

**Women's Platform for the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework  
for the DRC and the region**

**Minutes – 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Board  
15 June 2017, 18:00 – 19:45  
UNSOM meeting room, Block S, level-3**

**Advisory Board - Present**

Said Djinnit, SESG, Chair

Pramila Patten, SRSG-SVC

Innocent Zahinda, Team Leader, Team of Experts Sexual Violence in Conflict

Silja Halle, Programme Officer, Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch,  
UNEP, Geneva

Simone Oluoch-Olunya, Deputy Director for Eastern & Southern Africa Region, UN Women

Simon Idi, Chargé de Programme, Fonds pour les Femmes Congolaises (FFC)

Lisa Block, Program Officer, Freedom from Violence, Global Fund for Women

Marie Chantal Safu, Ministre du genre, de la famille et de l'enfant, RDC

Annie Kenda, Directeur chef de service chargé des questions juridiques sur le statut de la femme,  
Ministre du genre, de la famille et de l'enfant, RDC

Dr. Attiat Halleem, ICGLR Regional Women's Forum President, Sudan

Jamila Seftaoui, Senior Gender Advisor, MONUSCO

**Advisory Board - Regrets**

Mary Robinson, Special Envoy, Climate Change and MRCF

Bineta Diop, Special Envoy for WPS, African Union, President FAS

Katharina Samara-Wickrama, Oak Foundation

**Advisor/Facilitator**

Carole Doucet, Senior Gender Advisor, OSESG-GL

**Observers – Present**

Lies Vanslebrouck, Liaison Officer, OSESG-GL

Nene Bah, Political Affairs Officer, OSESG-GL

Theresa Pirkel, Special Assistant, OSESG-GL

**Secretariat and Notes:**

Ludmila Azo, Associate Programme Officer, OSESG-GL

Mary Mbaabu, Gender Consultant, OSESG-GL

**Minutes**

**1. Welcome Remarks**

The Special Envoy of the Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region (SESG) welcomed all participants to the meeting and gave special recognition to Pramila Patten, the new SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict, for joining in, in person. On her part, she pledged her commitment to the cause for women in conflict situation and promised to share her expertise

gained in various missions. The SESG also welcomed colleagues from DRC, with special recognition for the Ministre du genre, de la famille et de l'enfant, Madame Marie Chantal Safu. He acknowledged with gratitude, the presence of the other Advisory Board members from MONUSCO, UNEP, UN Women, ICGLR Regional Women's Forum, Global Fund for Women and Fonds pour les Femmes Congolaises (FFC).

The SESG explained that though the Advisory board had not met for a while, a number of activities had been on-going towards enhancement of the role of women in the PSC-F. He introduced the Senior Gender Advisor, Carole Doucet and mentioned that she had been leading the Women's Platform in the OSESG office for the last one year.

## **2. Review and adoption of minutes**

The minutes of the last Advisory Board meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2016 were reviewed and adopted. However, under matters arising, Dr. Attiat expressed her concern that South Sudan was still not getting enough information on the PSC-F activities to enhance RWF's participation.

## **3. Briefing on highlights and recent developments in the region**

The SESG gave a brief highlight of recent developments in the region under the PSC Framework as well as the related activities undertaken. These are as follows:

- 1) Engagement with partners in the region, AU, EU in attempts to neutralize the negative forces (FDLR) in the region - a major issue that calls for a strategic approach.
- 2) Issue of the ex-M23 causing serious threats to stability in the region as some combatants are still present in Rwanda and Uganda. This issue has been further compounded by the recent incursion of some of the combatants into the DRC.
- 3) . It was noted that massacres had reduced in eastern DRC, partly as a result of joint MONUSCO-FARDC interventions.
- 4) Several South Sudan SPLM/A-IO combatants (600) had moved to DRC, thus contributing to instability in the region. The support of the UN has been requested, in particular on the issue of their repatriation either back to their country of origin or to a third country.
- 5) OSESG continues to re-invigorate efforts to advance the implementation of the Nairobi Declaration.
- 6) OSESG has made great efforts in engaging authorities (DRC, South Africa and Uganda governments) on the issue of ex-combatants operating in DRC.
- 7) OSESG has worked very closely with MONUSCO, ICGLR and AU, in addressing the issue of repatriation of the presence of South Sudan rebel soldiers (SPLM-IO) in eastern DRC
- 8) The Special Envoy has also visited Tanzania lately, in support to the efforts of the inter-Burundi dialogue, as part of joint efforts from the international community.
- 9) The same support was extended to the dialogue in the DRC and lead to the signature of the 31<sup>st</sup> December agreement. A joint delegation comprised of the PSC F guarantors recently undertook a visit to the country authorities in a view to discuss ways to create conditions for a dialogue.

