

**Declaration of the Advisory Board of the Women's Platform for the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region on the twentieth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000)**

As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), we, the members of the Advisory Board of the Women's Platform for the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region, which brings together the United Nations, the African Union, the Secretariat of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and its forums, civil society organizations, the Consultative Umbrella of Women's Associations in the Great Lakes Region (COCAFEM-GL) and the Fond pour les Femmes Congolaises (FFC), wish to congratulate all the States of the region on the significant progress made with regard to women, peace and security.

Indeed, the countries of the Great Lakes region have distinguished themselves globally through the presence of many women in their parliaments and in high-level positions within government, including transitional Head of State, president of the National Assembly, vice-president of the republic and as ministers for defence and foreign affairs, to cite but a few examples. In addition, most countries have developed national action plans and the minimum quota of 30 per cent [for women's participation] has been taken into account in some institutions.

Despite the progress made, some challenges remain, including security issues that primarily affect women, most of whom are victims of sexual and gender-based violence and are in the grip of the economic vulnerability that has been accentuated by the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Reaffirming its strong commitment to promoting the political empowerment and economic recovery of women in the region, the Advisory Board recommends the following:

- Continue to advocate before States in favour of effective support, including financial support (amounting to 15 per cent of their budgets), for national action plans for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and for the inclusion of issues related to women, peace and security in the policies, planning, budgeting and response to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- On the basis of the recommendations of the virtual round tables, examine, in collaboration with other regional and international technical and financial partners, ways and means of promoting the meaningful participation of women in political and security governance;
- Identify and support networks of women mediators to foster a broad coalition for the promotion of dialogue and peacebuilding at the community and regional levels, and support the Guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region and the Advisory Board in their initiatives in response to peace priorities;
- Strengthen the role of civil society organizations, young people and the media in their efforts to promote peacebuilding;
- Appoint women to negotiating missions so that they can take part in the signing of peace agreements and so that issues related to women, peace and security and the social and humanitarian dimension are taken into account in such agreements.

**Advisory Board of the Women's Platform for the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo**