



**OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR
THE GREAT LAKES REGION**

Factsheet- Advisory Board for Women Peace and Security (WPS) in the Great Lakes Region

The mandate of the Advisory Board is centered around United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on WPS, focusing on Advocacy, Participation, Prevention, and Protection. The Office of the Special Envoy integrates a gender approach in all its activities to ensure gender mainstreaming is central to its engagement within the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. This aims to advance the implementation by member states of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women Peace and Security and other relevant UN resolutions. (The O/SESG-GL is fully compliant with the Secretary General's system guide strategy on gender parity, with a 50/50 parity of its staff)

Background

The 'Advisory Board of the Women's Platform for the Peace, Security & Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the region' was established in 2013 to enhance the participation of women in leadership and political decision-making in support of peace-building efforts. It further provided a mechanism to facilitate access for women at grassroots level to some small grants, aiming to lift them out of poverty so that they can be active participants in social and political lives of their communities. It is an initiative of the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary General (SESG), Mary Robinson and the African Union Special Envoy for Peace & Security, Bineta Diop.

Building on the objectives of the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development for 2030 and the AU Agenda 2063, the Advisory Board focuses on empowering women's organizations and women leaders to actively contribute to the implementation of the PSC-F and the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Pact. It remains a key strategic advocacy tool for the Office of the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, working with the AU, ICGLR, UNWOMEN, and regional Civil Society Organizations, to advance women's meaningful participation in electoral and political processes to achieve the minimum quota of 30%; support efforts protection and prevention as well as women's economic empowerment.

The Advisory Board has a three years strategy (2020-2023) which focuses on the following key areas: (i) Widen the reach and focus of the Board and the use of its good offices; (ii) Undertake contextual conflict analysis and research that will highlight the causes of violence and prevent it; (iii) Support the strengthening of women and girls leadership for their meaningful representation and participation in decision making in the Great Lake region; and (iv) Secure sustainable financial resources for WPS in the Great Lakes Region.

As the COVID-19 pandemic deepens economic and social stress coupled with restricted movement and social isolation measures, women are adversely affected. The Advisory Board calls on member states to make prevention and response part of their national COVID-19 response plans to preserve the gains made to-date in the implementation of Resolution 1325. In doing so, ensuring a high-priority is afforded to women and young girls, including through the establishment of special funds to promote the recovery of grassroots women's economic activities.

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

The Advisory Board engages on the following Strands:

- Advocacy: Undertake solidarity missions to raise awareness of the need for women's participation in democratic processes and socio-economic development. Strengthen women's coalitions and support their meaningful participation in all aspects of conflict resolution, peacebuilding and humanitarian interventions, including promoting the role of CSOs, (women and youth) and regional fora in conflict prevention, mediation and peace building: Through inclusive peace building efforts, broadening constituencies to increase the potential to identify and address the root causes of conflict and meet the needs of those it affects.
- Women's participation in electoral and political processes. Increase women's effective participation in political, electoral and peace processes, including compliance through the introduction of legislation to achieve the minimum quota of 30% women's representation.
- Protection and Prevention to address conflict related sexual violence. Bring attention to the issues of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and abuse against women, and the need for

Activities	<p>accountability and measures to address human rights violations. This includes consultations with local women and CSOs around addressing issues relating to transitional justice and reparation, advancing women’s livelihoods and property rights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Programmatic</i>. Ensuring gender mainstreaming in all projects through fund allocation. <p><u>August 2018</u>. The Advisory Board, comprising high-level women representatives from AU FemWise-Africa, ICGLR and the UN undertook solidarity missions across the region. H.E. Dr Speciosa Wandira, Former Vice-President of Uganda, and Ambassador Liberata Mulamula, former Executive Secretary of the ICGLR, co-led the solidarity missions to Burundi and CAR, with H.E. Catherine Samba-Panza, former Transitional President in Central African Republic (CAR), leading the solidarity mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).</p> <p><u>October 2018</u>. H.E. Samba Panza addressed Regional Leaders at the 9th Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM) on behalf of the Advisory Board and made a strong appeal for the promotion of women’s meaningful participation in the political and peace processes in the Great Lakes Region. This was the first time that a women senior leader had been afforded the opportunity to address a high-level summit of the ROM.</p> <p><u>November 2018</u>. O/SESG-GL and the Executive Secretariat of the ICGLR, working with Advisory Board senior leaders, co-organised a meeting of the Gender Ministers from the Great Lakes Region in collaboration with the Government of Uganda. The meeting resulted in the adoption of the Regional Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2000), which provides a framework to advance the WPS Agenda in the region.</p> <p><u>June 2019</u>. O/SESG-GL, in partnership with the African Union Commission (AUC), AU-FemWise Africa, the ICGLR and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women facilitated a follow-up mission of the Advisory Board to Burundi and the DRC.</p> <p><u>September 2019</u>. O/SESG-GL facilitated an inaugural consultative meeting of regional CSOs and Foras. The objective of the meeting was to establish a new network and promote a civilian agenda to offer policy makers a wider perspective on progress and challenges faced, primarily by women and youth, since the signing of both the ICGLR Pact (2006) and the PSC-</p>
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Framework (2013) and offer recommendations. CSO representatives were energized by coming together to form a coalition of likeminded stakeholders and further sought support to provide an assessment from their perspective with a focus on prevention and early warning.

November 2019. The 11th Session of the Advisory Board was held at the AUC HQ, Addis Ababa in coordination with the Office of the AU Special Envoy for WPS. This was followed by a gender and elections meeting organized in cooperation with the AU Department of Political Affairs at the AUC HQ

December 2019. Regional Preparatory Workshop of Women Business Entrepreneurs for the Great Lakes Investment and Trade Conference, Nairobi, Kenya.

December 2019. Technical Planning Activity Meeting for 2020 of Women, Youth and Regional Fora Organizations, Naivasha, Kenya

March 2020. Follow-up Solidarity Mission to Burundi prior to the upcoming elections in May 2020.

Membership	<p>The Advisory Board broadened its mandate and membership in 2019, to include the African Union Network for Conflict Prevention and Mediation (AU Fem-Wise-Africa), UNTAD, ICGLR Women & Youth Fora, regional CSOs ('COCAFEM'), and Academia, and changed its name to the 'Advisory Board for Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in the Great Lakes Region'.</p> <p>The Advisory Board changed its name to the 'Advisory Board for Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in the Great Lakes Region' and broadened its mandate and membership in 2019, with the current members drawn from a wide range of stakeholders including: UN (SESG-GL, SRSG-CRSV, UNWOMEN, UNEP, UNTAD), African Union (AU Special Envoy for WPS, AU SRSG-GLR), Executive Secretariat of (ICGLR) & ICGLR Women & Youth For a, World Bank and African Development Bank, African Union Network for Conflict Prevention and Mediation (AU Fem-Wise-Africa), Global Fund for Women (GFW), OAK Foundation, Regional Civil Society Organisations (CSO): COCAFEM', 'FFC' and other grassroots women organisations, Academia</p> <p>Secretariat Nene L. Bah,</p> <p>Snr Gender Adviser</p> <p>Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region</p> <p>Intermission: 124-26916</p> <p>M: +254 701 156021</p>
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