

OUTCOME DOCUMENT

Information-sharing Session with Great Lakes women in the margins of the Silver Anniversary of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security

18 October 2025, Windhoek, Namibia

We, women of the Great Lakes Region of Africa, convened in Windhoek, Namibia, on 18 October 2025, under the leadership of the women facilitators and women leaders, namely H.E Madam Catherine Samba Panza, former President of the Central African Republic and H.E Madam Sahle-Work Zewde, former President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and with the support of H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former President of Liberia, Patron of the African women Leaders Network (AWLN), and Ambassador Liberata Mulamula, the African Union Commission (AUC) Chairperson's Special Envoy for Women Peace and Security (WPS).

ACKNOWLEDGE AND APPLAUD the role of the Government of Namibia, under the leadership of H.E Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, President of the Republic of Namibia, for hosting the 25th Anniversary of the landmark United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), and affording the opportunity to the women of Africa, to convene, exchange experiences and lessons on peacebuilding across their adversities, and strengthen Continental and regional solidarity. Through this convening, women reaffirm their shared commitment to peace and security, demonstrating that cross-learning and collaboration is imperative in advancing the peace and security agenda on the Continent.

WELCOME the statements of women leaders, with emphasis on strengthening the participation and role of women in preventing and resolving conflicts at all levels.

ACKNOWLEDGE the participation of women leaders, government and civil society representatives from the Great Lakes region and the Continent, and commend their courage, resilience and commitment to contributing to peace initiatives at the local and regional levels.

APPRECIATE the role and continued collaboration between the Office of the AUC Chairperson's Special Envoy on WPS (AU/SE-WPS), the 'Panel of the Wise', the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FemWise-Africa), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), Office of the Special Envoy of the United Nation (UN) Secretary General for the Great Lakes region (OESG-GLR), the African Women's Leadership Network (AWLN), The UN Organization Stabilization

Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), The UN Office to the African Union (UNOAU), the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN WOMEN), The UN Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), German Federal Government through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the governments of Japan, Denmark, Ireland, Norway and China towards advancing the WPS agenda in the Great Lakes region and beyond.

APPLAUD H.E Madam Liberata Mulamula, the AU/SE-WPS for her efforts towards ensuring that the voices of the women of the Great Lakes region remains a priority in search of lasting peace.

HAVING LISTENED to experiences of women in mediation, and lived experiences shared by women from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Mauritania, and as far as the Sahel.

GUIDED BY the various normative instruments and decisions that advance the WPS agenda, including UNSCR 1325 (2000); the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, UNSCR 2250 (2015), the AU Constitutive Act, the Maputo Protocol on Women's Rights- Article 10 (2003), the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004), Aspiration 6 of the Agenda 2063; and the AU Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 2018-2028, the AU Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (2024), amongst others;

FURTHER GUIDED BY the ongoing regional dialogue processes, namely the African led mediation processes, the Luanda and Nairobi processes, as well as the Peace and Security Cooperation Framework Agreement for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region (PSC Framework).

ACKNOWLEDGE the persistent security and humanitarian challenges in the Great Lakes region and the disproportionate impact on women, girls, people with disability and other vulnerable groups.

RECOGNIZE the leadership of H.E. Joao Lourenco, President of Angola for serving as the AU designated Mediator for the Great Lakes region. And celebrating the appointment of two eminent women leaders to the five-member Facilitation Panel of the regional peace process for the DRC.

COMMEND the AUC for its continued investment in strengthening women's leadership and participation in peace and security processes, notably through the establishment of mechanisms such as FemWise-Africa, AWLN, and the Pan-African Women's

Organization (PAWO), as well as the Swakopmund process, which aim to enhance women's inclusion and meaningful engagement in peace and security initiatives across the Continent.

COGNISANT of the barriers and challenges that continue to impede the full realization of the WPS agenda in the Great Lakes region, while also recognizing the unprecedented opportunity presented by the 25th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 (2000) and the 30th Anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action to renew commitments and accelerate implementation.

REMAIN DEEPLY CONCERNED that despite the progress, women in the Great Lakes region continue to be grossly underrepresented in decision-making in peace and security processes. This is compounded by persistent violations of women's rights, including widespread conflict-related sexual violence, forced displacement, and limited access to essential services such as health care, education, and access to justice.

COMMIT to continue working collectively and in close collaboration with the Facilitation Panel of the regional peace process for the DRC in pursuit of inclusive, sustainable, and lasting peace and security in the Great Lakes region.

STRESS the importance of transparency in strengthening mutual trust, accountability, and confidence among the women in the region and in building constructive and enduring partnerships with regional and international stakeholders.

FURTHER COMMIT to:

- Ensure the meaningful participation of women as equal and indispensable actors in all phases of peace processes with a minimum of 30% representation, including in ceasefire negotiations, peace agreement signings, security arrangements, constitutional reforms, transitional justice, reconciliation efforts, and humanitarian assistance.
- Advocate for urgent and consistent humanitarian assistance to communities affected by conflict in the region, including internally displaced persons and refugees in host and border countries, ensuring access to essential services and guaranteeing safe and secure shelter for women and girls along transit routes, and within displacement and refugee camps.
- Prevent and end all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls, as well as boys and men, including conflict related sexual violence to promote accountability and justice for survivors.

- Engage women and communities affected by conflict in shaping responses to ensure that measures implemented effectively address their needs and restore the dignity of those affected.
- Strengthen women regional platforms to facilitate continuous, open dialogue to share experiences and best practice to develop collective measures to advance peace and security in the region.
- Strengthen mentorship and dialogue between young women and established women leaders in the Great Lakes Region, ensuring continuity and joint action to advance sustainable peace and security.
- Jointly develop and implement joint cross-border programs focused on early warning, constructive dialogue, reconciliation and actively counter hate speech and misinformation.
- Support women's economic empowerment through joint capacity building programs and cross-border trade initiatives in a bid to transform conflict-driven economic patterns into shared prosperity that fosters stability.
- Integrate local perspectives and experiences in initiatives and work with grassroots women's organizations in negotiations, mediations and peace dialogue at all levels.
- Utilize established women's platforms and networks, such as the Advisory Board for WPS, to enhance coordination and collaboration with all stakeholders, ensuring effective implementation of strategies and roadmaps.
- Incorporate peace education in education curricula and cultivate critical thinking skills as well as evidence-based research to identify root causes of conflict.
- Leverage on social media and digital communication to promote messages of peace while combating misinformation and hate-speech.
- Establish a dedicated funding modalities within the AU Peace Fund to support the WPS agenda.

Windhoek, Namibia 18 October 2025