

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TECHNICAL MEETING OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS AND REGIONAL FORA CONTRIBUTING TO THE SESSION OF THE TECHNICAL SUPPORT COMMITTEE AND HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS OF THE REGIONAL OVERSIGHT MECHANISM FOR THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR PEACE, SECURITY AND COOPERATION FOR THE DRC AND THE REGION AND THE ICGLR PACT ON SECURITY, STABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT

September 10, 2019, Nairobi, Kenya

From 8 to 9 September 2019, the Office of the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region (OSESG) in collaboration with the *Concertation des Collectifs des Associations Féminines dans la région des Grands Lacs* (COCAFEM-GL), the *Fonds pour les Femmes Congolaises* (FFC), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) as well as partners from Swiss Cooperation and CARE International organized a consultative meeting of civil society organizations and fora of the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) in Nairobi, Kenya.

In addition to the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, representatives of the African Union Liaison Office for the Great Lakes Region, the ICGLR, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the National Oversight Mechanism of the Framework Agreement on Peace, Security and Cooperation for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region were present.

The objective of the meeting was to generate recommendations to fast-track the implementation of the commitments made by the signatory States to the Pact on Security, Stability and Development for the Great Lakes Region (known as the ICGLR Pact) and the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Region.

At the end of the meeting, civil society organizations and Fora reiterated their commitment to continue their partnership with member States, economic communities and regional mechanisms as well as all institutions involved in peace and stabilization processes in the region.

During the deliberations, the following topics were discussed:

- The status of implementation of the 2006 ICGLR Pact and the 2013 Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo and the region;

- The major changes needed for the promotion and protection of women's rights and specific groups as well as the expected role of women, men and youth;
- The participation of women and young people in decision-making bodies and processes.

In the light of the presentations made, the following progress was noted:

1. A legal and political framework currently favourable to the promotion of peace, security and conflict prevention in the region;
2. Reconciliation between the Heads of State and Government of the region and therefore that of the peoples;
3. Increasingly visible security and judicial cooperation between countries;
4. Democratic progress through a peaceful transition of power;
5. A growing trend in women's representation and participation in political governance;
6. Strengthening of frameworks for exchange, dialogue and accountability between the various state and non-state actors in the region;
7. The active role of civil society organizations and women's movements in the political and economic empowerment of women;
8. An increasingly strong partnership between governments, UN agencies, technical and financial partners, the private sector and civil society.

Despite this progress, some challenges remain, including among others:

1. Partial implementation of the commitments made by States in the areas of peace, security, development and the fight against sexual and gender-based violence (SGVB) despite a favourable legal framework and policy;
2. The persistence of armed groups in the region, which discourages hope for lasting peace and a better tomorrow, especially for women and girls;
3. Non-compliance with quotas and parities in nominated and elected positions in some countries of the region;
4. The limited presence of women in the boards of political parties;
5. Electoral laws and electoral commissions that do not take into account the specific needs of women and youth in some countries of the region;
6. A low presence of women in regional inter-governmental organizations and peace processes (negotiation, mediation and peacebuilding);
7. The absence of a framework for consultation and mentoring between senior and junior women and girls in politics and those with political ambitions at the local, national and regional levels;

8. Limited access for victims of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence to integrated and holistic services contrary to the spirit and letter of Resolution 11 of the Kampala Declaration on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, as well as problem ridden community reintegration;
9. Persistent impunity for perpetrators of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence due to a lack of convincing evidence and delays in the processing of court cases
10. Insufficient budgets allocated to the fight against GBV and the promotion of gender equality.

In response to the above, the following is recommended to the governance mechanisms of the ICGLR Pact and the Framework Agreement on Peace, Security and Cooperation for the DRC and the region:

1. Enable civil society to conduct a periodic assessment of the implementation of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development of the Great Lakes Region and the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the region with the support of the guarantors of the Framework Agreement and to report to the authorized governance mechanisms;
2. The Executive Secretariat of the ICGLR to review and harmonize the terms of reference for the fora, to operationalize the secretariats of the youth forum in Kenya, women forum in Rwanda and civil society forum in Tanzania and formalize the host country Agreement by end 2020;
3. Member States of the ICGLR to apply parity in regional organizations and national bodies; and achieve the minimum quota of 30% by the end of 2020;
4. Member States to ensure that they take all necessary measures to include binding gender mainstreaming measures in laws governing the functioning of political parties and electoral laws;
5. Member States to implement their commitments in relation to the allocation of a substantial annual budget dedicated to actions to combat VSGB and to promote gender equality;
6. Member States to set up a regional centre for women's leadership and provide it with a support fund for its functioning;
7. Member States that have not yet done so, to set up a Gender Monitoring Board bringing together state and non-state actors;
8. The Office of the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region to facilitate a special session in key countries between civil society organizations and technical and financial partners to support cross-border civil society initiatives by June 2020;

9. Member States to ensure that impunity for perpetrators of SGBV is ended and to take all necessary measures to ensure access to and free services for victims/survivors of such violence, their compensation and community reintegration;
10. To the guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the region to facilitate consultation twice a year between ICGLR fora and civil society organizations in the region as well as a high-level dialogue once a year between the guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the region, Women's Platform Advisory Committee of the Platform for Women and civil society organizations and regional fora.