“Towards Gender-Responsive Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement”
33rd Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting on Gender Mainstreaming in the African Union
03 - 04 February 2019, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

RECOMMENDATIONS

We, participants of the 33rd Session of the Gender Is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 03 to 04 February 2019 under the theme, “Towards Gender-Responsive Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement” acknowledge our diversity and common objectives of advancing gender equality and the human rights of African girls and women;

WELCOME the decision of African Union Heads of State and Government to declare 2019 as the year of ‘Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement’;

THANK the Africa Union Commission for retaining the Office of the Special Envoy to the Chairperson of the AUC on Women, Peace and Security and are grateful for provision of necessary resources for that office;

WELCOME the renewed commitment by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat to Gender Equality in Africa and the numerous support he has provided to the Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD) particularly in ensuring that the High-Level Panel on Gender Equality continues to articulate and engage the concerns of African women in the overall implementation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

TAKE cognizance of the reforms of the African Union led by H. E Paul Kagame as well as the impact of the reforms in promoting efficiency and effective delivery of programmes and projects that will impact on African citizens especially women, girls and youth.

ACKNOWLEDGE the contribution of the Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security in highlighting women’s conflict experiences through solidarity visits and promoting their participation in peace building and post conflict reconstruction;
RECOGNIZE increasing commitment to end child marriage by prioritizing continental efforts on girl child education and increasing resources towards the realization of social economic rights of girls;

DRIVEN by the fact that urgent steps need to be taken to invest and speed up the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the African Union Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by 2020, especially as it relates to women and girls in Africa.

We urge the African Union Heads of State and Government to:

I. Recognize and formalize the role of GIMAC as a major stakeholder in the implementation of GEWE programmes and initiatives within Agenda 2063;

II. Make it possible for women to occupy central leadership positions in decision-making and the management of programmes in IDP and Refugee camps which must include the financing of women’s specific needs;

III. Set up a Women’s Rights Commission as a separate entity from existing National Human Rights Commissions who from our experience are not taking up and advancing the rights of women in all areas including in Refugee and IDP camps;

IV. Consider the convening of a Special Session of Heads of State on Acceleration of Political Participation of Women with focus on strong interventions and legislative support that will eliminate all barriers and create well-resourced and gender sensitive political and electoral processes for effective participation of all women including those in refugee and IDP camps;

V. Adopt policies and measures that prioritize comprehensive gender responsive local and national refugee frameworks and develop gender responsive sector plans that address empowerment mechanisms for refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees as well trafficked women with active involvement and support of the countries that serve as source, route and recipients;

VI. Increase public investment in provisioning of gender-responsive services in IDP and refugee settlements and informal displacements in urban/rural areas with specific focus on key services such as water and sanitation facilities, quality education and child care services complemented with long term efforts of addressing women’s rights to housing, land and property;

VII. Engage men as partners in the fight against SGBV and GBV and also encourage judicial institutions to establish mechanisms that will eliminate and fast track sexual and gender-based violence cases especially with the inclusion of forensic technology and post incident trauma care;
VIII. **Put in place** an annual Peer Review mechanism to review and track compliance on requisite legal and medical responses to address the situation of displaced women and girls. This mechanism should be open to civil society actors;

IX. **Invest** in education technology for refugee, IDP and returnee children who find themselves vulnerable to risks such as child labour, sexual exploitation, physical abuse, and early marriage and pregnancies;

X. **Introduce** Comprehensive Sexuality Education for survivors of Conflicts, refugees, IDPs and victims of displacement and ensure they have access to integrated package of sexual and reproductive health interventions and information;

XI. **Strengthen** the practical actions and accountability for prevention of child marriage in conflict and humanitarian settings, as well as ensure support to girls who experience, child early and forced marriage;

XII. **Prioritize** the ratification, adoption and implementation of key legal and policy frameworks, specifically the Kampala Convention and the Maputo Protocol to advance the protection of women’s rights and eliminate harmful practices exacerbating the vulnerability of displaced women;

XIII. **Strengthen** reporting mechanisms and adopt the new African Union Women Gender and Development Directorate (AUWGDD) reporting format because it increases access to authentic data at the national level;

XIV. **Focus on and adequately** implement and finance the women component of the African Peace and Security Architecture in an inclusive manner that protects and strengthens women’s economic empowerment and also create space and opportunities to ensure the contributions of women’s mediators at each level of conflict situation;

XV. **Provide** gender sensitive support to IDPs, refugees and forced displacement people, by putting in their security and defence forces, gender equity and equality policies coupled with tailored capacity building and training programmes in collaboration with African Centres of Excellence and partners;

XVI. **Adopt** processes, practices, and structures to mitigate climate change and moderate potential damages associated with climate change-related displacement including robust social protection schemes and support to build the resilience of displaced women pastoralists and farmers;

XVII. **Put** Burundi back on the Peace and Security Agenda of the continent and urgent and necessary action be taken for quick resumption of the Inter-Burundi Dialogue with adequate participation and representation by the Women of Burundi as way of bringing permanent peace to the country.

Dated at Addis Ababa, this 04th day of February 2019.