships at all levels and in the activities of the African Union, we hereby **recommend** the following to the 3<sup>rd</sup>

Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Session of the Heads of States and Government of the African Union:

**A. African Union**

1. That an African Union Gender Policy and Declaration, as well as a gender mainstreaming strategy and co-ordinating framework are put in place as soon as possible;
2. That a Specialised Technical Committee on Women and Gender be established under Article 14 of the African Union Constitutive Act; and
3. That adequate resources be availed for the work of the Women, Gender and Development Directorate

**B. Participation of African Women in the Organs of the African Union**

1. That the Pan African Parliament Protocol should be amended to allow for at least two women representatives out of the five representatives from each member country;
2. That the Economic, Social and Cultural Council ensure gender parity in its membership; and
3. That a high level mechanism is provided for dialogue between women's organisations and networks and the key decision-making structures of the African Union

**C. Draft Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa**

1. That the Draft Protocol is adopted and the mechanism for ratification be put into place; and
2. That member States consider withdrawing reservations made on certain key Articles of the Draft Protocol, with a view to strengthening the final Protocol

**D. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)**

1. That the establishment of a task team to ensure that specific issues faced by poor women are addressed in poverty reduction strategies, as envisaged in par 119 of the NEPAD, be expedited; and
2. The rapid implementation of paragraphs 132 –137 of the NEPAD, pertaining to agriculture

**E. Maternal mortality**

1. The adoption of concrete legal, policy and programmatic interventions to curb the high incidence of maternal mortality;
2. Prioritising the commitment of adequate financial resources to health care services, including maternal mortality, at a regional and national level; and
3. Eradicating discriminatory and harmful practices against women that expose them to dying during pregnancy and birth

***F. HIV/ AIDS***

1. That HIV/AIDS policies and programming interventions take due cognisance of the gender implications of the epidemic

***G. Agriculture***

1. The establishment of an African food bank reserve to be used in cases of emergency

**Done in Maputo, Mozambique on 24 June 2003.**