

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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African Union Launches Strategic Roadmap to End Violence Against Women and Girls, Urging Continental Action for the Signature, Ratification, Domestication and Implementation

The African Union Commission's Women, Gender and Youth Directorate (AUC-WGYD) convened the online launch of the [Roadmap of the African Union Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls \(AU-CEVAWG\)](#). This initiative was organized in collaboration with the **African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR)** through the mechanism of the **Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa (SRRWA)** and the **AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security (AU-SEWPS)**.

The framework was further strengthened by the strategic contributions and commitments of the **African Women Leaders Network (AWLN)**, **Traditional Leaders**, **UN Women**, **UNFPA**, **UNDP**, alongside **World Vision International**. These partners reaffirmed their support through specialized interventions, including the introduction of a child-friendly booklet of the Convention and community-led advocacy strategies to reach all levels of African society.

This strategic framework marks a decisive step in operationalizing Africa's first legally binding instrument dedicated exclusively to eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG). The virtual launch brought together high-level policymakers,

civil society, and development partners to mobilize political will for the Convention, which was adopted by the AU Assembly in February 2025.

Despite existing frameworks like the [Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa \(Maputo Protocol\)](#), VAWG remains a pervasive crisis in Africa, with one in three women experiencing violence, a rate that reaches 41% in certain regions. The AU-CEVAWG addresses modern challenges, including:

- **Technology-facilitated violence** and online abuse.
- **Femicide** and economic coercion.
- **Conflict-related sexual violence** and harmful traditional practices.

"Instruments do not save lives; political will and collective action do," stated Ms. Prudence Ngwenya, Director of the Women, Gender, and Youth Directorate (WGYD), emphasizing that the roadmap is a *"strategic compass"* to move from continental aspiration to national reality.

The roadmap outlines a time-bound strategy to secure the **Convention's entry into force**, which requires **15 ratifications**. Currently, eight Member States have signed the instrument, listed in order of signature: **Djibouti, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), The Gambia, Angola, Liberia, Burundi, Ghana and Equatorial Guinea.**

The implementation strategy is built on four fundamental pillars:

1. **Prevention:** Transforming harmful social norms and engaging men and boys.
2. **Protection:** Establishing survivor-centered support and multi-sectoral referral systems.
3. **Prosecution:** Strengthening criminal justice responses and legal alignment.
4. **Policy Implementation:** Ensuring dedicated resource mobilization and gender-responsive budgeting.

The African Union Commission encourages all 55 Member States to prioritize the following immediate actions:

- **Accelerated Ratification:** Ratify the Convention for its entry into force.
- **Legislative Alignment:** Initiate comprehensive reforms to align national laws with the Convention.
- **Sustainable impact & Accountability:** Integrate progress reporting into the existing African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) reporting cycles and achieve measurable reductions in reported cases through proven prevention programs as well as early intervention strategies, ensuring the [AU-CEVAWG](#) delivers real, life-changing results.

Following the launch, the AU will initiate a multi-year advocacy and communication campaign to sustain momentum. The AUC-WGYD, ACHPR, through the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa and the AU-SEWPS, will lead the monitoring and oversight of these commitments to ensure that the promise of the AU-CEVAWG becomes a lived reality for every woman and girl in Africa.

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