



Africa Week 2015

CONCEPT NOTE

HIGH-LEVEL EVENT: 15 YEARS OF THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA IN AFRICA: STOCKTAKING AND PERSPECTIVES

**UN SECRETARIAT, CONFERENCE ROOM 12
9:00AM to 11:00AM, WEDESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2015**

I. BACKGROUND

This Year 2015 has been proclaimed the “Year of Women’s Empowerment and Development towards Africa’s Agenda 2063” by the African Union. This comes at a very particular moment when there is convergence of stock-taking and examination of a number of continental and global instruments that seek to promote the role of women in conflict prevention, peace building and security processes. Key among these policy instruments is the United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 and its subsequent Resolutions¹ that have been hailed as the foundation for the women, peace and security agenda across the world, and in Africa in particular, where conflicts continue to cause immense suffering on women and girls.

In January 2015, the Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and UN women co-organized consultations with African Ministers in charge of Gender and Women Affairs, regional and international organizations and civil society organizations to contribute to the Global Study on 1325 led by UN Women. This was followed by a high-level event that was co-organized by the Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) and UN-Women in March 2015 to discuss priority issues for the forthcoming African Union continental results framework on women, peace and security. These consultations provided stakeholders with an opportunity to examine the status of implementation of the Women Peace and Security (WPS) agenda in Africa, and highlighted good practices, gaps and challenges. Participants looked also at ways to move forward the women, peace and security agenda on the continent.

As the world gathers at the United Nations Headquarters to celebrate the 15th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325, the occasion provides an opportune moment for Africa to share her experiences in the implementation of this landmark resolution, including with respect to resulting AU instruments. It also creates a moment for reflection on ways to accelerate the implementation of these instruments in the face of new and emerging threats to women, peace and security in Africa, such as terrorism and violent extremism, and climate change. In addition, it provides an opportunity to strategize on transformative actions to address women’s peace and security in a comprehensive and integrated manner in the context of implementation of the remaining years of the African Women’s Decade, Africa’s Agenda 2063 and the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is against this backdrop that the African Union is organizing this High Level Panel on the margins of the WPS celebrations in New York.

2. PARTNERSHIPS

In a spirit of synergy of efforts towards strengthening the role of African women in shaping the continental women, peace and security agenda, the Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission is partnering with UN Women, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) and the Permanent Observer

¹ Resolutions 1820 (2008); 1888 (2009); 1889 (2009); 1960 (2010); 2106 (2013); 2122 (2013);

Mission of the African Union to the United Nations to co-organize a joint side event on “15 Years of the Women Peace and Security Agenda in Africa: Stock-taking and Perspectives”.

3. OBJECTIVES

The High Level Panel has four key objectives:

- Highlight and share examples of good practices in Africa in the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and subsequent Resolutions;
- Highlight and raise global awareness on persisting gaps and challenges to the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda in Africa;
- Highlight the need to accelerate the implementation of the multiple policy instruments on women, peace and security in Africa;
- Galvanize action and resources at the global level to ensure the accelerated and effective implementation of the women, peace and security agenda in Africa.

4. FORMAT

The event is structured in two parts: a high-level panel discussion and the launch of a feature booklet that documents Africa’s good practices in implementing the women, peace and security agenda. The High Level Panel is scheduled for 1.5 hours in the format of a 10 minutes presentation by each panelist followed by a contribution, questions and answers session from participants. This will be followed by the launch of the feature booklet.

5. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Good practices in Africa in the implementation of WPS are recognized and celebrated;
- Major gaps and challenges in the implementation of WPS on the continent are identified;
- A stronger determination for action on Women, Peace and Security agenda in Africa is generated; and
- A strengthened partnership with key stakeholders is built for an accelerated implementation of WPS Agenda and Other AU Instruments

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