



STATEMENT

BY

H.E. LAZARUS O. AMAYO

**AMBASSADOR/ PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE
PERMANENT MISSION OF KENYA**

**DURING THE
UN PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION
ELECTRONIC CONSULTATION**

ON

**FULL, EQUAL & MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN
PEACEBUILDING**

21 April-1 May 2020

Mr. Chair,

My delegation welcomes the focus of the role of women in peacebuilding as part of the 2020 Peacebuilding Architecture Review consultations. We commend H.E. Marc-André Blanchard, Permanent Representative of Canada and current Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, and the Peacebuilding Support Office in ensuring the continuation of these consultations in the midst of the COVID-19 challenge.

In the lead up to the 20th anniversary of the Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration, it is indeed critical to reflect on the achievements made. Additionally, it is also important to take stock of the persistent challenges in ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of women at every stage along the peace continuum, including in peacebuilding.

The various panelists, representing various organizations and regions have further identified important gaps that need to be addressed particularly the gap between rhetoric and actual implementation. Therefore, beyond reaffirming the significant role women play in sustainable peacebuilding, we, member states and the United Nations System need to demonstrate a stronger commitment and invest in the operationalization of women-led initiatives.

Despite the slow pace in achieving gender parity in the peacebuilding arena, we welcome, as reflected in the various briefings by local peacebuilders from Colombia, Ghana and South Africa, the fact that many countries and regional organizations are dedicated and committed on delivering on the women in peacebuilding agenda.

Women participation and leadership in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and conflict resolution has further established women as informed and efficient agents of change through their role as mediators, negotiators and signatories in peace agreements.

On 16-18 August 2019, it was a great honor for Kenya to host the first ever African Women Leaders Network Intergenerational Retreat in Nairobi. This meeting was organized by the African Women Leaders Network and the Office of the African Union Youth Envoy. During the discussions, various commitments were made towards fostering women leadership, including a call by the UN Deputy Secretary-General, H.E. Ms. Amina

Mohammed to strengthen intergenerational dialogues to allow for women and girls to work collectively in addressing global challenges to peace.

Kenya finalized the implementation of the first National Action Plan (NAP) on resolution 1325 under the auspices of the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender in 2019. We are currently drafting the second edition based on the experiences gained and lessons learned from the 2016 -2018 phase. Our mantra continues to be, “*Kuhusisha Wanawake ni Kudumisha Amani*”, meaning, “To Involve Women is to Sustain Peace”.

Some of the lessons learnt and priority areas identified during Kenya’s first implementation phase of resolution 1325 that relate to peacebuilding include:

- I. The importance of gender responsive language and messaging among leaders and law enforcement particularly when it comes to matters pertaining to women, peace and security.
- II. Enhanced investments including the strategic allocation of budgets for education of young boys and girls, including those in refugee and internally displaced persons (IDPs) settings, goes a long way in economically empowering young women, and contributing to sustainable peace.
- III. The women, peace and security agenda must be a whole-of society enterprise and not just left to women. We should not forget to encourage our young boys and men to also champion the Agenda. The link between the women, peace and security agenda and the youth, peace and security agenda is therefore critical.
- IV. Localization of National Action Plans (NAPs), including allocation of resources at the county level contributes to strengthening of the grassroots women-led initiatives, including monitoring and evaluation systems.
- V. Partnership with the private sector and civil society has also proved critical in moving the women in peacebuilding agenda forward.
- VI. Equal participation and access to political platforms is an integral way of ensuring meaningful engagement of women in decision and policy making. Kenya is honored to have a woman as our Cabinet Secretary of Defense. Furthermore, the number of women Cabinet Secretaries, and Principal Secretaries continue to increase with the Supreme Court’s Deputy Chief Justice and Chief Registrar both being women.
- VII. The contributions of regional efforts need to be highlighted, and their respective recommendations integrated into the work of the UN

System. Examples from our region include the African Union FemWise Africa, the African Union Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, and the AU Continental Results Framework (CRF) for Monitoring and Reporting on the implementation of the women, peace and security Agenda in Africa.

Kenya validated the CRF in March of 2018. Africa remains the only region with a CRF on the women, peace and security agenda.

In conclusion, we welcome the recent Deputy Secretary-General's launch of the *Women Rise for All* initiative to save lives and protect livelihood from COVID-19. The program also includes a call to contribute to the UN Response and Recovery Trust Fund to support the vulnerable in rural and urban settings. This initiative can be an important entry point to explore how the Peacebuilding Commission Gender Strategy can analyze and assess the current human crisis from a peacebuilding gender-responsive lens.

I thank you.