MEDIA ADVISORY

High-Level Virtual forum

Levaraging Women Leadership in the COVID-19 Response and beyond

What: Women in Governance and Political participation; Enhancing African women’s Role in Leadership

When: 24th – 25th, June, 2020 from 3.00pm to 6.00pm Addis Ababa time and 8.00am to 11.am New York time

Where: Online through the following link: https://bit.ly/2YkJRYo

Who: Organised by the African union Commission through the Department of Political Affairs

Speakers:
- H.E. Sahle-Work Zewde, President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
- H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former President of the Republic of Liberia
- H.E. Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary General of the UN
- H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamet, Chairperson, African Union Commission
- H.E. Thomas Kwesi Quarty, Deputy Chairperson, AUC
- H.E. Minata Samate Cessouma, Commissioner for Political Affairs
- H.E. Ahunna Eziakonwa, ASG and Director UNDP Africa
- H.E. Bineta Diop, Special Envoy, Women, Peace and Security, AUC
- H.E. Phumzile Nmlambo Ngcuka, USG, Executive Director UN Women
Background

Seventy two years after the universal declaration of human rights and twenty five years after the Beijing Declaration and plan of action that are enshrined in the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol) there is much progress on women’s rights to be celebrated. However, the agenda is still unfinished, particularly in relation to women’s civil and political rights.

The AU has maintained Gender Parity at its topmost decision making level. Currently, there are five female commissioners and five male Commissioners - including Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, and efforts are made for the gender parity principle to percolate other AU organs and institutions. Furthermore, the AU's vision to silence guns by 2020, pays particular attention to women’s voices not only as victims, but as partners and active contributors to all stages of the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa in the process of nation-building, peace-building and democracy-building.

The proposed initiative on women in governance and political participation contributes to the governance pillar of the joint AU-UN African Women Leaders Network (AWLN). This initiative of African women leaders from across sectors is aimed at enhancing African women’s leadership in transforming the continent in the context of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. The AWLN supports the advancement of African women in leadership through flagship projects, peer learning, and experience sharing as well as cross-generational dialogue in six thematic areas: (a) governance; (b) peace and security; (c) finance; (d) youth; (e) agriculture; and (f) social mobilization. Since it was established in June 2017, the network’s achievements range from multiplying the voices of African women leaders on the ground to
enhancing their representation, participation and leadership in key decision-making processes.

The initiative aims to address the ecosystems, institutions and structures that hold women in leadership back. It will build on the progress African countries have made so far, and the positive attitudes towards women’s leadership in some countries to boost women’s role in leadership and in political participation including in relief and recovery decision making process with regard to COVID-19.

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