

**FEMNET Report
On Participation of the SOAWR
Coalition in the Pre-Summit Activities
of the 13th Ordinary Summit of the
African Union Assembly**

June/July 2009

BACKGROUND:

The African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) is a founder member of the Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR) Coalition which was set up in 2004. Since its inauguration the SOAWR Coalition's main area of focus has been to compel African states to urgently sign, ratify, domesticate and implement the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.

The SOAWR Coalition continued in 2009 to advocate at the continental, sub- regional and national levels to push for ratification of the Protocol and also monitor the implementation of the Protocol, particularly by supporting national level lobbies to seek law and policy reforms, in order to make it relevant and applicable to the lives of women in Africa.

Through this process the SOAWR Coalition has contributed to bringing the number of countries that have ratified the Protocol to twenty-seven (27) as of May 2009. The SOAWR Coalition continued to work closely with the AU Women, Gender and Development Directorate and women's and human rights organizations throughout the continent to ensure that the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women is adopted and respected by all as the minimum standard for the promotion and protection of women's human rights in Africa.

The July 2009 AU Summit in Sirte, Libya was organised under the theme: ***“Investing in Agriculture for Economic Growth and Food Security,”*** critical to African women and the realization of their human rights.

The members of the SOAWR Coalition considered it most appropriate to facilitate the participation of rural women from all four sub – regions in sub – Saharan Africa to participate in the pre- Summit events and afterwards be part of the team to lobby the leaders in the Summit. However, due to the complexities involved in acquiring invitations and accreditation for the rural women to attend the Summit, it was agreed that the women be facilitated to participate in the Second AU Pre-Summit on Gender which was convened in Addis Ababa.

SOAWR COALITION ACTIVITIES:

I. The 2nd African Union Pre-Summit on Gender, Addis Ababa, June 18-19, 2009

The meeting was organized by the AU Women, Gender and Development Directorate (AUWGDD), in collaboration with the UNDP Sub- Regional Office based in South Africa. SOAWR facilitated the participation of 8 rural women from Burundi, Burkina Faso, Malawi and Mali to attend the Second Gender Pre-Summit (see Annex III for list of participants). The women were small scale farmers, engaged in various types of farming including horticulture, animal husbandry and cassava farming and processing. The eight rural women were accompanied by a SOAWR member from each of the four countries, and representatives from the SOAWR Steering Committee, Naisola Likimani (Advocacy Officer, FEMNET) and Caroline Muthoni (Programme Officer, Equality Now). In total the SOAWR Coalition had 14 representatives at the Second Gender pre- Summit Meeting.

As part of their participation the SOAWR team prepared and presented a statement on the theme of the Summit, highlighting the relevance of the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women in this context. Several of their recommendations were incorporated in the final document from the meeting. The recommendations from the Second AU Pre-Summit on

Gender were mainstreamed in the report of the AU Commissioner of Agriculture and Rural Economy, presented at the Summit in Sirte. Using this statement, FEMNET, on behalf of the Coalition, prepared and widely circulated a press release. The press release was carried by/quoted in IPS, PZN Africa, ReliefWeb articles, and led to interviews with SABC and UN Radio Sierra Leone with FEMNET Executive Director Ms. Norah Matovu Winyi. See Annex I and II for the SOAWR statement and press release.

The rural women participants also made significant contributions to Working Group deliberations on the sub-themes of the Summit, most specifically on the sub-theme “Stimulating participation of the very poor and vulnerable in rural economic activities in order to alleviate food and nutrition insecurity.” Additionally, the rural women participants presented their prepared statements during the meeting:

Burundi noted that the government has not yet found an answer to women’s land issues. Widowed women, who return from exile, see their land occupied by their brothers- in - law who had remained in the country. They claim the right to deprive their sisters- in-law, arguing that women have no rights to property left by their husbands. The same phenomenon is witnessed among widows whose lands were occupied by persons unknown to them. Death threats are made against them to force them to abandon their property. Divorced and unmarried women also face problems related to land, while Burundi is a country where 90% of the population lives off agriculture. The serious violations of women's rights are justified by the weight of tradition and the often cited fear of adverse consequences that the enactment of a law on inheritance, types of marriages would have on the balance of Burundian society.

