



## Economic and Social Council

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### Commission on the Status of Women

#### Fifty-eighth session

10-21 March 2014

**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women  
and to the special session of the General Assembly  
entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and  
peace for the twenty-first century”: implementation of  
strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern  
and further actions and initiatives**

**Statement submitted by African Women’s Development and  
Communication Network, Akina Mama Wa Afrika, Association of  
African Women for Research and Development, Eastern African  
Sub-Regional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women,  
Femmes Afrique solidarité, Servitas Cameroon, Women in Law  
and Development in Africa, non-governmental organizations in  
consultative status with the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.



## Statement

The non-governmental organization endorsing the present statement welcome the priority theme of the fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls and highlight key actions that are required by Governments, civil society organizations and the private sector for a transformative agenda to sustain progress on the Millennium Development Goals and for the success of the post-2015 development agenda.

In the years since the Millennium Development Goals were adopted, Africa as a whole has registered impressive economic growth. However, taken individually, many countries have not translated these economic gains into inclusive growth that puts human security at the centre. As 2015 fast approaches, stark inequalities between the rich and poor, the urban and rural, and men and women pose grave risks to the sustainability of progress that has been made towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals. Africa remains off track on the Goals to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health and ensure environmental stability. Failure to accelerate progress on these lagging Goals have dire implications on human security, particularly for women and girls, including their health, economic, food, political, environmental, community and personal security.

We call for accelerated implementation of measures to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and fully support initiatives that are people-centred, owned and run and that place women's human rights and development at the centre. As discussions continue on the post-2015 development agenda, we join other civil society groups in calling for a transformative global agenda and a stand-alone goal to achieve gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment that is grounded in human rights and tackles unequal power relations. We also stress the importance of integrating gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment consistently across the entire framework.

There are existing examples in Africa of how development challenges can be combated, which has contributed to progress on the Millennium Development Goals. Governments should demonstrate political will to adapt those solutions to local realities and to scale-up those initiatives, where appropriate, within an integrated and inclusive development agenda.

We support the vision of the African Union of a prosperous Africa at peace with itself and welcome the report of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, which notes that peace and access to justice are not only fundamental human aspirations but cornerstones of sustainable development. Women's leadership should be at the centre of peacebuilding in the post-2015 development agenda and Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) should be translated into real action on the ground, particularly for countries in conflict and those recently emerging from conflict.

We urge Governments, civil society organizations and the private sector to implement regional and national laws and policies that seek to address development challenges through social justice and gender justice. These include universal ratification and implementation of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, which commits States to

honour the comprehensive rights of women, including access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. We also support comprehensive sexuality and reproductive health education and services for youth.

Women's participation at all levels of decision-making in the public and private sphere is critical to the success of the post-2015 development agenda. We urge Governments to implement the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa in all sectors. In consideration of Africa's youth dividend, the private sector should ensure that young women have access to employment opportunities and receive equal pay. We support recognition of women's unpaid care work, the realization of women's ownership of land and their access to and control over energy, water, agricultural inputs and credit. Governments, civil society organizations and the private sector should dedicate resources to enable access to technology and transfer of information to women in rural areas.

The post-2015 development agenda should emphasize zero tolerance of all forms of violence against women and girls. Resources should be made available to ensure women's access to justice, the protection of victims and their access to quality health-care services.

We call for meaningful engagement between Governments and civil society, including women's groups in the development, implementation and monitoring of the post-2015 agenda. We particularly urge the inclusion of marginalized women, including those living in urban slums, refugee and internally displaced persons camps, remote or rural areas, and those with disabilities, as well as the inclusion of impoverished communities in the discussions on the post-2015 agenda.

We strongly reiterate the call for accelerated implementation to achieve the Millennium Development Goals through dedicated political will, good governance and financial resources. We fully support and advocate for initiatives that place women's human rights and development at the centre of the post-2015 development agenda.

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