

Advisory Board Meeting
PSC Framework Women's Platform

Nairobi, Kenya (22 February 2018)

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

1. The Women's Platform for the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework was established in 2014, with the aim of empowering and supporting women in the region as leaders and peacemakers, and to ensure that they play critical roles in the implementation of this landmark Framework Agreement. The Security Council Annual Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) on 27 October 2017 further agreed on the need of the United Nations Secretary General to place a specific emphasis on assessing not only the quantitative, but also the qualitative dimension of participation and representation of women in dialogue and peace processes and implementing institutions. Speakers suggested strengthening partnerships with regional organizations, CSOs and women's groups was also seen as key.

2. The Advisory Board is the strategic body for the Women's Platform. It is responsible for: advising the Women's Platform on issues that impact women's participation in peace and political processes at local, national or regional levels in the Great Lakes region; making recommendations to relevant donors that could support Women's Platform initiatives; and, supporting fundraising efforts undertaken by the Office of the United Nations (UN) Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region (OESG). The last meeting of the Advisory Board was held via VTC in June 2017. The Special Envoy recommended then that the next meeting be held in person in order to enable a more in-depth dialogue and discussion on its overall strategic direction. The year to come therefore offers an opportunity for such an engagement.

3. The Women's Platform for the PSC Framework is key to advancing the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda in the Great Lakes region. It builds on the momentum that has already been generated by women's groups and women's movements to claim justice, peace, and security for all citizens in the Great Lakes region. Its purpose is to: **i)** allow women's organizations to actively contribute to the implementation of the PSC Framework by: supporting the strengthening of their collective action, providing grants for relevant projects, and enabling women to play an active and sustained role in the overall peace process. **ii)** combatting violence against women and supporting women affected by violence; **iii)** advancing women's livelihoods and property rights, and **iv)** promoting women's equitable access to and control of natural resources.

4. Since its inception, the Women's Platform has contributed to building a network with governments of the region, international and regional organizations, civil society organizations and donor countries to ensure the implementation of the WPS agenda. It has also generated positive results at local levels through the grant-making process with the Global Fund for Women. While the Women's Platform has yielded considerable benefits to its target audience, and the Special Envoy intends to increase its strategic impact by further focusing outputs on political advocacy. This was reflected in the final communiqué of the 8th High-Level Meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM), held in Brazzaville on 19 October 2017, in which Heads of State and Governments of the region encouraged the OESG, in consultation with the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union (AU), to convene regular meetings to review progress in the implementation of the Goma Declaration of the Women's Platform of the PSC Framework.

5. The Advisory Board meeting will therefore discuss: (i) the linkages and potential synergies between existing frameworks and policy processes to address WPS; (ii) ways and means to develop a joint strategy with complementary priorities, roles and responsibilities; and, (iii) concrete recommendations on how to overcome challenges as well as on joint actions in the lead-up to the ministerial meeting and the 9th ROM meeting, scheduled to take place in Uganda in October 2018.

Objectives

6. The objectives of the meeting are as follows:

- a) Take stock of developments in the region since the last meeting of the Advisory Board in June 2017.
- b) Assess progress in the development of the Regional Plan of Action developed by ICGLR and in the implementation of the July 2016 Goma Declaration.
- c) Discuss and adopt the Regional Plan of Action on UN Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1325 (2000).
- d) Discuss the strengthening of the Advisory Board and the role its members can play to further support the advancement of political advocacy.
- e) Discuss modalities and messaging for solidarity missions by Advisory Board members to Burundi, the Central African Republic, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in 2018.
- f) Discuss how to further involve the grassroots women's organizations funded by the Women's Platform in all regional peacebuilding activities, such as the implementation of regional action plans and the July 2016 Goma Declaration and the solidarity missions.

Participants and Venue

7. The meeting will bring together 56 participants, including senior representatives from the UN, AU, AU FemWise, ICGLR and SADC, as well as selected members of grantees from the PSC Framework's Women's Platform, representatives of youth, ICGLR Regional Women's Forum, UN WOMEN (Nairobi-based Regional Office), and the Regional Training Facility on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in Uganda.

8. The meeting will be held at the Tribe Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya. The venue was chosen in view of its transportation links, and excellent facilities and accommodation that have been used frequently for OSESG-sponsored events.

Format and Structure

9. The first day of the event will be at a technical level in order to review and validate the Regional Plan of Action on UNSCR 1325 (2000), and agree on possible amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Advisory Board and planned initiatives. The meeting will be facilitated by a consultant hired by OSESG.

10. The second day of the event will bring together the Principals, supported by technical experts, for high-level discussions on how to strengthen political advocacy. It will be chaired by the UN Special Envoy as well as the Gender Ministers of Kenya (host) and the Republic of Congo (Chair of

the PSC Framework for 2018). The agenda will include briefings and exchanges on the following items:

- a) OSESG. To discuss the Women's Platform, the Advisory Board and opportunities for enhanced collective political advocacy.
- b) ICGLR. To provide an update on the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action.
- c) AU FemWise. To share experiences on mediation efforts in the Great Lakes region and to discuss the way forward in ensuring women representation in political and dialogue processes.
- d) SADC. To share experiences on the SADC strategy in support of WPS and, most importantly, in the DRC.

Expected Outcomes

11. At the end of the meeting, participants will have: adopted joint strategies to support the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action and the Goma Declaration; agreed on additional terms of reference for the Advisory Board; confirmed the operational modalities for solidarity missions of the Advisory Board; a Gender Ministers meeting with concrete proposals for joint action in the lead-up to the ICGLR/ROM Summits. The outcome document will be transmitted to the Heads of State and Governments of the region, either at the next ICGLR Summit or the 9th ROM meeting of the PSC Framework.

Budget

12. The costs relating to the organization of the meeting will be covered by the OSESG Trust Fund, as well as for the invited grass-root attendees. All other attendees are expected to meet their costs through their respective institutions.

Administration.

13. Letters of invitation and an Administrative Note will be circulated by OSESG. This will include detailed arrangements regarding protocol and security for VIPs.