Burkina Faso expressed that the situation of the majority of women in Burkina Faso remains difficult given the socio-economic, socio-political and socio-cultural conditions. Despite the achievement of a political will to improve the living conditions of women through texts and laws, development plans, programs and projects, constraints persist and continue to make living and working conditions difficult for rural women. These include unequal access to land, credit and human resource development, exacerbated by the general decline in incomes of the population following the collapse of agricultural production and the allocation of projects to foreign NGOs.

Full texts of all the statements are available upon request.

The SOAWR participants debriefed several times on the proceedings of the pre-Summit, and strategies for follow-up after the pre-Summit. The following was noted by the women:

- They were very grateful for the opportunity to share their experiences and opinions since they already know what is necessary for economic growth and development at the rural level
- They benefited from the information they received during the two day meeting and were happy to learn that there were initiatives at the African Union level that were taking into consideration their needs as rural farmers
- With the new information they would be able to make demands on their governments back home to implement the decisions made at the AU level
- They were also keen to give this information to their communities who have limited access to information especially political decisions that are made the at the African Union

- More rural women should be engaged to participate in regional discussions impacting their rights and livelihoods

As a follow up to the rural women's participation in the pre- Summit on Gender, exchange visits are to be organized in the coming months to continue the lobbying process at the national level. The four countries have submitted proposals for these activities to Equality Now, SOAWR Secretariat. It was proposed that during the exchange visits a national dialogue would be organized in each country to bring together the stakeholders to deliberate on the best way to follow up on the implementation of the Conclusions from the July 2009 AU Heads of States and Government Summit in Sirte, Libya. The stakeholders would include officials from government, the donor community, experts in relevant fields, those involved in agricultural extension work, microfinance groups that support small scale farmers, civil society representatives and those from demonstration farms that are promoting irrigation and efficient water use and management.

The national dialogues will be organized in addition to visits to various projects and farms that will enhance the learning of the grassroots women on how best to improve women's participation in agriculture as a profitable business for them, their families and the larger community.

During the pre-Summit, the AU-WGDD also highlighted the following:

- **AU Women Trust Fund** – The launch is targeted for January 2010. The fund aims to fund practical initiatives that will bridge the gender gap such as providing seed to women farmers, educating girls, etc. A feasibility study has been conducted and the validation workshop will be held in October 2009, where the modalities of the fund will also be discussed and developed.
- **AU Experts Meeting on the Status and Reporting and Implementation of the SDGEA (in Banjul 2009)** – It was reported that of the 53 member states, only 9 submitted reports in January 2007, with 7 more submitting in 2008, and 3 in 2009. Only Senegal has submitted more than one report.
- **African Women's Decade 2010-2020** – During the meeting in Banjul the African Women's Decade was also discussed, and a framework, strategies for implementation and road map were developed. The focus will be on a bottom-up approach, with national level launches first then regional level launches. The official launch will be July 31, 2010 Pan African Women's Day. The decade will be divided into two phases – Phase 1: 2010-2015, and Phase 2: 2015-2020. Events such as the World Cup, the AU Summit in Uganda, will be used to popularize the Decade. Pre-launch activities, resource mobilization and theme development are all part of the road map.

II. The 14th Pre- Summit Consultative Meeting on Gender Mainstreaming in the African Union, Tripoli, June 27-28, 2009

The meeting was organized by the Gender is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) and coordinated by Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS), who works in partnership with the African Union (AU), AU Women, Gender and Development Directorate (AUWGDD), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), Department for International Development (DFID), the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland.

