

**SOLIDARITY FOR  
AFRICAN WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

A force for freedom



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

Une force pour la liberté

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Statement by the Solidarity of African Women's Rights (SOAWR) Coalition on the Election of Dr Nkosazana Clarice Dlamini-Zuma as the AUC Chairperson**

**Nairobi, Kenya, 30 July 2012** - The 40 members of the Solidarity for African Women's Rights Coalition, based in 22 African countries, commend the African Union (AU) Heads of States and Governments on the successful election of **Dr Nkosazana Clarice Dlamini-Zuma** as its African Union Commission (AUC) first female Chairperson.

The admirable way the elections were conducted exhibited the AU's ability to apply its principles of promoting gender equality and respect for democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance as provided in the Constitutive Act of the AU. This is a strong message that should form the basis for similar renewed action within the AU and across Africa.

In this regard, SOAWR recommends that the AU, its institutions and member states should effectively strengthen their policies and programmes at national and regional level to ensure that:

- The implementation of projects during the African Women's Decade (AWD) 2010-2020 increases participation of women in governance, peace process and upholds gender justice;
- Africa's integration agenda supports economic growth and social inclusion for the most vulnerable, minorities and indigenous groups in Africa;
- Long-lasting solutions are effective in resolving conflicts and widespread violence in conflict situations and ensure peace and justice for the peoples of Africa, particularly in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, South Sudan and Mali.

#### Coalition Members

Action for Development (ACFODE), African Centre for Democracy And Human Rights Studies (ACDHRS), African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), Akina Mama wa Afrika (AMWA), Alliances for Africa, The Association of Egyptian Female Lawyers, Association des Juristes Maliennes (AJM), BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights, Cellule de Coordination sur les Pratiques Traditionnelle Affectant la Sante des Femmes et des Enfants (CPTAFE), Centre for Justice Studies and Innovations (CJSI), Coalition on Violence Against Women (COVAW), Collectif des Associations et ONGS Féminines de Burundi (CAFOB), Eastern Africa Sub-regional Support Initiative (EASSI), Equality Now, FAHAMU, Federation of Women Lawyers Kenya (FIDA-Kenya), Forum Mulher, Girl Child Network (GCN), Human Rights Law Service (HURILAWS), Inter-African Committee on Harmful Traditional Practices (IAC), Inter-African Network For Women, Media, Gender and Development (FAMEDEV), Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC), NGO Gender Coordination Network (NGOGCN), Oxfam GB, People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA), Reproductive Health and Rights Alliance (RHRA), Sister Namibia, Strategic Initiative for the Horn of Africa (SIHA), Tomorrow's Child Initiative (TCI), Uganda Women's Network (UWONET), Union Nationale des Femmes de Djibouti (UNFD), University of Pretoria Center for Human Rights, Women Direct, Voix de Femmes, Women of Liberia Peace Network (WOLPNET), Women and Law Southern Africa (WLSA), Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF), Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Alternatives (WRAPA), Women NGO's Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL)

We further urge the AU member states to ratify and domesticate the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.

We congratulate our sister, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, in her new role as AUC Chairperson and appreciate her dedication of her success to all African women. SOAWR urges her to live up to her commitment of ensuring the progressive development of Africa and the livelihoods of all Africans, particularly those of women.

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**NOTE:**

The Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR) Coalition is a pan-African regional network comprised of 40 national, regional and international civil society organisations based in 22 countries, 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 ratify, domesticate and implement the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. The Protocol has thus far been ratified by 32 of the 54 African Union member states, the latest of which is Cote d'Ivoire, which ratified the Protocol in March 2012. The Coalition has committed itself to utilizing the platform of the African Women's Decade (2010-2020) to intensify efforts to compel African states to deliver on their commitments to women's human rights, through ratification of the Protocol, accelerating implementation through a multi-sectoral approach, and prioritizing the promotion and protection of women's bodily integrity and dignity, as well as their participation in governance, peace and security processes and structures.

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