- 10) As part of the briefing on the cross-cutting issues in the region and initiatives to tackle root causes of conflict in the region, the Advisory Board was informed of the recent ministerial meeting on youth held in May 2017 in Livingstone Zambia in collaboration with the ICGLR.
- 11) In addition, OSESG is planning a meeting on the the illegal exploitation of natural resource scheduled for early July, 2017. .
- 12) A Gender ministerial meeting is also being planned in collaboration with ICGLR for September, 2017.

#### **4. Update on the status of the Women's Platform**

##### *Revised Strategic Framework*

- 1) Progress report on the Women's platform: The Senior Gender Advisor informed that the strategic framework had been revised to make it more strategic and to emphasize advocacy for women's participation in peace and political processes. In this connection, the meeting welcomed the Women's Platform progress report covering the last 13 months which had been shared with the Advisory Board.

##### *Recent developments*

- 1) Highlights for the women in the region: It was noted that women through the Regional Women's Forum (RWF), now have a seat at the Technical Support Committee (TSC) following recommendations at the Goma Declaration of July 2016. This gives women an important opportunity to voice their concerns and insights and to provide updates and recommendations related to the implementation of the gender, women, peace and security agenda.
- 2) The OSESG has also provided support to ICGLR Regional Training Facility in Kampala towards training on SGBV, including a symposium, and study on SGBV as well as a case law compendium.
- 3) The Global Open Days on resolution 1325 was organized and 30 women leaders from the 4 core countries and from South Sudan participated in the event in Goma in January, 2017. The event culminated in a half day dialogue with senior leaders and decision-makers from the region.
- 4) Upcoming events for the Women's Platform:
  - Grants committee meeting planned for July 2017 with GFW and UN Women.
  - Resource mobilization collaboration with UN Women – working towards a half-day regional donors' meeting to explore possibility of raising funds in support of the Women's Platform and pillar 5 of the Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework (on gender and SGBV).
  - Working closely with UN agencies in the region on Pillar 5 activities and coordination (UN women and UNFPA – co leads).
  - Gender Ministers' meeting planned for September, 2017. The ICGLR Gender Policy and Regional Action Plan on 1325 (RAP) will be reviewed for adoption.
- 5) Goma Declaration of July, 2016 – prominent women from the region and some Advisory Board members gathered in Goma and adopted several resolutions prior to the AU

summit. SESG brought these resolutions to the attention of the leaders during the summit, and as a result, the declaration was endorsed and adopted by the leaders. has made concerted efforts in getting respective governments to take action towards follow-up on the implementation of the Declaration.

## **5. Update on funded projects through the grants component of the Women's Platform**

Lisa Block, Program Officer, Global Fund for Women (GFW), provided the following overview of GFW's role in the Platform and reiterated GFW's firm commitment to the Platform:

- Since 2016, GFW had mobilized \$ 553,458 including OSESG funds, Irish funds, Oak Foundation and individual donors.
- Groups awarded in 2016 and 2017 : Abaremeshamahoro \$ 20,000; Association Dushirehamwe \$39,338.38; Developpment Agropastoral et Sanitaire \$ 22,000; Association des Femmes Rapatriees du Burundi \$40,000; Fonds pour les Femmes Congolaises (FFC) \$ 180,000 & \$ 99,119.62; Solidarite des Femmes Activistes pour la Defense des Droits Humains \$ 29,000; Isis-women's International Cross Cultural Exchange \$25,000.
- A total of 13 grants awarded (1 Rwanda 6 Burundi 5 DRC OSESG 1 Uganda). Two of the grants awarded in DRC have been to FFC who have a lot of experience on the ground in mobilizing women groups. GFW have provided some grants to enable them contact additional groups.

It was noted that GFW had a balanced portfolio in terms of thematic areas: 9 grants for Theme 1; 7 theme 2, 10 on livelihoods and 3 on Natural resources. Additional grants are expected from OSESG and UN Women. It was also noted that OSESG gave DRC and Burundi funding priority due to the crisis in the region and that FFC was a critical partner on the ground as they have a regional outlook in both countries and good monitoring and evaluation.