GIMAC is network of women's groups, regional bodies, UN agencies and governments that have defined thematic focal points, reporting guidelines and strategies for advocacy

and lobbying aimed at making African States accountable for the implementation of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA). These initiatives seek to ensure the continued implementation of gender parity in the AU and at the national level.

The Pre -Summit Consultative Meetings on Gender Mainstreaming in the AU have been held in the following locations: Durban, June 2002; Dakar, April 2003; Maputo, June 2003; Addis Ababa, June 2004; Abuja, January 2005; Tripoli, July 2005; Dakar 2005; Banjul, June 2006; Addis Ababa, January 2007; Accra, June 2007; Addis Ababa, January 2008, Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt July 2008 and Addis Ababa January 2009.

It is on this premise that the 14th Pre- Summit Consultative Meeting was held on the 27th – 28th June 2009 in Tripoli, Libya.

SOAWR Coalition, in the person of Ms. Mary Wandia of Oxfam GB, was invited to participate in the Consultative meeting and present on the theme of the Summit. Instead, FEMNET represented SOAWR Coalition at this meeting and the presentation was made by the Executive Director Ms. Norah Matovu Winyi. The full version of the presentation is available on request. It combined the contents of the paper developed by Ms. Wandia on the theme together with the highlights of the SOAWR statement from the Gender Pre-Summit in Addis Ababa. It also expounded on some of the actions that participants should take post- Summit to follow up on the implementation of the recommendations made. The copy of the final outcome document will be circulated by the organizers of the meeting.

III. Lobbying at the AU Summit in Sirte, Libya, June 28-30, 2009

The SOAWR Coalition was represented in Sirte by Ms. Norah Matovu Winyi and Ms. Naisola Likimani of FEMNET. Lamine Ndiaye from Oxfam GB graciously coordinated our accommodation and transport in Sirte. Our strategy was to distribute the SOAWR Statement and press release to official delegations and the media, and to lobby Ministers of Foreign Affairs on the ratification of the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women.

Ms. Norah Matovu Winyi participated as one of the panelists in a panel discussion and press conference convened by Oxfam GB, to launch a Briefing Paper titled “**Investing in Poor Farmers Pays: Rethinking how to invest in Agriculture.**” As a panelist Norah raised a number of gender issues that one needs to consider in order to ensure that investment in Agriculture benefits those that contribute to and sustain the agriculture sector: the women of Africa that contribute 60 – 80% of agricultural labour.

During the Summit, FEMNET also raised awareness on the status of ratification and the rights covered in the Protocol, especially as related to the theme of the Summit. FEMNET distributed the SOAWR position paper on investing in agriculture to Ministers of Foreign Affairs from Benin, Tanzania, Zambia, South Africa, Nigeria, Mali, Togo and Uganda as well as to representatives from SADC, Namibia, South Africa and Kenya. FEMNET additionally distributed the press release to members of the press from PANA, Mozambique News Agency and more.

During the Summit four member states were to present their Peer Review Reports. These were Uganda, South Africa, Benin, and Algeria. The reports were widely distributed to both government and non- state actors in Sirte. The Uganda Report clearly indicated that Uganda has delayed the ratification process of the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women. It notes that Uganda has many progressive laws including its

Constitution of 1995. However, several gender – responsive legislations have been in the pipeline for a very long time. Specific reference is made to the bill on Marriage and Divorce, the bill on Property Rights between Married Persons, and the bill on Violence against Women (the bill has now been adopted by Cabinet and will soon be presented to Parliament).

WHAT DID WE ACHIEVE IN THIS PROCESS?

