

African Union, African Regional Bodies

Recommendation from the Twelfth Pan-African Parliament Conference on Women's Rights

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African Union

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Commenced

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THE PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT,

CONSIDERING Article 17(1) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, establishing the Pan-African Parliament, to ensure the full participation of African peoples in the development and economic integration of the continent;

CONSIDERING ALSO Article 3 of the Protocol to the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community relating to the Pan-African Parliament, and Rule 4(a) of the Rules of Procedure of the Pan-African Parliament;

CONSIDERING FURTHER the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (also known as the Maputo Protocol), the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration, and the Platform for Action and the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, the African Women's Decade (2010-2020), the AU Strategy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment;

TAKING NOTE of the Report and recommendations from the 12th Conference on Women's Rights convened by the Pan-African Parliament on 14 and 15 October 2019, in Midrand, South Africa, around the AU theme of the year 2019: The Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa;

NOTING that the Women's Conference has been, since 2008 a platform to review women's issues in Africa and to monitor and evaluate progress towards advancement of women's rights in Africa;

NOTING ALSO the Women's Conference took place in the context of the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the adoption of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention governing specific aspects of Refugees and the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Kampala Convention on Internally Displaced Persons (IDP);

NOTING WITH CONCERN that women and children are the most affected by conflicts and displacement, and that women bear the burden of poverty, owing to limited access to decision-making processes, finance, education, health, and means of production.

NOTING ALSO the launching of the operational phase of the AfCFTA on the 7 July 2019, following the entry into force of the African continental trade area on the 30th May 2019;

NOTING FURTHER that the AU Agenda 2063, which envisions Africa as a continent where the free movement of people, capital, goods and services will significantly increase trade and investments amongst African countries and improve Africa's situation in global trade;

RECOGNIZING the significant role played by women in creating productive opportunities and positive impact on the continent's socio-economic development whether implicitly or explicitly;

ACKNOWLEDGING that Parliamentarians, as the people's representatives, have a critical role to play in creating an enabling environment for the realisation of the rights of women and girls, including through ratification, domestication and implementation of international and regional treaties;

NOTING WITH CONCERN challenges and delays with regard to the signing, ratification and domestication of African Union treaties pertaining to women's rights, such as the Maputo Protocol;

IN ACCORDANCE WITH Rule 5 (d) of the Rules of Procedures of the PAP, which authorizes the PAP to make recommendations and formulate resolutions on any matter relating to the African Union and its organs, Regional Economic Communities and their respective organs, Member States and their organs and institutions;

NOW HEREBY RECOMMENDS:

1. **On the AU theme for 2019: The year of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons:**
 - i. The AU Member States to put the concerns of refugees, internally displaced persons and stateless persons on the agendas of the African Union Peace and Security Council, Regional Economic Communities and relevant organs;
 - ii. The AU Member States to strengthen comprehensive mediation, peace building and conflict resolution mechanisms, including the full participation of women in all peacebuilding activities and processes, to pursue national reconciliation through the African Peace and Security Architecture, to strengthen Africa's peacekeeping and enforcement capabilities and collaboration with the United Nations system;
 - iii. The AU Member States to employ an inclusive approach and foster the participation of women, refugees, and internally displaced persons in all decision-making processes affecting them.
2. **On the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA):**
 - i. The Member States to take effective steps to ratify the AfCFTA;
 - ii. The Member States to implement programmes to empower women to actively participate in the Free Trade and to opt for gender responsive policies to improve inclusiveness.
 - iii. The Member States to deliberately facilitate women's access to trade information, services, finance, ICT and markets opportunities;
 - iv. Parliamentarians of the Member States to monitor the negotiations, the implementation and impact of the AfCFTA with a particular focus on the participation of women;
 - v. The Member States to build the capacity of women to effectively participate in free trade and to add value to commodities with the view to increase production and supply of services;
3. **On African Women's Decade (2010 – 2020)**
 - i. The Member States to pass and fully implement gender parity laws that include specific quota for women;
 - ii. The Member States to submit their periodic reports on Beijing +25 for adoption by Ministers in charge of Gender and Women's Affairs during their meeting to be held from 28 October to 1 November 2019;
 - iii. The Member States and Civil society Organizations to develop projects to be submitted to the AUC to be financed under Fund for African's Women (FAW);
 - iv. Parliamentarians to take action to address the existing gaps between policy frameworks on women's rights and the actual realities of women's rights in Africa;
 - v. Women parliamentarians to lobby for the universal ratification of the Maputo Protocol by 2020 to advocate for policies that are favourable to women's economic integration, gender mainstreaming in governance and development sectors and the empowerment and inclusion of women into national programmes;
 - vi. The media to lead campaigns on narrative change on the rights of African women through the sensitization, promotion of laws, policies, and best practices as well as investigation and reporting of gender-based violence;
4. **On women and ICT**
 - i. The African Parliamentarians to advocate in their member states for internet access as a basic right;

- ii. The Member States to ensure the integration of ICT into school curriculum and the elimination of barriers to enable young girls pursue programmes in the field of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM);

5. On Mobilization of resources

- i. The PAP Goodwill Ambassador on Economic Development and Women to mobilize the necessary financial resources from the private sector to support:
 - a. Advocacy for the domestication and the implementation of Maputo Protocol in all African countries;
 - b. Strategic communication to galvanize the work of the PAP on women's rights, particularly the programmes and activities of the Women's Caucus.

Done at Midrand, South Africa on 17 October 2019.