## **6. Revision of updated Terms of Reference for the Advisory Board and discussions on inclusion of additional members**

- 1) SESG noted that during the last meeting of March 2016, it was agreed that additional members be invited to provide more expertise – he suggested inviting World Bank as they have a strong engagement with women in the Great Lakes (GL). WB had also pledged a lot of support to women in the GL.
- 2) Innocent Zahinda, Team Leader, Team of Experts, Sexual Violence in Conflict noted satisfaction with current TORs.
- 3) SESG mentioned that he had been in touch with the first Executive Secretary of ICGLR, Ambassador Mulamula and that she was willing to join the board. SESG to write to her officially and renew contacts with WB and AfDB.
- 4) MONUSCO Gender Advisor suggested approaching philanthropic organizations that support women's initiatives for resource mobilization. SESG requested that she sends to OSESG some contacts to enable his office contact them.
- 5) SESG informed that his office would try to seek prominent women personalities to address the upcoming Heads of State meeting. He requested those with suggestions to share.

## 7. Any other business and action points for next four months

- SESG emphasized the importance of the Women's Platform's Strategic Framework 2016 – 2019 and urged all present to study it closely as it forms the basis for understanding the role of women in the PSC-F
- Dr. Attiat, RWF- Sudan, emphasized the need for the Women's Platform to better coordinate with Regional Women's Forum in South Sudan and in CAR.
- UNEP – Silja Halle noted that there were potential areas of collaboration and that UNEP would like to explore this further. SESG mentioned that the Executive Director of UNEP was expected to participate in the July 2017 meeting on natural resources.
- Madame Marie Chantal Safu, Ministre du genre de la famille et de l'enfant welcomed the briefings and expressed her gratitude for assistance offered to women in DRC. She requested OSESG to extend grants to other regions in DRC. She also mentioned that the DRC National Action Plan on resolution 1325 needs to be updated and further requested support for this activity.
- Pramila Patten, SRSG-SVC congratulated SESG for his initiative in supporting women in peace and security matters in the region. She recognized that the grantees were the missing link in enhancing peace and security in the region.
- SESG made reference to the July 2016 Goma Declaration and mentioned that it was at this meeting that a request to hold a meeting of gender ministers was made and that his office was working on holding this meeting in Nairobi in September 2017.
- SESG said that he had been engaging local partners to explore fundraising strategies and appealed for assistance from all quarters, to explore ways of enhancing resource mobilization. He also emphasized the role of MONUSCO Senior Gender Advisor in mobilizing the UNCT to provide resources for women, peace and security issues in the DRC.
- Oak Foundation – fund raising for WP (\$500,000 for grant making) including contribution from other donors. It was noted that more funding was expected from individual donors.
- OSESG Senior Gender Advisor (SGA), clarified that there was money expected from EU for the activities of the Women's Platform. She said that the office was also working with UN Women to undertake resource mobilization. SGA expressed gratitude to GFW for their efforts in raising \$ 500,000. She mentioned that OSESG-GL had collaborated with ICGLR on the Khartoum RWF strategic planning meeting.
- SGA said that the office had invited leaders from South Sudan to the Global Open Days meeting in Goma and reassured Dr. Attiat that more would be done to ensure closer networking with South Sudan.
- SGA said that 8 countries of the Great Lakes Region already had National Action Plan (NAP) and that a Regional Action Plan (RAP) was being developed and would build on this. The RAP's to include consultations from all the 13 countries.
- SESG admitted that more could have been done towards resource mobilization but his office was committed to further engagements in resource mobilization. He said that a team from UN was scheduled to meet on 29 June, 2017 in Brussels, Belgium to engage further on resource mobilization.
- Madame Marie Chantal Safu, Ministre du Genre, de la famille et de l'enfant

noted that the Gender Advisor at MONUSCO was fully committed to mobilizing the government to provide all the support especially in the Kasais region.

**8. Closing remarks and date for next Advisory Board meeting**

SESG thanked all for participation but regretted that Oak Foundation and AU did not make it. However, he noted that both organizations remained very supportive of the Women's Platform.

SESG informed that efforts would be made by O/SESG for a face to face meeting next time. He mentioned that the gender ministers' meeting would be held in September, 2017 in Nairobi. SESG promised to try and get some advisory board members to attend. He said it would be a good opportunity to engage more closely.

SESG requested his office to shares all email addresses of board members with one another while FFC requested for support/advice on a need basis from the advisory board.

Next Advisory Board meeting to be held tentatively in October, 2017.

The meeting closed at 19:15 hrs.