Through engaging in the pre-Summit processes of the African Union, SOAWR:

1. Amplified the voices of grassroots women in regional policy and decision making processes and increased their capacities to engage at the national level;
2. Lobbied Uganda and Kenya Foreign Ministers on ratification of the Protocol. Lobbied Foreign Ministers from South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Kenya, Uganda, Benin, Togo, Nigeria and Mali on SOAWR's position on the theme of the Summit;
3. Maintained the spotlight on the need for universal ratification and implementation of the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women;
4. Networked and built relationships with members of the Permanent Representatives Council, Executive Council, leaders of the Africa Peer Review mechanism (APRM), GIMAC members and Libyan women's organizations. A sample of relevant contacts is attached hereto (Annex IV);
5. Continued SOAWR's visibility in the media and in AU spaces

CHALLENGES:

- No country has ratified the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa since the January/ February 2009 Summit activities. SOAWR had agreed to focus on lobbying in nine countries namely Uganda, Kenya, DRC, Sudan, Tunisia, Cote D'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Madagascar, and Cameroon. Following the January Summit, the team in Kenya presented a communiqué to the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, asking that Kenya deposit its instrument of ratification. To date this has not happened, despite follow-up efforts.
- Post-Summit advocacy and follow-up at the national level need improvement. A significant amount of traction on this platform should be gained at the national level in between Summits, and Summit work should complement these efforts.
- The July Summit in Sirte was not a very accessible space to civil society due to shortage of facilities and subsequent limited number of invitations issued by the AU Commission. This resulted in the rural women being unable to attend and engage their leaders. Advocacy at the Summit on the theme of agriculture and food security, critical in the current economic climate and food crisis, also proved to be a challenge as the theme took a backseat to sparring over the formation of the AU Authority.

/END

Annex I

**SOLIDARITY FOR
AFRICAN WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

A force for freedom



**MOUVEMENT DE SOLIDARITÉ
POUR LES DROITS
DES FEMMES AFRICAINES**

Une force pour la liberté

**STATEMENT BY SOLIDARITY FOR AFRICAN WOMEN'S RIGHTS
AT THE AFRICAN UNION 2ND PRE-SUMMIT ON GENDER**

June 18-19, 2009

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The Solidarity for African Women's Rights Coalition (SOAWR) is a regional network made up of 33 national, regional and international Civil Society Organisations working towards the promotion and protection of Women's Human Rights in Africa. Since its inauguration in 2004 SOAWR's main area of focus has been to compel African states to urgently sign, ratify, domesticate and fully implement the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (hereinafter referred to as 'the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women').

SOAWR has continued to advocate at the continental, regional and national levels to push for ratification of the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women. This has contributed to bringing the number of countries that have ratified to twenty-seven (27) as of May 2009. To this end the SOAWR Coalition has continued to work closely with the AU Women, Gender and Development Directorate and women's and human rights organizations throughout the continent to ensure that the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women is adopted and respected by all as the minimum standard for the promotion and protection of women's human rights. Significant efforts are currently underway to engage with governments on the domestication, implementation and strengthening monitoring mechanisms at the national and regional levels for the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women.

Additionally, SOAWR has endeavoured to engage women operating at the grassroots and rural level to ensure that a diverse representation of African women's voices is heard at the national and regional level. It is on this premise that SOAWR facilitated the participation of 8 rural women from Burundi, Burkina Faso, Malawi and Mali to attend the Second Gender Pre-Summit. We extend our appreciation to the AU Women, Gender and Development Directorate and UNDP for providing a space where these women's voices can be heard. Their contributions and concrete recommendations have enriched the discourse and we look forward to their recommendations being carried forward to the 13th Ordinary Summit of the African Union Assembly.

As millions of Africans face the threat of starvation and famine and the wars and insecurity leading to massive displacement of people from the land which is their mainstay and source livelihood, focusing on "*Investing in Agriculture for Economic Growth and Food Security*," the theme of the 13th Ordinary Summit of the African Union Assembly, could not be more critical. Africa is essentially an agricultural society with a

largely rural population. In sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture accounts for approximately 30% of the continent's GDP, and women are the backbone of the agricultural workforce, responsible for 60-80% of food production for consumption and sale¹.

Today the world is undergoing a three pronged crisis - dire food insecurity, high fuel prices and an ever-expanding financial and economic crisis. According to the World Food Programme (WFP) the number of the new and urgently hungry in 2009 is increasing by an average of 4 million a week worldwide.² In sub-Saharan Africa, recent food price increases have sunk an additional 28 million Africans into poverty.³ This paints a grim picture for African women who as we know are most disproportionately affected by poverty.

