

AFRICAN UNION  
الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE  
UNIÃO AFRICANA

---

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY OF THE  
CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

---

**9<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD OF THE WOMEN'S PLATFORM OF THE  
PEACE, SECURITY AND COOPERATION FRAMEWORK FOR THE GREAT LAKES  
REGION**

**NAIROBI, KENYA 22 FEBRUARY 2018**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Your Excellency Mme Catherine Samba Panza, Former President of the  
Republic of Central Africa;**

**Her Excellency Ms. Speciosa Wandira Kazibwe, Former Vice President of  
Uganda;**

**Honorable Mme Chantal Safou Lopusa, Minister of Gender, Women and  
Children of the Democratic Republic of Congo;**

**Your Excellency Amb. Said Djinnit, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for  
the Great Lakes Region;**

**Ambassador Sahle-Work Zewde, Director General of the United Nations  
Office in Nairobi (UNON);**

**Distinguished Members of the Advisory Board,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**All protocol observed,**

**Good Morning,**

From the outset, let me convey greetings from His Excellency **Moussa Faki  
Mahamat**, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, who has clearly

indicated his commitment to advancing gender equality and women empowerment and, in particular his support to women's initiatives in building peace across the continent.

Let me also thank Amb. Said Djinnit for convening this ninth meeting of the Advisory Board of the Women's Platform, giving us another opportunity to review together matters that are very core to the security, peace and development of the Great Lakes Region, a region whose people, particularly women and children have suffered for far too long due to violent conflicts that continue to affect the region.

I also want to congratulate you Amb. Said Djinnit for the important initiatives your office undertook under the Women's Platform including advocating for regional and national plans on Security Council Resolution 1325; combatting violence against women and supporting women's economic empowerment of women affected by violence. I extend my gratitude also to the UN agencies particularly the UN Women and the Global Fund for Women for their support to the women and communities of the Great Lakes Region. I want to commend the role of the ICGLR in stabilising the region through different initiatives.

**Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Since our last meeting, various reports indicate that Women in the Great Lakes Region, particularly in Burundi, DRC, CAR, and South Sudan, continue to be subjected to violence and to be marginalized in political and peace processes. We salute the fact that the last round of the South Sudan Peace agreement

revitalization forum that took place in Addis Ababa saw the participation of eleven women, but this remains far below levels that represent women of South Sudan.

**In Burundi and Central Africa Republic,** incidences of sexual and gender-based violence against women increased and were perpetrated with extreme cruelty, often accompanied by gender-based political hate, torture and killing of family members.

**In DRC,** the continuing violence has hindered women's full participation in the electoral process. According to the January 2018 report of the UN Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) a 5% decrease in female voter registration has been recorded. In past elections, electoral violence against women has been used to intimidate and deter women from seeking public offices.

### **Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

These few examples call for increased action to the WPS Agenda, through measures such as the initiative to develop an ICGLR regional strategy on Women, Peace and Security. The Regional Action Plan will serve as a tool to enhance women's voice, participation and protection in the Great Lakes Region.

Noting, the presence of several national, regional and continental commitments, including declarations, protocols, national legislations and action plans on women peace and security and the wide gap between their formulation

and implementation, it is crucial that we monitor the implementation of commitments made by Member States with regards to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. It is in this perspective that my office is in the process of finalizing a Continental Results Framework for Monitoring and Reporting on Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa as a tool to bridge the gap between the numerous policies and instruments with concrete actions that impact the lives of communities.

In the same vein, in partnership with UN, AUC launched recently an Africa wide Network of Women Leaders with the aim to enhance the agency and leadership of women in the transformation of our continent. Members of the network in the Democratic Republic of Congo have taken the lead in establishing a national chapter with the aim to mobilize women for meaningful participation in the current processes that will lead to elections.

As we seat here today, it is for us a space to reflect and act on how to use our good offices, political profile and influence to support the efforts of women in the region in their quest for peace.

I wish to take this opportunity to reiterate my office and AUC commitment to join hands in efforts to enhance women's voices and role in the advancement of durable peace and change in the region.

**Thank you for your kind attention!**