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DRAFT - CONCEPT NOTE

**3RD AFRICA FORUM ON WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY
UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LEADERSHIP OF H.E .SAHLE-WORK ZEWDE, THE
PRESIDENT OF ETHIOPIA**

14-15 DECEMBER 2022, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

**LEVERAGING ON WPS MONITORING TO ENHANCE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION AND
LEADERSHIP IN PEACE PROCESSES IN AFRICA**

1.BACKGROUND

Over twenty-two years ago, the UN Security Council adopted security council resolution 1325, linking women's agency to peace and security by calling for increased women's participation in conflict prevention, resolution, and post conflict reconstruction. However, despite the progress made with development of implementations frameworks, there are huge gaps between its provisions and what exists in reality. Women represent a tiny segment of peace negotiators, peace envoys, mediators, and peacekeepers. For instance, in 2021, only 19% of women participated in UN (co)-led peace processes as negotiators or observers.¹

The 2021 peace talks report notes that women in Africa were persistently absent from negotiation processes that took place in 2020². In the Central Africa Republic for instance, women were scarcely involved in decision-making and in political negotiations and processes, with only three (3) of the 29 members of the national dialogue's organising committee being women. Additionally, during the Democratic Republic of the Congo peace consultations in

¹2022 Women and peace and security Report of the Secretary-General

² Peace Talks in Focus 2021. Report on Trends and Scenarios accessed at [Peace Talks in Focus 2021: Report on Trends and Scenarios - World | ReliefWeb](#)

Nairobi of April 2022, women were glaring absent. Likewise, in the Chad peace talks in Doha in 2022 there was only one woman among the over 50 participants³ present.

However, despite their absence as shown above, women movements and peace builders have continued to demand their equal and meaningful participation in peace processes while engaging in many local peacebuilding initiatives. ⁴In Libya, for instance, women's groups denounced the breach of commitments such as by failing to include women in the Government of National Unity and demanded more women in the negotiations including in the mechanisms for monitoring the ceasefire. In Somalia, the country's women's organisations demanded for compliance with the minimum quota of 30% adopted in the agreements of 17 September 2020 and 27 May 2021 in all political and peace building efforts.

In Sudan women belonging to the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North Abdelaziz al-Hilu faction advocated for their inclusion in the political and peace process, while in South Sudan, the Women Leadership Forum brought together a diverse group of women who called for strengthened women's representation in politics and peace process. And in Mali, following constant advocacy, progress was reported in the integration of women in the Agreement Monitoring Committee and its subcommittees.

The above demonstrate the resilience of women in overcoming the myriad of challenges posed by patriarchal norms, increase in authoritarian governments and disrespect of agreed inclusion principles. In recent times, these challenges have been exacerbated by the challenge of COVID-19, Climate change, new war in Europe, and a rise in unconstitutional change of governments in Africa among others.

Irrespective of women's increased skills in peacebuilding, activism and formal recognition of their important role and contribution in search for a lasting peace, stability, and development, ascending to formal peace building processes by women remains a huge challenge.

2. ENHANCING WOMEN'S ROLE IN ADVANCING PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA

All regions of Africa (East, West, South, Central and the North) are hosting pockets of security and political instability driven by internal civil strives, political unrests and terrorism. These include situations in Central African Republic, Libya, South Sudan, the Northern Mozambique, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Cameroon's North-West and South-West regions⁵. On the same note the threat of terrorism in the Sahel, Lake Chad Basin, East Africa, and the Horn presents further security challenges in Africa. All these have negative consequences to human rights and human security of women and other vulnerable members of the society at large. Their effective resolution calls for increased women's participation than they are today.

The continued absence of women in peace tables, requires a re-assessment of the current strategies used to promote women's participation with a view of formulating new approaches to further enhance women's access, ascension, and leadership to formal political and peace building processes, especially given the current challenges.

³ 2022 Women and peace and security Report of the Secretary-General

⁴ ⁴Peace Talks in Focus 2021. Report on Trends and Scenarios accessed at [Peace Talks in Focus 2021: Report on Trends and Scenarios -orld | ReliefWeb](#)

⁵ [African conflicts to watch in 2022 - ISS Africa](#)

3. LEVERAGING ON WPS MONITORING AND REPORTING USING THE CRF

Women's continued exclusion from the formal peace processes is an indication of the broad systematic gender inequality in the political, social, and economic spheres of life. Addressing these inequalities calls not only for context appropriate policies but also for data to inform effectiveness and impact of the various strategic measure put in place.

Consequently, in 2018, the African Union Office of the Special Envoy on WPS, together with Member States, Regional Economic Communities, and the Civil Society, developed and validated the Continental Results Framework (CRF) for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the WPS agenda. The CRF was adopted by Peace and Security Council in May 2018 as an African tool to enhance accountability on WPS by the various actors in the continent.

The tool has become useful in the current situation of multiple crisis. It is helping to track the impact of the crisis on women, as well as their contribution and participation in mitigation and response processes. In addition, it is being used to assess the delivery of the existing WPS action plans and strategies by our member states and regional organizations.

4. THE 3RD AFRICA FORUM ON WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY

In view of the foregoing, this third Africa forum on women peace and security convened by the African Union Special Envoy on WPS, under the **leadership of H.E Sahle-Work Zewde, the president of Ethiopia** serves as a space to deliberate, share experience, and recommend practical actions for advancing women's participation in peace process. The forum will also offer an opportunity to assess the progress made by member states and regional organizations in delivering existing commitments on WPS using the CRF.

The forum will bring women peacebuilders, leaders, and national & regional focal points on women peace and security.

5. DURING THE FORUM, DELIBERATION WILL:

1. Reflect on the current strategies of enhancing women participation in peace processes with a view to understand the gaps and make recommendations.
2. Reflect on how to strengthen and support women's peace building networks, especially in countries undergoing political crisis.
3. Reflect further on the role of young women and girls in peace and security
4. Evaluate the delivery of existing WPS strategies, using the CRF with a view to input on the 3rd report of the AUC chairpersons report on the Implementation of WPS agenda in Africa.

6. FORMAT OF THE FORUM

The forum will be held in a hybrid manner on 14 to 16 December 2022. Through moderated panel discussions the forum will deliberate on the above four themes.

7. FORUM OUTPUTS

- Strategies for advancing women's inclusion and participation in peace processes identified

- Strengthen networks and learning among the regional women peace and security forums.
- Inputs are made to the 3rd Africa status report on WPS developed through the CRF.