Past efforts to reduce hunger and increase rural incomes have failed largely due to the lack of attention paid to women as farmers and their central role in agricultural productivity. It has been shown that women's empowerment, especially through increase in access to physical and human resources, is central to the improvement of food production and distribution. As such, strategies addressing investment in agriculture for economic growth and food security should be inextricably linked to investing in women's empowerment as clearly outlined in the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women and the Solemn Declaration on Gender in Africa, in order to be truly effective.

The Solidarity for African Women's Rights Coalition,⁴ in conjunction with rural women farmers from Burundi, Burkina Faso, Mali and Malawi would like to recommend the following to African Heads of States and Governments:

- 1. Increase women's land ownership and access to credit facilities, agricultural inputs, information and technology** – African women are primarily responsible for food production. However land is still mainly owned and/or controlled by men. Women's productivity is thus curtailed as their decision making ability is limited, and they are also unable to secure vital credit without land rights, and consequently unable to secure fixed and working capital for improving and expanding agricultural production. The AU Protocol on the Rights of Women calls on States Parties to take **all appropriate measures** to promote women's access to productive resources such as land and guarantee their right to property. Special attention should be paid to the needs and rights of widows and returnees.

¹ Rural Women and the Right to Food <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/W9990E/w9990e10.htm>

² "U.N. Warns of Catastrophe as Hungry People reach One Billion." The Washington Post, June 12, 2009.

³ *Africa in Our Hands*. Development Support Monitor 2009. Africa Monitor. p12

⁴ African Centre for Democracy And Human Rights Studies (ACDHRS), Akina Mama wa Afrika, Association des Juristes Maliennes, Cellule de Coordination sur les Pratiques Traditionnelle Affectant la Sante des Femmes et des Enfants, BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights, Centre for Justice Studies and Innovations (CJSI), Coalition on Violence Against Women, Collectif des Associations et ONGS Féminines de Burundi (CAFOB), Eastern Africa Sub-regional Support Initiative (EASSI), Equality Now-Africa Regional Office, FAHAMU, FAMEDEV-Inter-African Network For Women, Media, Gender and Development, (FEMNET) - African Women's Development and Communication Network, Federation of Women Lawyers Kenya (FIDA-Kenya), Forum Muhler, Girl Child Network (Zimbabwe), Inter-African Committee on Harmful Traditional Practices (IAC), Human Rights Law Service (HURLAWS), Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC), Oxfam GB, Sister Namibia, Strategic Initiative for the Horn of Africa (SIHA), Union Nationale des Femmes de Djibouti, Voix de Femmes, University of Pretoria Center for Human Rights, Women Direct, Women of Liberia Peace Network (WOLPNET), Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF), Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Alternatives (WRAPA)

State parties must ensure that the benefits from agricultural production are more equitably distributed in order to accelerate rural development as the majority of African people, and most especially the women live in rural areas.

Improving women's access to quality education and adult training opportunities is probably the single most important policy instrument that will substantially increase agricultural productivity and reduce food insecurity and poverty. With increased access to relevant and timely information and technology, women can increase their ability to take leadership, influence decision making, and increase agricultural productivity through efficiency gains and participation in transformative processes of produce.

2. **Increase investment in agriculture** – We call on African leaders to honour their commitment to increase investment in agriculture to 10% of their overall annual budgets. This must include targeted investment in small scale farming, and in particular providing incentives to women small-scale farmers, building the entrepreneurship capacity of women to engage in agri-business and grow cash crops, and ensuring that State investments in social protections are not sacrificed.
3. **Facilitate increased participation of women in decision making** – Women continue to be underrepresented in decision-making positions in governments, civil society and the private sector, and as such their needs, issues and constraints are not often reflected in policy-making processes and laws impacting their lives. In particular women need to be included and empowered to participate in decision making processes at the community level, particularly in the context of infrastructure development and collaborative marketing. This is provided for in the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women, which calls for States Parties to take specific positive action to ensure that women are equal partners with men at all levels of development and implementation of State policies and programmes.

