

**DECLARATION OF THE AU MINISTERS OF GENDER AND
WOMEN'S AFFAIRS ON THE AFRICA COMMON POSITION ON
POST 2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

ADOPTED ON 8TH FEBRUARY, 2014

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

We the Ministers of Gender and Women's Affairs from African Union Member States met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 6th and 7th February 2014 to deliberate on progress made in the achievement of the MDGs and reach consensus to strengthen gender equality and women's empowerment in the Africa Common Position on the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

A review of the MDGs indicates that while progress has been made, Africa may not achieve all the eight MDGs by 2015. It is important to note that Goal 3 on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment is critical to the realisation of all the other MDGs. Progress in realising this goal has been minimal in the last 15 years across the continent. Whereas there is commendable progress on achieving parity between boys and girls in primary, secondary and tertiary schools and in the share of women in parliament, there is little progress in the proportion of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector. These are the indicators for gender equality and women's empowerment in MDGs.

The lack of progress on most of the MDGs indicates the challenges of mainstreaming gender effectively. It also indicates the deficiencies in the MDG 3 itself especially in providing gender and sex disaggregated data to inform proper planning and decision making. In addition, the MDGs failed to take cognizance of the impact of violence against women and children in development. Furthermore the MDG 3 did not include adequate gender analysis nor budgeting. Most importantly, the MDGs failed to address inequalities and disparities within and between countries and between men

and women as well as address underlying systemic issues such as discrimination and lack of access and control over resources.

We acknowledge the inclusion of gender equality and women's empowerment as a priority area under pillar 3 on people centered development, in the Africa Common Position on the Post 2015 Development Agenda. Cognizant of the fact that the attainment of gender equality and women's empowerment is central to the achievement of all the priority areas identified in the Africa Common Position, it is critical to strengthen gender equality and women's empowerment in the post 2015 development agenda.

We the AU Ministers of Gender and Women's Affairs are therefore:

- Recommending that the AU High Level Committee on the Post 2015 Development Agenda should include a 6th pillar in the Common African Position on **“Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment, and Women's Rights”** in the forthcoming post 2015 development agenda
- Recommending that gender be mainstreamed across all 5 pillars
- Supporting the UN Women position on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the post 2015 development agenda on a “Stand-alone” goal that is equivalent to the 6th pillar for the African priorities that we are proposing.

We further recommend that the following priority areas are included in the proposed 6th pillar and mainstreamed across the other five pillars of the Africa Common Position:

- Women and girls have access, control and ownership of resources, including land, information, technology, safe water, energy and finance.

- Public and private investment in agriculture to achieve food security and nutrition which are major concerns for women and children.
- Elimination and prevention of all forms of sexual and gender based violence.
- Elimination and prevention of all harmful practices including; early, child and forced marriages and FGM.
- Universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.
- Decent work and living wage for women, in both informal and formal sectors and as well as recognise, redistribute and remunerate unpaid care work.
- Economic empowerment of women, particularly for rural women to combat poverty, inequalities for sustainable economic growth.
- Adequate financing for gender equality and women's empowerment especially for programmes and strengthening institutional mechanisms.
- Collection, analysis and use of sex, age and gender disaggregated data for informed planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Inclusion of clear and specific gender indicators and targets for monitoring progress.
- Gender sensitive public finance reforms and gender responsive budgeting, focusing on public investment, infrastructure, economic and social services.
- Equal access, retention and completion by boys and girls of early childhood development, primary, secondary and tertiary education.
- Transformative gender parity in decision making positions across all levels in public and private sectors and adoption of affirmative action for increased participation of women in leadership.
- Universal access to quality health services, with particular emphasis on maternal and neonatal health, breast, cervical and other types of cancers and other non communicable and HIV and AIDS.

- Human rights and universal access to services for women and girls with disabilities.
- Peace and security for women and girls in conflict and post conflict countries and the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions on Peace, Security and Reconciliation.
- Sustainable environmental conservation including extractive natural resources.
- The impact of climate change on women.

Consequently, we emphasise the importance of a 6th pillar on gender equality and women's empowerment in the Africa Common Position as well as mainstreaming gender across all other pillars. In addition, we call for a stand-alone goal and gender mainstreaming in the global Post 2015 development agenda; and in the sustainable development goals.

We further emphasise the necessity to consider our recommendations in the upcoming CSW58, in preparation for the Beijing +20 progress review as well as the mid-term review of the African Women's Decade to influence the post 2015 development agenda.