

AFRICAN UNION

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Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA P. O. Box 3243 Telephone 517 700 Fax : 517844

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
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**THE REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON ON MATTERS
RELATED TO THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF ACTIVITIES
OF THE WOMEN, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT
DIRECTORATE**

MAPUTO DECISION EX/CL/DEC.66 (III)

**THE REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON ON MATTERS RELATED TO
THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF ACTIVITIES OF THE WOMEN,
GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE
MAPUTO DECISION EX/CL/DEC.66 (III)**

It will be recalled that Maputo Decision EX/CL/Dec.66 (III) on Matters Related to the Operationalization of Activities of the Women, Gender and Development Directorate requires the African Union Commission to undertake four main tasks, namely to: set in motion the process leading up to the formulation of an AU Policy and Declaration on Gender; elaborate a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy; put in place a framework for coordinating the integration of gender into the work of the AU; and to pursue the process aimed at operationalizing the African Women Committee on Peace and Development (AWCPD), particularly its harmonious integration into the new structures of the Union

In implementing the first three segments of this Decision, a Working Group on Gender was convened by the Chairperson from 4 to 6 March, 2004 in the premises of the African Union Commission. The Working Group had two main tasks. The first task was to help the Commission think through some of the issues that are crucial to elaborating: an African Union Gender Policy; a gender mainstreaming strategy; and a coordination and implementation framework. In this regard, issues discussed included the definition of the role of the Gender Directorate, how the Directorate should pitch its interventions, how it should interface with the other Directorates of the Commission, with other Organs of the AU, and with other stakeholders, including Member States.

The second task of the Working Group on Gender was to help the Commission in taking further the pace-setting decision on gender parity taken in Durban and the elections in Maputo. The issue was how to translate these practical gains into more gender-responsive policies, programmes and activities on the part of the Commission for its Member States. In this regard, the Working Group assisted the Commission in thinking through the processes leading to the Session on Gender during the AU Summit in July 2004.

Regarding the African Women Committee on Peace and Development (AWCPD), the Chairperson convened a meeting on the Committee from 20 to 22 March 2004 at the premises of the African Union Commission. Participants were drawn from the African Union, the Economic Commission for Africa, and members of the AWCPD. The meeting reviewed and deliberated on issues relating to the AWCPD,

focusing mainly on drawing lessons from the past and making proposals regarding the way forward, taking into consideration the transformation that has taken place from the OAU to the African Union, and the gender programme of the African Union. The recommendations emanating from this meeting, regarding the new mechanism that will be integrated into the African Union is hereby submitted to Executive Council for consideration and adoption.

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KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Context

The Executive Council of the African Union (AU), at its meeting in July 2003, in Maputo, Mozambique, adopted Decision EX/CL/Dec.66 (III) which states as follows: “UNDERScores the need for the African Union to pursue the process aimed at operationalizing the African Women’s Committee on Peace and Development particularly to its harmonious integration in the new structures of the Union and report thereon to the Fourth Ordinary Session of the Executive Council”. Consequently, a meeting on the Committee was convened by the Chairperson of the African Union from 20 to 22 March 2004 at the premises of the African Union Commission. Participants were drawn from the African Union, the Economic Commission for Africa, and members of the African Women Committee on Peace and Development (AWCPD).

The meeting reviewed and deliberated on issues relating to the AWCPD, focusing mainly on drawing lessons from the past and made proposals regarding the way forward, taking into consideration the transformation that has taken place from the OAU to the African Union, the vision of the Chairperson and the programme on Gender of the African Union. The meeting came up with the following recommendations regarding the new mechanism that will be integrated into the African Union:

Mandate

The Committee will be a:

- resource for the Chairperson of the Commission and the African Union as a whole in relation to gender issues, as well as in enhancing the capacity of the Women, Gender and Development Directorate of the African Union, and widening the reach of its operations.

- channel for the voices of African women at all levels to enable them to participate in and influence all policy and decision-making in the African Union and its organs.
- channel for popularizing the decisions and workings of the African Union
- support the African Union to further its goals and objectives.

Status and Position

- The Committee will have a Secretariat housed the Women, Gender and Development Directorate.

Support structures

The Committee will have a staff commensurate with its functions.

In view of the new mandate, the Executive Secretary should be someone who shares the vision of the Committee and has prior experience on women and gender related issues. The following should be part of the Terms of Reference for the Executive Secretary of the Committee:

- Meet the criteria set for a P6/P5 position within the African Union Commission
- Must be at least bi-lingual
- Must be able to take initiatives in consultation with the Committee and the Office of the Chairperson of the Commission.

An Information/Communication Officer will be required to assist the Executive Secretary. The Information/Communication Officer should:

- Meet the criteria set for a P3 position within the African Union Commission
- Be bi-lingual
- Have experience in the Information/Communication area.

Functions of the Committee

- Advocacy
- Advisory
- Popularization
- Any other functions as may be assigned by the Chairperson

Functional modalities

- Secretariat responsible to the Committee through the Office of the Chairperson
- Location in the Women, Gender and Development Directorate will facilitate reporting to the African Union Policy Organs and for budgetary allocations

Relationships and linkages

- Link with all stakeholders, civil society groups working on women's issues, professional organizations, and women's groups in the various regions of Africa and Diaspora
- Use existing networks and organizations working on specific issues, looking at the challenges around which women can be organized
- Link with women ministers and parliamentarians and their networks, especially the Pan-African Parliament Women's Caucus
- Use on-going meetings for advocacy
- Link with any other institutions and bodies that will support its work
- The Committee will need to set out the modalities by which other organizations will be affiliated to it and in what capacity.

Resources

- The African Union to provide resources for the smooth functioning of the Committee
- The African Union will have the main responsibility of mobilizing resources for the work of the Committee with assistance from the Committee.

Criteria for Membership

- Experience in working on women and development issues
- Track record and performance in terms of what has been achieved, not necessarily academic excellence, but an activist who has and is still working on the furtherance of gender equality in any area.
- Demonstrated commitment to the cause and struggle of women, taking into account the diversity of women in Africa
- Composition –16 eminent women
- The President of the Pan-African Parliament, ECOSOCC, and of other AU Organs should participate in an ex-officio capacity.

Selection Process

- The Chairperson of the African Union Commission should appoint members of the Committee taking into account the diversity of women in the continent, the need for geographical representation as well as the inclusion of the various social groups.
- The Chairperson of the African Union Commission should consider retaining some of the initial members of the African Women Committee on Peace and Development (AWCPD) for purposes of continuity and harmonious integration.

Name

- The Committee proposed **African Union Women Committee (AUWC) or Comite des Femmes de l'Union Africaine (CFUA)** as the new name for the new Committee.

Budget Lines

Secretariat

Meetings (1 general meeting and 1 consultative meeting a year)

Missions (5)

Communications (newsletters, website, etc)

2004

The report of the chairperson on matters
related to the Operationalization of
Activities of the women, gender and
development directorate Maputo
Decision Ex/CI/Dec.66 (Iii)

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