In closing, we call on our leaders in particular those of Kenya, Uganda, Cote D'Ivoire, Ethiopia and Botswana to lead by example and accelerate the ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa before the 13th Summit of Heads of States and Governments scheduled to take place in Sirte in Libya on the 1st – 3rd of July 2009.⁵

⁵ The following countries have not ratified the African Women's Protocol: Botswana, Egypt, Eritrea, Sao Tome and Principe and Tunisia, Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Cote D'Ivoire, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Niger, Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland and Uganda.

AnnexII

**SOLIDARITY FOR
AFRICAN WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

A force for freedom



**MOUVEMENT DE SOLIDARITÉ
POUR LES DROITS
DES FEMMES AFRICAINES**

Une force pour la liberté

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

20th June, 2009

African Rural Women Farmers call on Head of States to increase investment in Agriculture

African Rural women farmers from Burundi, Burkina Faso, Mali and Malawi are participating in the Gender Pre- Summit meeting in Addis Ababa Ethiopia convened by the Women, Gender and Development Directorate of the Africa Union and UNDP. The purpose is to strategise on what they want heads of states and government in Africa to prioritize during the forth coming African Union Summit to be held in Libya. In collaboration with Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR) Coalition, the women have called on African heads of states to honour their commitment to increase investment in agriculture to 10% of their overall annual budgets.

Bangou Marimpoa rural farmer from Burkina Faso said increased investment in agriculture must include targeted investment in small scale farming, and in particular providing incentives to women small-scale farmers, building the entrepreneurship capacity of women to engage in agri-business and grow cash crops, and ensuring that State investments in social protections are not sacrificed.

Other recommendations made by the rural women and members of the Solidarity for African Women's Rights Coalition (SOAWR Coalition) in the meeting include:

- **The need for state parties of the AU to take measures to increase women's land ownership and access to credit facilities**, agricultural inputs, information and technology which is in line with the provisions of the Protocol on African Women's Rights.
- **The urgent need to take measures to achieve gender parity in decision making bodies at all levels in order to guarantee increased participation of women in decision making.** Women continue to be underrepresented in decision-making positions in governments, civil society and the private sector, and as such their needs, issues and constraints are not sufficiently reflected in policy-making processes and laws impacting their lives.

The 13th Ordinary Summit of the African Union Assembly to be held in Libya next month will take place at a time when millions of Africans face the threat of starvation and famine, insecurity leading to massive displacement of people from the land which is their mainstay and source of livelihood. The theme for this summit is *“Investing in Agriculture for Economic Growth and Food Security,”* could not have come at better time than this one. Africa is essentially an agricultural society with a largely rural population. In sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture accounts for approximately 30% of the continent’s GDP, and women are the backbone of the agricultural workforce, responsible for 60-80% of food production for consumption and sale⁶.

Today the world is undergoing a three pronged crises - dire food insecurity, high fuel prices and an ever-expanding financial and economic crisis. According to the World Food Programme (WFP) the number of the new and urgently hungry in 2009 is increasing by an average of 4 million a week worldwide. In sub-Saharan Africa, recent food price increases have sunk an additional 28 million Africans into poverty. This paints a grim picture for African women who as we know are most disproportionately affected by poverty.

The grassroots women in collaboration with the SOAWR Coalition have also called on African leaders in particular those of Kenya, Uganda, Cote D’Ivoire, Ethiopia and Botswana to lead by example and accelerate the ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa before the 13th Summit of Heads of States and Governments scheduled to take place in Sirte in Libya on the 1st - 3rd of July 2009.

