

PRESS RELEASE

The Republic of Mali launches the AU Campaign to End Child Marriage in Africa

Bamako, Mali, 11th October 2015. Under the title campaign “Education for girls, a means to eliminating early child marriage”, the Republic of Mali launched on 11



October 2015 its national campaign to end child marriage in the village of Konobougou, 160 kilometers away from the capital Bamako. The campaign was spearheaded by, Mrs Maiga Aminata Keita, First lady of the Republic of Mali.

In her introductory remarks, First Lady Keita emphasized on retention of girls in school and the important role that education plays in strengthening the abilities and personalities of these little girls that embody the future of Mali. The First Lady expressed her commitment to eradicate school dropout rates for girls and her full engagement also in the fight against child marriage which undermines the socio-economic development of the country.

On behalf of the African Union Commission, the AU Special Rapporteur on Ending Child Marriage in Africa, Ms. Fatema Sebaa Dellage congratulated the Government of the Republic of Mali for taking the bold step to launch the campaign and called on all stakeholders to ensure the success of the campaign by harmonizing all laws that speak to the age of consent and ensuring that that are in line with that of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child which sets the age of marriage at 18 years. She also called for the adoption of a national strategy to monitor and evaluate the campaign at the different levels of government. “These would greatly help to eradicate child marriage and demonstrate the commitment of the Government of Mali in promoting and safeguarding the rights and wellbeing of children in Mali.”

The launch event witnessed a march around Konobougou with musical slogans condemning any sort of violations against Malian girl child’s human right to education and prosperity. The call for child marriages to be eliminated was followed by drama performances played by young children – depicting social attitude towards the retention of girls in schools.

About the AU campaign to end child marriage in Africa

The campaign was launched at continental level in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on May 29th, 2014 during the Conference of Ministers of Social Development. It is aimed at ending child marriage by: (i) support legal and political actions in the protection and promotion of human rights, (ii) increased awareness of the continental socio-economic impact of negative child marriage, (iii) strengthening of social movements and social mobilization to peoples and national level; and (iv) an increase in the capacity of non-state actors to undertake advocacy policies based on evidence including youth leadership role among others through new media technologies, monitoring and evaluation.

KO/NT/EAT

Media contact:

Ms. Nena Thundu;THUNDUN@africa-union.org

Kenneth Oliko;Kennetho@africa-union.org

pages.au.int/cecm | www.facebook.com/OurGirlsAfrika | www.twitter.com/ourgirlsau

For more information, please contact:

Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: DIC@african-union.org | Web Site: www.au.int | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia

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