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

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

**Subject:** Minutes of the Inaugural Conference Call of the Advisory of the Women's Platform for the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework

**Date:** 8 July 2014

**Moderator:** Special Envoy Mary Robinson, Dublin, Ireland

**Participants:**

UNEP Nairobi, Ibrahim Thiaw

UNDP Nairobi, Nardos Bekele -Thomas

FANPRAN, South Africa -- Dr Lindiwe Sibanda

UN Women, Nairobi – Christine Musisi

Ministry of Gender, Kinshasa, DRC – Mme Jeanine Mukarniwa

Global Fund for Women, USA – Musimbi Kanyoro and Muadi Mukenge

O-SESG-GL, Nairobi– Miranda Tabifor

Femme Africa Solidarite (FAS), New York– Harriette Williams Bright

**Apologies**

(OSRSG-SVC), New York, SRS Zainab Bangura

Fonds pour les Femmes Congolaises – Julienne Lusenge

**Note takers:** Miranda Tabifor and Muadi Mukenge

**Background**

In implementing the Special Envoy's mandate and commitment on women's empowerment and regional economic integration, including to promote 'top-down and bottom-up ownership' of the PSC-F, the Women's Platform was launched in January 2014 on the margins of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the AU Summit. Through the Platform, it is hoped that approximately 60 direct grants totaling \$2.5 million per year will be awarded over the next three years to women's organizations in the Great Lakes Region. The Platform is being managed by the Global Fund for Women as the designated Secretariat. The other implementing partners for the Platform include: the Office of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict

(OSRSG-SVC), Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS), and Fonds pour les Femmes Congolaises (FFC).

The governance of the Women's Platform is ensured by the Advisory Board and Management Committee (the Secretariat and the Senior Gender Advisor of SESG), reporting to SESG-GL. The roles of the Advisory Board are to: 1) provide guidance on the implementation of the key objectives of the Platform; 2) recommend projects to be funded through the Platform and comment on the final grantees presented by the Secretariat; 3) support the Secretariat to deepen its understanding of the interplay between the peace processes in the Great Lakes Region and the role of the women's movement; and 4) make recommendations of relevant donors that could support Platform initiatives. The Advisory Board will convene via conference calls every three months, and will receive project updates from the Secretariat every two months via email. Membership on the Advisory Board is voluntary.

Under the guidance and leadership of Special Envoy Mary Robinson, the Advisory Board held its Inaugural Conference Call on 8 July 2014.

### **Summary of discussions**

- Special Envoy Mary Robinson thanked all members for accepting the invitation to serve on the Advisory Board and reiterated the key role the Advisory Board is to play to support the mission of the Women's Platform. This includes providing inputs on programmatic elements, visibility, fundraising, and recommendation of grantees.
- She related the rationale and added-value for establishing the Women's Platform which she stated was in recognition of women's unprecedented role in the PSC-F.
- She noted that the Women's Platform will work with existing mechanisms particularly the ICGLR Regional Women's Forum to ensure its objectives are achieved.
- In her update as designated Secretariat of the Women's Platform, Ms Muadi Mukenge of Global Fund for Women related key areas of activities undertaken since January 2014 which includes to – 1) develop the administrative systems of the Secretariat; 2) organize promotional events at the Commission on the Status of Women and at a donor conference in New York; 3) undertake fundraising with foundations and individual donors; 4) complete proposal processing for groups to be supported under the Women's Platform.
- During the question and Answer session of the Conference Call, participants requested for the narrative report of the Secretariat in both English and French as well as the thematic indicators of the Women's Platform.
- Dr. Lindiwe promised to share a copy of a report of the meeting of the Ministers of environment regarding Sustainable Development Goals to appreciate indicators that have been developed around Clean Energy, one of the Platform themes
- The meeting stressed on the importance to ensure quality control, monitoring and tracking of the grant implementation process. The reporting requirements, the plan to hire a local consultant as well support from Fonds pour les Femmes Congolaises were cited by Global fund for Women as mechanisms to ensure this . UN Women offered to support with M&E on the ground as well through their country offices. Request made for a list of the grantees to be supported in the first round with Dutch funding

- Information and clarification was provided by the Secretariat on grant making process pertaining to grant amounts. The initial grants are lower than in the initial Women's Platform documents. The first round of grants range from \$10,000 to \$18,000 each.
- SESG Robinson stressed the need to link the groups across themes and to treat them equally for synergy in action. She also stated commitment to collaborate with ICGLR Regional Women's Forum. GFW added that ICGLR RWF will receive some support through the Platform and will also be invited to the convenings in order to meet grantees and enable grantees to be informed on RWF priorities and strategies. ICGLR RWF will also receive grants and as the funding base of the Platform increases, support will be extended to ICGLR RWF.
- The meeting suggested the Secretariat to consult the indicators developed around the Year of Agriculture, and to learn of the funding partnerships formed. The document will be provided by Advisory Board participant , Dr. Lindiwe.
- The meeting recommended to hold at least one face-to face meeting per year of the Advisory Board. It was suggested that On the occasion of the AU Summit in January 2015, the 1<sup>st</sup> face-face meeting should be held.
- SESG stated the intention of the Platform to be open to collaborations and information sharing. This includes linking to other initiatives, to other conflict settings such as CAR, and to multiple donors. In addition, as the funding for the Women's Platform increases, the intent is to create a communications portal that will highlight the progress of the Platform, the work of grantees and the other engagements of the Women's Platform.
- SESG stated the desire for Advisory Board members to be involved in fundraising for the Women's Platform as there is a strong need for additional resources to expand the Women's Platform intervention for maximum impact. The Secretariat will assure accountability for smaller groups that are supported by different donors.
- It was noted that an African funding opportunity could be explored for livelihoods through Agriculture. Dr Lindiwe promised to share details on possible partners.
- FAS announced it is planning a meeting of the UNSCR 1325 Regional Steering Committee within two months, in Rwanda.
- SESG stated the importance of linking the Regional Plan of Action with the Women's Platform for synergy and to support for each other. Women's Platform convenings should include Regional Steering Committee members.
- SESG announced her appointment as UN Special Envoy for Climate Justice as of early August 2014. She will continue to support the Women's Platform in her new role and is committed to its success and viability.
- Musimbi Kanyoro further stressed that the Secretariat needs more support to achieve its scope of work. Particularly with fundraising. Support of the Advisory Board in this effort is welcomed.
- Priorities for the next 3 months were provided by Miranda Tabifor as follows: grantmaking for round 1, due diligence on grants for round 2, continuation of fund raising and planning of 1<sup>st</sup> convening.
- The call ended with thanks from SESG Mary Robinson. The next conference call will take place on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2014

### **Key action points**

- Ms Mukenge of GFW to share Secretariat narrative report in both English and French as well as the thematic indicators of the Women's Platform as soon as possible
- Ms Mukenge of GFW to share the list of grantees to be supported in the first round with Dutch funding
- Dr. Lindiwe to share a copy of a report of the meeting of the Ministers of environment regarding Sustainable Development Goals with all members
- Advisory Board members to be involved in fundraising for the Women's Platform