



OAU

ACW F/C

**AFRICAN WOMEN COMMITTEE  
ON PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT**



ECA

27583

**THE AFRICAN WOMEN COMMITTEE  
ON PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT**

*The guiding principle of the Committee is a total rejection of war as an option for conflict resolution. The Committee therefore advocates for alternative options to war and violence, and promotes the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts through a greater involvement of women in decision-making and their participation in peace processes.*

# **THE AFRICAN WOMEN COMMITTEE ON PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT**

## **1. BACKGROUND**

The intensity and increasing number of violent conflicts in Africa in which women have been the major victims on the one hand, their absence in the decision making structures and in the existing mechanisms of conflict prevention, management and resolution on the other hand has resulted in a widespread concern and recognition that a sustainable peace can not be attained without the essential participation and empowerment of women.

The Regional Conference on Women, Peace and development held in Kampala in 1993 provided therefore African Women the appropriate forum to examine these fundamental issues. The conference deliberated mainly on the nature and effect of conflicts and the indispensable empowerment of women in the peace process.

The conference ended with the adoption of the Kampala Action plan which among others recommended the creation of an appropriate structure to promote leadership of women in conflict prevention, management and resolution and the establishment of a Committee that would channel women's inputs into the peace process at the regional and international level.

These recommendations were later incorporated in the African Platform of Action and endorsed by the African Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

The Fourth World Conference on Women which convened in Beijing in 1995 resulted in the unanimous adoption of the Beijing Plan of Action which explicitly stipulates that Women's participation is an imperative component of any Peace process.

The African Women's Committee on Peace and Development was therefore established as a result of Decision CM/DEC/337(LXVI) of the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) held in Harare, Zimbabwe, in June 1997.

The Committee was then launched on 28 April 1998, during the International Conference celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The Central Organ of the OAU, which met in November 1999, defined its legal status as an Advisory Body to the Secretary General of the OAU and the Executive Secretary of the ECA on gender related issues on peace, security and development in Africa.

The Committee works closely with the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. Its mandate is to bring women's concern into the mainstream of the Continent's efforts on peace and development.

## **2. OBJECTIVE**

The main objective of this Committee is to mainstream women's participation in all endeavors, policies and programs involving the promotion of Peace and Development at the National, Sub Regional and Continental levels.

### 3. FUNCTIONS

The Committee is mandated to :

- **Facilitate and ensure** the effective participation of women in all peace initiatives in Africa including fact-finding, mediation, negotiation, and observation functions.
- **Promote and support** networking of existing women's peace building mechanism with mainstream institutions working on peace and ensure their systematic inclusion in all mainstream conflict prevention , resolution and peace negotiation teams.
- **Identify , articulate and seek** ways and means of addressing women specific experiences of conflict .
- **Ensure** in collaboration with concerned institutions and agencies that the needs of refugees , returnees and displaced children and women are adequately addressed at the highest level of decision-making.
- **Undertake** capacity building activities resulting in strengthening women's role in the peace process.
- **Monitor** the implementation of the Regional and Global Platform for Action with regard to Peace .
- **Devise and strengthen** mechanisms that will ensure sustainable peace in Africa through a gender inclusive response to peaceful resolution of conflicts and reconciliation.
- **Research , document and publicize** the root causes of conflicts on the continent and the gender specific impact of conflicts.
- **Establish** relations of close cooperation and collaboration with the Conflicts Management Division and the Women's Unit of the OAU as well as with the African Center for Women of the ECA and submit reports annually or whenever circumstances require it to the Secretary General of the OAU and the Executive Secretary of the ECA.

### 4. INSTITUTIONAL STATUS

The Committee is an autonomous body with an independent Secretariat. The Committee has an advisory status with both the OAU and ECA .The Committee shall establish relations of cooperation and collaboration with governments, UN Agencies and NGOs on issues related to Peace and Development .

### 5. SECRETARIAT

The Executive Secretariat of the Committee carries out the overall administration of the Committee's activities. It undertakes the coordination between the Committee members.

It acts as a liaison office between the Committee and OAU, ECA and other relevant bodies. The Secretariat is based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

## 6. ACTIVITIES

Since its establishment, the Committee has focused mainly on:

- *Building an African Women's Agenda for Peace*, which culminated in the organisation of the Pan African Women's Conference on Peace held in Zanzibar in May 1999, together with UNESCO and attended by over three hundred women from all parts of Africa.
- *Bringing women's voice to peace negotiations*. At the National level, the Committee supported the Burundian women to build their platform and facilitated their talks in Kampala, Uganda in October 1998, as well as in the process of the Arusha Negotiations. Members of the Committee further facilitated the Sudanese and Somali women's participation in their national peace efforts. At the Sub-regional level, the Committee initiated a peace program for the women of the Mano River Region namely, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, to enhance their involvement in the ECOWAS' peace mechanism.
- *Advocating for women's participation in the peace process*. The Committee organised a series of activities within the process of the evaluation of Beijing + 5 to sensitise African Leaders on the centrality of women's role in peace building.
- *Establishing National Peace Committees*. Members of the Committee are establishing National Peace Committees to reach grass-root women, facilitate networking and experience sharing. The first example in this process was undertaken by the women in Gabon.
- *Capacity building*. The Committee supported women's program aimed at strengthening women's capacity in conflict resolution, peace and civic education, advocacy on gender issues including HIV/AIDS. One of the training workshops was held in April 2000 at the OAU headquarters in Addis Ababa.

## 8. COMPOSITION AND MEMBERSHIP

### COMPOSITION

The Committee is made up of sixteen members :

- Six members nominated by government
- Five members appointed in their personal capacity .
- Five members selected from African women NGOs.

## **MEMBERSHIP :**

Appointment of members is through submission of candidacy and selection shall take into consideration among other things , the proper representation of the five OAU regions.

## **COMPOSITION OF THE FIRST MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE :**

The Committee is made up of sixteen members. out of whom :

- **Six\* are nominated by government:**

- MS. KARADJA FATMA-ZOHRA - North Africa
- H. E. MRS. FATIMATA DIALLO-DAH – West Africa
- HON. DR. SPECIOZA WANDIRA KAZIBWE - East Africa
- MS. SARA LETTY KACHINGWE - Southern Africa
- HON. PAULETTE MISSAMBO - Central Africa

- **five appointed in their personal capacity**

- H.E MRS. RUTH SANDO PERRY
- HON. GERTRUDE MONGELLA
- MS. PATIENCE HALTSHWAYO PASHE
- MRS. SAIDA AGREBI
- Mme MARIE-THERESE AVEMEKA

- **Five\* selected from African women NGO's.**

- HON. INONGE MBIKUSITA LEWANIKI  
(Federation of African Women For Peace)
- MRS. BINETA DIOP  
(Femmes Africa Solidarité)
- MS. MEAZA ASHENAFI  
(Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association)
- Ms. ASHA HAJI ELMU  
(Save Somali Women and Children )

## **SECRETARIAT ADDRESS:**

**AWCPD SECRETARIAT**

**P.O.Box:3001**

**Addis Abeba - Ethiopia**

**Fax: 251-1-515890 // 251-1-512785**

**Tel : 251-1-44 37 02 // 251-1-445205**

## **Suggestions for Draft Terms of Reference**

### **1. MAJOR ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED:**

- a) Review of progress in Member States and the region as a whole in the mandate area
- b) Capacity building
- c) Awareness-raising on the central place of knowledge and information in economic growth and development
- d) Data collection, communication and utilization to illustrate current needs and policy positions
- e) Standardization and best practices
- f) Development of national and regional policy frameworks
- g) Stimulation of debates on policy and technical issues
- h) Promotion of public-private partnerships
- i) Development and facilitation of Networks
- j) Review of ECA work programme in the area of KLIS

### **2. Goal**

The sub-committee on Knowledge, Libraries and Information Services (CODI-KLIS) shall be the forum for high-level representatives of ECA member States to discuss and share information on technical and policy issues related to the roles and value of libraries, knowledge and information services in economic and human development; and to propose and advocate policies and strategies for their mainstreaming in Africa development agenda at the national and regional levels.

It shall:

- (a) raise awareness of the value libraries, knowledge and information in economic growth and human development;
- (b) promote the development of knowledge systems in member States;

- (c) identify and raise awareness about priority issues in information and knowledge policies and institutions;
- (d) examine and review progress made by member States;
- (e) facilitate capacity building with regard to the development of systems and services for the information society and knowledge economy;
- (f) review recent and proven technical trends and status of knowledge and information practices in global context;
- (g) recommend strategies on the utilization of new and proven technologies and methodologies to improve data collection , processing and mode of use for decision-making;
- (g) promote the development of best practices and standards in these fields;
- (h) develop and support the establishment of national, regional and global networks and partnerships, with the aim of facilitating integration and optimizing the use of resources.
- (i) identify, promote and support regional projects;
- (j) examine and provide principles regarding ownership, access to, custodial responsibilities and commercial aspects of knowledge and information for the promotion of transparency and exchange;
- (k) The sub-committee will liaise and coordinate its activities with other CODI sub-committees;
- (l) Promote networking among institutions and practitioners in KLIS and generate synergy at national level to facilitate their management and best use;
- (m) Review of the ECA work programme in the area of KLIS.

3. Observers will include representatives of national, regional, sub-regional and international organizations. Also UN agencies, IGOs, NGOS, academia , research institutions, and private sector and the industry, including producers and users of information .