



## SOAWR COALITION'S

### Call to Action and Accountability

to:

The African Union Member States

### Introduction

We, members of the [SOAWR Coalition](#), are **deeply** concerned about the continued violation, infringement, abuse, and denial of the rights of women and girls in Africa in contravention of the provisions of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa ([the Maputo Protocol](#));

Recognizing that 46 AU Member States have ratified the Maputo Protocol;

Concerned that nine (9) Member States are yet to ratify the Maputo Protocol;

Acknowledging that the Republic of Botswana and the Central Africa Republic have taken positive steps towards ratifying the Maputo Protocol.

### We therefore :

1. Urgently call upon the following nine (9) States to ratify the Maputo Protocol: the Republic of Burundi, the Republic of Chad, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the State of Eritrea, the Republic of Madagascar, the Kingdom of Morocco, the Republic of Niger, the Federal Republic of Somalia, and the Republic of Sudan and encourage the Republic of Botswana to formally deposit the instrument of ratification with the African Union Commission. We also urge the Central African Republic, which took steps to ratify the Maputo Protocol in 2012, to urgently complete the process by depositing the instrument of ratification with the African Union Commission.
2. Call upon all AU Member States to enact and effectively implement appropriate legislative or regulatory measures prohibiting and curbing all forms of discrimination against women and girls, taking corrective and positive action in those areas where discrimination against women and girls continues to exist.
3. Urge all AU Member States to invest in public education, information, communication, and other strategies to achieve the elimination of harmful cultural and traditional practices and all other practices that are based on the idea of the inferiority or superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles.



4. Appeal to AU Member States to adopt and enforce legislative, administrative, social, and economic measures to prevent, punish, and eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls, ensuring the protection of every woman's right to dignity.
5. Exhort AU Member States to employ appropriate national legislative measures to guarantee that women enjoy equal rights as men and are regarded as equal partners in marriage, at entry, after separation, divorce, or annulment.
6. Further call upon AU Member States to take specific positive actions, including affirmative action, enabling national legislation, and other measures to ensure that women are represented equally and effectively at all levels in all electoral and decision-making processes.
7. Impress upon AU Member States to adopt and enforce legislative and other measures to guarantee that women have equal opportunities in work, career advancement, and access to other economic opportunities, including the freedom to choose their occupation, equal remuneration for jobs of equal value, adequate and paid pre- and post-natal maternity leave in both the private and public sectors and further take adequate measures to recognize, redistribute, reduce, and reward unpaid care work.
8. Further impress upon AU Member States to urgently adopt and enforce legislative and other measures to guarantee that women's right to health, including sexual and reproductive health, is respected and promoted and that women have the right to control their fertility, choose any method of contraception as well as access to medical abortion in cases of sexual assault, rape, incest, and where the continued pregnancy endangers the mental and physical health of the mother or the life of the mother or the fetus.
9. Implore AU Member States to urgently adopt all appropriate measures backed with sanctions, explicitly prohibiting harmful cultural practices, including Female Genital Mutilation, non-consensual marriages, and marriage of girls below the age of 18 years, ensuring that women's right to live in a positive cultural context and to participate at all levels in the determination of cultural policies is upheld.
10. Strongly urge all AU Member States to honor their treaty reporting obligations under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights by submitting their periodic reports under Article 62 of the Charter as read together with Article 26 of the Maputo Protocol, indicating the legislative and other measures undertaken for the full realization of the rights of women and girls as guaranteed by the Maputo Protocol.

