

AFRICAN UNION

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CONCEPT NOTE

AFRICAN UNION HIGH-LEVEL WOMEN MEETING

02 April 2018

African Union Commission, Headquarters

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Concept Note

African Union high-level women meeting

1. Background

The theme for International Women's Day 2018 is to ***Press for Progress***. In line with its mission, the Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD) wishes to press for progress by further leveraging the leadership of its women Commissioners, Ambassadors, Advisors, Directors and Representatives of RECs. Through this event, WGDD expects to further connect the women leaders within the AU and the Member States, gather their feedback on critical business agenda described below.

In this regard, WGDD would like to officially convene a meeting followed by a celebratory lunch on 2nd of April at the African Union Commission (AUC) Headquarters, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It will mark the end of the Women's Month.

2. Content of the meeting

- **The Gender Strategy**

In 2016, the AUC through WGDD launched the process of designing its strategy for gender equality and women's empowerment to concretize commitments made in Agenda 2063. WGDD has since then undertaken a wide range of consultations which have led to an advanced draft ready for review and validation by the AU high-level women. The final document will be presented for adoption by AU Ministers of Gender during the 3rd Specialized Technical Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in May 2018.

- **The Women's Museum and Garden Project**

The AU Assembly Declaration in 2015 mandates the Commission to both erect a monument and place art in the main building in honor of women who fought for Africa's liberation during the various stages of the continent's struggle for freedom. A stone was officially placed on one of the possible future sites of this monument and a portrait of women who founded the Pan African Women's Organization (PAWO) was unveiled during International Women's Day 2017.

- **The 2018 High-Level Panel (HLP)**

The African Union High-Level Panel on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment has become a traditional arena for discussing and advancing the gender agenda on the continent. The Women, Gender and Development Directorate proposed to organise the 2018 edition of the HLP in June 2018 in Mauritania.

- **The 3rd Specialized Technical Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

WGDD will organize the 3rd Specialized Technical Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment from 7th to 11th May, 2018. The STC will adopt the gender strategy and the evaluation report of the 2009 Gender Policy and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa report 2017 for onwards transmission to the Assembly and renew the Bureau.

- **The 10th anniversary of the African Union Gender Pre-Summit (AU-GPS)**

The year 2019 marks the 10th anniversary of the AU-GPS, which has played a significant role in influencing and shaping African Union policies on gender equality and women's empowerment. Commemoration of the 10th AU-GPS provides an opportunity to reflect on progress made thus far, to determine the shape and nature of the AU-GPS, particularly within the context of Agenda 2063 and the AU reforms which call for more effectiveness and efficiency at financial, political and operational levels in the work of the AU.

- **The African Gender Scorecard**

The African Gender Scorecard (AGSC) is a tool which enables Member States to measure their performance against commitments. Since 2015, the AU awards Heads of State and Governments who have achieved significant contributions to gender equality and women's empowerment against AGSC scale. The AGSC is aligned with the theme of the year and developed in collaboration with AfDB and UNECA and the AU Advisory Board on corruption.

- **Celebratory lunch: Press for Progress in line with the theme for International Women's Day 2018**

This will be an event celebrating women. Indeed, it will provide the opportunity to celebrate achievements, meet the AU's new female leadership, and network among women.

3. Objectives and outcomes

The objectives are as follows:

- Women leaders are officially introduced to each other, they are better connected to their wider base of women within the Commission and in Member States representations and their leadership appreciated, including of the past Chairperson of the PRC (2017-2018) who is leaving for a new assignment.
- Contributions to the 2018 High-Level Panel on GEWE

- The gender strategy on GEWE is reviewed and validated by AU Women leaders
- Recommendations for the concretization of the monument and the portrait are secured and potential pledges for donations of art work and material and financial support towards the monument are received
- Recommendations for improving the African Gender Scorecard 2018 and beyond are secured
- Participants are informed about the 3rd STC
- Contributions to the 10th anniversary of the GPS are provided

4. Proposed approach

This meeting will comprise of political and technical consultations on substantive working documents that will be provided and a networking lunch to celebrate women's leadership at the AU. The meeting will include a visit to the site where the monument will be erected and the portrait that was unveiled.

5. Profile of the participants

The meeting will be attended by the following key participants:

- ❖ Women Ambassadors of the AU Member States
- ❖ Women Commissioners
- ❖ Women Advisors
- ❖ Women Directors of the AUC

6. Date and venue

This meeting will take place on **Monday April 2nd, 2018 from 09.30 am to 1 pm at the AUC Headquarters in Small Conference room 4** and the **Celebratory lunch: Press for Progress** will be held in the **Multipurpose Hall from 1 pm to 2.30 pm.**