For Further Information Contact:

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To talk to the Executive Director of FEMNET call Norah Matovu Winyi on 254 20 271 2973/ 254 729 571 544. You can also contact Ms. Faiza Mohamed the Regional Director of Equality Now which hosts the Secretariat for the SOAWR Coalition on 254 20 271 9913/ 271 9832.

Note to Editors:

The Solidarity for African Women’s Rights Coalition (SOAWR) is a regional network made up of 33 national, regional and international Civil Society Organisations working towards the promotion and protection of Women’s Human Rights in Africa. Since its inauguration in 2004 SOAWR’s main area of focus has been to compel African states to urgently sign, ratify, domesticate and fully implement the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (hereinafter referred to as ‘the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women’). Additionally, SOAWR has endeavoured to engage women operating at the grassroots and rural level to ensure that a diverse representation of African women’s voices is

heard at the national and regional level. It is on this premise that SOAWR facilitated the participation of 8 rural women from Burundi, Burkina Faso, Malawi and Mali to attend the Second Gender Pre-Summit from 18th-19th June 2009 in Addis Ababa Ethiopia. Recommendations from this meeting will be presented to the AU Heads of States and governments during the summit. SOAWR has continued to advocate at the continental, regional and national levels to push for ratification of the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women. This has contributed to bringing the number of countries that have ratified to twenty-seven (27) as of May 2009. The following countries **have not ratified** the African Women's Protocol: Botswana, Egypt, Eritrea, Sao Tome and Principe and Tunisia, Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Cote D'Ivoire, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Niger, Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland and Uganda.

For more information about SOAWR visit: www.soawr.org

Annex III

SOAWR/Rural Participants to AU pre-Summit on Gender:

Country	Organization	Representative
Burkina Faso	Voix des Femmes (SOAWR member)	Monsieur ZOMBRE Pascale
	Grassroots woman	Madame KAFANDO née NIKIEMA Azarata
	Grassroots woman	Madame KOLOGO née BANGOU Marimpo
Burundi	CAFOB (SOAWR member)	NKURUNZIZA Justine
	Grassroots woman	BARINDAMBI Véronique
	Grassroots woman	NDAMUHAWENIMANA Analyssa
Mali	AJM (SOAWR member)	Maître Saran KEITA DIAKITE
	Grassroots woman (L'Association des Femmes Rurales de Niena (Sikasso))	Madame DOUMBIA Salimata SANGARE
	Grassroots woman (Femmes de la Commune Rurale de Kati)	Madame MACALOU Fanta DEMBELE
Malawi	NGOGCN (FEMNET member)	Mrs. Emma Kaliya
	Grassroots woman (National Association of Business Women)	Mrs Chrissie A Katundu
	Grassroots woman (National Association of Business Women)	Mrs. Lucy Kuboma Meda

Annex IV

Sample List of Relevant Contacts

- 1) Maître Soyata Maïga,
Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women
in Africa
ACHPR
- 2) Hon. Kabinga J. Pande, MP
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Zambia
- 3) Hon. Bernard K. Membe, MP
Minister of Foreign Affairs
The United Republic of Tanzania
- 4) Amb. James M. Mugune
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Uganda
- 5) Sandile Schalk
Deputy Head of Mission
South African Embassy
Ethiopia
- 6) Amb. Martin Andjaba
Head of Department, Multilateral Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Namibia
- 7) Tanki J. Mothae
Director: Organ on Politics, Defense
and Security Affairs
Southern African Development
Community
- 8) Strike Mkandla, Ph.D
UNEP Representative to AU, ECA
and Ethiopia
- 9) Cornelius Aidam
Organisation Internationale de la
Francophonie
Madagascar
- 10) Prof. RM. Mkandawire
Head of CAADP
NEPAD Secretariat
- 11) Amb. Malefetsane Mohafa
Kingdom of Lesotho
Ambassador to Libya
- 12) Amb. Moses Sebunya
Republic of Uganda
Ambassador to Libya
- 13) Valuarda G. Monjane
FDC (Community Development
Foundation)
Mozambique