Delivered at Mombasa, Kenya on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023....:

By the SOAWR Steering Committee on behalf of the Members of the SOAWR Coalition:



1. Action for Development (ACFODE), Uganda
2. African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies (ACDHRS), The Gambia
3. African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), Kenya
4. Akina Mama wa Afrika (AMwA), Uganda
5. Alliances for Africa, Nigeria
6. Association de Promotion de la Culture Environnementale (APCE)
7. Association des Juristes Maliennes (AJM), Mali
8. Association des Juristes Sénégalaises, Senegal
9. Association of Egyptian Female Lawyers (AEFL), Egypt
10. Atwar Organization for Research and Social Development (Atwar), Libya
11. BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights, Nigeria
12. Cellule de Coordination sur les Pratiques Traditionnelles Affectant la Santé des Femmes et des Enfants (CPTAFE), Guinea
13. Center for Health Human Rights and Development (CEHURD), Uganda
14. Centre for Justice Studies and Innovations (CJSI), Uganda
15. Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW), Kenya
16. Centre for Reproductive Rights (CRR), Kenya
17. Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV), South Africa
18. Coalition on Violence Against Women (COVAW), Kenya
19. Collectif des Associations et ONGS Féminines de Burundi (CAFOB), Burundi
20. Communication Techniques for Development (ACT)
21. Eastern African Sub-regional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women (EASSI), Uganda
22. Equality Now, Kenya
23. Federation of Women Lawyers Kenya (FIDA-Kenya), Kenya
24. Fondation Pour l'Egalité/ CIDDEF, Algeria
25. Forum for Development and Human Rights Dialogue
26. (FDHRD)
27. Forum Mulher, Mozambique
28. Great Lakes Initiative for Human Rights and Development (GLIHD), Rwanda
29. Haki Nawiri
30. Help Age International
31. Her Voice Liberia
32. Human Rights Law Service (HURILAWS), Nigeria
33. Initiative for Gender Equality and Development in Africa (IGED), Ghana
34. Inter-African Committee (IAC), Guinea and Ethiopia



35. Ipas Africa Alliance for Women's Reproductive Health and Rights, Kenya
36. Jossour, Morocco
37. KADIRAT, Tunisia
38. Kenyan Section of the International Commission of Jurists, Kenya
39. La Journal Féministe Algérien (JFA) (The Algerian Feminist Journal), Algeria
40. Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC), Tanzania
41. Make Every Woman Count, Guinea
42. Malawi Human Rights Resource Center, Malawi
43. MPower, Mauritius
44. NGO Gender Coordination Network (NGOGCN), Malawi
45. Oxfam GB, Kenya
46. People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA), South Africa
47. Question des Femmes, Togo
48. Réseau des Femmes Leaders pour le Développement (RFLD), Bénin
49. Réseau Inter Africain des Femmes, Médias, Genre et Développement/Inter-African Network For Women, Media, Gender and Development (FAMEDEV), Senegal
50. Sister Namibia, Namibia
51. Sources of Peace Organization (SPO), Libya
52. Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA), Uganda and Sudan
53. Support the Empowerment of Women and their Rights for Development (STEWARWOMEN), South Sudan
54. The Forum for Development and Human Rights Dialogue (FDHRD), Egypt
55. The National Association for the Defense of Rights and Freedoms NADRF, Egypt
56. The Network Against Female Genital Mutilation [NAFGEM], Tanzania
57. The New Generation Girls and Women Development Initiative (NIGAWD)
58. Tomorrow's Child Initiative (TCI), Kenya
59. Tshwaranang Legal Advocacy Centre (TLAC), South Africa
60. Uganda Women's Network (UWONET), Uganda
61. Union Nationale des Femmes de Djibouti (UNFD), Djibouti
62. University of Pretoria Centre for Human Rights, South Africa
63. Voix de Femmes, Burkina Faso
64. Well Being Africa (WBA), South Africa
65. Women's Advocacy and Communication Network (WANET), Cameroon
66. Women and Law Southern Africa (WLSA), Zambia
67. Women and Law Southern Africa (WLSA) Zimbabwe
68. Women Counselling and Information Centre (WCIC), Cameroon



69. Women for Justice and Equality
70. Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF), Zambia
71. Women Lead Movement Madagascar
72. Women NGO's Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL), Liberia
73. Women of Liberia Peace Network (WOLPNET), Liberia
74. Women on the Watch(WOW) Society Initiative
75. Women Peace Initiatives Association (WPI), Cameroon
76. Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Alternatives (WRAPA), Nigeria
77. Young Liberian Women Organization For Improvement (WOFIM), Liberia
78. Y-Peer Petri, Morocco