



**STAKEHOLDERS MEETING ON DOMESTICATION AND
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL TO THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON
HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS ON THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN AFRICA,
16 – 18 JULY 2009, KIGALI, RWANDA**

COMMUNIQUE

We, the participants at the Stakeholders meeting on the Domestication and Implementation of the African Union Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa held on 16th - 18th July 2009 in Kigali, Rwanda, organised by African Union Commission, United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and Solidarity for African Women Rights (SOAWR) Coalition;

Having come together in the spirit of partnership as key actors and representatives of governments (from 14 countries in East, Central and West Africa that have ratified the Protocol, namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Comoros, Djibouti, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal and Togo), African Union Commission, UNIFEM, International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), civil society, regional and sub-regional networks and organisations and development partners.

Reaffirming that international and regional commitments on the promotion of women's rights and gender equality are central to peace, security, good governance and sustainable development;

Recognizing that the primary responsibility for the implementation of the Protocol on the Rights of Women is on the State parties to the Protocol whose supreme policy and decision making organ, the Summit of the Heads of states and government, adopted the Protocol in July 2003 in Maputo, Mozambique;

Noting that every country represented at this meeting has the legal obligation to integrate the provisions of the Protocol into its domestic policies and laws in order to make the Protocol applicable within that country and that they have already taken a number of commendable measures and actions at the national and local levels that contribute to its implementation including among others: the inclusion of the principle of equality in national constitutions, the setting up of national machineries for the advancement of women, adoption of gender policies and national action plans, law and policy reforms; putting in place affirmative action policies to support women's participation in decision-making;

While appreciating the progress made, further measures are required to ensure that women and girls fully enjoy their rights and that their situation and position is fundamentally transformed in all spheres of life;

Further recognising that the key to fast-tracking the various commitments on women's rights as stipulated in the Protocol and other international human rights legislation is to ensure that women's rights are integrated in the national development plans including poverty reduction strategies, national legal frameworks and providing adequate financial and human resources within the development of national and sectoral budgets.

We recommend as follows:

Recommendations to the African Union Commission:

1. Provide expertise to support member states to adopt and utilise a multi-sectoral approach to the domestication and implementation of the Protocol and facilitate harmonised reporting on women's rights commitments by member states.
2. Recognise regularly the countries that have ratified and made significant progress in implementing the Protocol.
3. Encourage member states of the African Union that have not ratified the Protocol to do so.
4. Ensure the African Women Decade (2010 – 2020) and Beijing plus 15 Review process come up with actions that contribute to the full ratification, domestication and implementation of the Protocol in order to result in the demonstrated improvement in the lives of women in Africa.

Recommendations to State parties to the Protocol:

1. Take all necessary legislative, judicial, administrative, educational and other appropriate measures in order to fulfil their legal obligations under the Protocol.
2. Adopt and utilize a multi-sectoral approach to the domestication and implementation, and develop partnerships with key stakeholders to implement the Protocol including civil society, private sector and development partners.
3. Ensure the distribution of roles and responsibilities from different sectors based on the mandates and comparative advantage of each sector in fulfilling and promoting specific provisions of the Protocol.
4. Put in place dedicated budgetary allocations for capital and recurrent expenditures on activities that integrate women's rights in sector programmes.
5. Put in place effective monitoring mechanisms to measure the implementation of the Protocol including adopting best practices on implementing women's rights such as establishing performance contracts for all stakeholders in the multi-sectoral approach.
6. Harmonise the reporting process on progress made to implement women's rights in both the Protocol and other international women's rights instruments.
7. Include progress on the implementation on the Protocol within their annual reports to the AU Assembly of Heads of State as required by the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa and are encouraged to do so by the next AU Summit in January 2010, which is the beginning of the African Women's Decade.

8. Continue involving civil society in a coordinated advocacy campaign on the ratification, domestication and implementation of the Protocol.
9. Encourage states to develop and include gender-sensitive indicators and gender disaggregated data on women's rights into national statistics, national development plans and national budgets.
10. Urge fellow member states of the AU that have not ratified the Protocol to do so in the shortest time possible in order to fulfil their commitments to the MDGs and other international and regional human rights obligations.

Recommendations to Civil Society:

1. Work with the national women machineries and other key sectors to develop a specific multi-sectoral strategy for implementation of the Protocol.
2. participate in the implementation of the Protocol by providing technical support, playing a central role in mobilising different stakeholders at community level, to increase awareness on the Protocol and propose ways in which stakeholders can participate in implementing the Protocol using a multi-sectoral approach.
3. Form strategic networks among civil society across different sectors to advocate, lobby and monitor the implementation of the Protocol.
4. Civil society organisations, especially women's organisations to work in partnership with government to ensure the African Women Decade (2010 – 2020) and Beijing plus 15 Review process yields more actions that contribute to the implementation of the Protocol and result in the demonstrated improvement in the lives of women in Africa.

Recommendations to the United Nations and Development Partners:

1. To meet the commitments they have made at international level to support women's rights in Africa.
2. Support financially and with expertise the state parties to the Protocol to adopt and utilise a multi-sectoral approach in the implementation of the Protocol.
3. To prioritise and integrate support towards the implementation of the Protocol within their interventions in different sectors.

Done in Kigali, Rwanda on 18th July 2009

[Original Text in English]

Signatories:

- Governments representatives from National Machineries for Women from Benin, Burkina Faso, Djibouti, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda and Togo.
- Representatives of the AU Women, Gender and Development Directorate, African Union Commission
- United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)
- International Conference on the Great Lakes region (ICGLR)
- Civil society representatives including members of Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR) Coalition.