



Directorate of Information and Communication

Press Release

2nd African Girls Summit Kicked off

Accra, 23rd November 2018 – The 2nd African Girls Summit on ending child marriage has kicked off today under the theme: **“enough with the silence”** in Accra, Ghana which is organized by the African Union Commission, in collaboration with the Government of the Republic of Ghana.

The official opening of the summit was attended by H.E. Mrs. Rebecca Akufo-Addo First Lady of the Republic of Ghana, First Ladies of Niger, Liberia and Siera Leone; and H.E. Dr. Amira El Fadil, Commissioner for Social Affairs of the African Union, as well as religious and traditional leaders, United Nations representatives, Civil Society Organizations, government officials, and youth from 30 countries across the continent.

H.E. Rebecca Akufo - Addo the First Lady of the Republic of Ghana, said in her opening statement “It is my wish that these fruitful deliberations and meaningful commitments will heighten our efforts and responsibility to accelerate our engagement to end the practice of child marriage and contribute to the prosperity of Africa.”

“In Sub-Saharan Africa, 40 per cent of girls are forced into marriages before attaining the age of 18.” added H.E. Mrs Rebecca Akufo - Addo

H.E. Dr. Amira El Fadil AU Commissioner for Social Affairs in her key note speech said “Ending Child Marriage is prioritized under Aspiration number 6 of the Agenda 2063 framework and the article 21 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child which call for an end to all harmful social practices like child marriages and female genital mutilation on which we just launched a new AU led campaign in Burkina Faso”.

“ I hope this Summit would address the core need of investing in adolescent education specifically access to services such as sexual health care, sexuality education and rights protection.” added H.E. Dr. Amira El Fadil.

The Summit is a follow-up on the first African Girls Summit - where the main objective was to share experiences and good practices as well as challenges on ending child marriages at country, regional and international levels, particularly with countries that have already launched the AUC Campaign on ending Girls' Child Marriage.

In light of this, the 2nd African Girls Summit is looking at progress on commitments, interventions, measures and recommendations of keeping girls in school and facilitating Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR).

Two days prior to the Girls Summit there was a Youth Pre- Summit from 21 – 22 November for youth where they were given the opportunity to bring their ideas from different perspectives such as education for boys and girls, sexual reproductive health, ending child marriage, the role of the youth in community, among others and the way forward.

The AU Commission views child marriage as a crosscutting issue and recognizes that it is a development, cultural, health, political and religious issue – among others. The AU specifically promotes policies related to young people's rights and is mandated by its various instruments focusing on the rights of children and youth and has promoted adaptation and implementation of these instruments at regional and national level as well as conducted monitoring of implementation by Member States to ensure accountability.

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