

REPORT

of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission



Special Envoy of the AUC Chairperson on Women, Peace and Security on Solidarity
Mission in Somalia, with AMISOM Peacekeepers

2014



African Union Commission



"As we start the year, our hearts go out to the peoples of Central African Republic and South Sudan that face the devastation of the conflicts in these countries, especially women and children who are the main victims of these conflicts. We have to work together to ensure that we effect lasting peace and security in these countries, as part of our efforts to silence the guns on the continent.

It is in this context that I am pleased to announce the appointment of a Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security, Mrs. Bineta Diop, to ensure that the voices of women and the vulnerable are heard much more clearly in peace building and in conflict resolution."

Excerpts from a Statement by HE Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, to the Twenty-second Ordinary Session of the Heads of State and Government

*30 January 2014
Addis Ababa*

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I. INTRODUCTORY NOTE

This booklet captures the essential activities and accomplishments of the Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission in 2014.

The appointment of the Special Envoy came soon after the outbreak of the ongoing crisis in South Sudan in 2013, following reports of the tremendous suffering faced by the population and in particular, women and children as a result of the conflict.

In March 2014, the African Union set up a Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan to which the Chairperson appointed the Special Envoy as Commissioner responsible to look closely, and on the ground, at the plight of women and children in the crisis. Participation in the South Sudan Commission illustrated the urgent nature of the Special Envoy's mandate that primarily aims to end the victimization of women and children during conflicts and to advocate for their participation in peacebuilding and state building processes.

From the outset, the Office of the Special Envoy has adopted an action-oriented approach focused on understanding the realities of conflict affected communities through direct interaction with them to offer solidarity and, close consultation to hear and understand their views on resolving their situations.

To this end, the Special Envoy undertook solidarity missions to the Central African Republic, Somalia and Nigeria. In all the interactions, the Special Envoy emphasized ending violence against women in conflict and post-conflict situations and the importance of enhancing women's participation in decision-making at all levels so as to be fully included in shaping their societies and nation's future.

These activities were successfully carried out within an intense and short period with the generous support provided by the Bureau of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNWomen). Mention must also be made of the support from various African Union Commission Departments such as the Peace and Security Department and the Department of Political Affairs.

I wish to thank them profoundly and reiterate our utmost commitment to the cause of women protection and participation.

Addis Ababa, 26 January 2015

Bineta Diop,

Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security of The Chairperson of The African Union Commission

II. BACKGROUND

At the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the OAU/ AU in 2013, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), Mme Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma underscored that the next 50 years of the Union would witness a commitment to women's rights, gender equality and women, peace and security.

As part of this commitment, the Chairperson of the AUC appointed the very first AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security, Mme Bineta Diop, in January 2014. Mme Diop, a long standing civil society women's advocate and activist was appointed to promote the protection and advancement of the rights of women and children, in particular those affected by violent conflicts. In addition, her appointment aimed at promoting the active participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution and peace building. Indeed, the Special Envoy was appointed as part of the effort to "ensure that the voices of women and the vulnerable are heard much more clearly in peace building and conflict resolution".

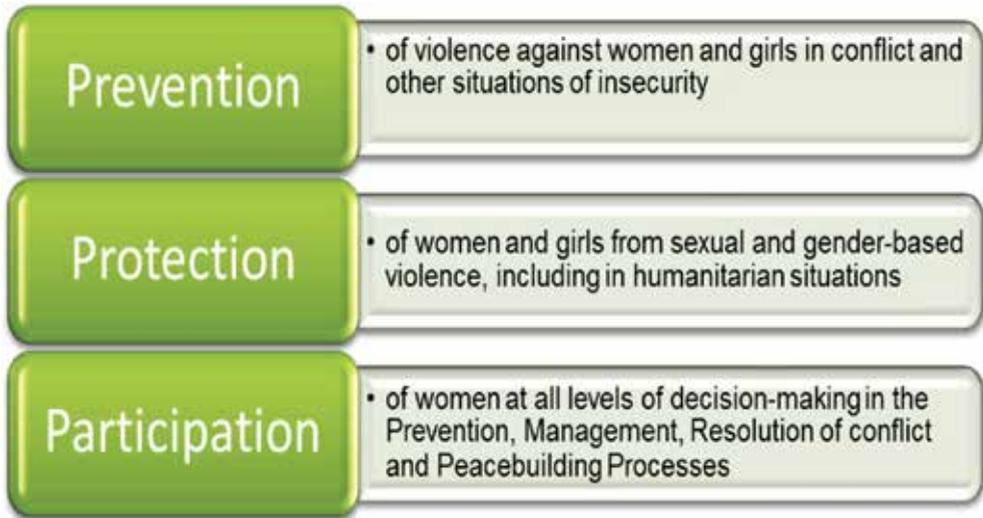
Several AU policies and normative frameworks have come into existence in the recent past to provide strong foundations from which member states can pursue more robust efforts towards protection, prevention and participation of women in addressing women, peace and security concerns.

Events in 2014 continued to demonstrate that more efforts to protect women and children are required. Indeed, during visits to the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Somalia and Nigeria, the Special Envoy observed first-hand the sufferings of women and children in those conflict-affected countries.

III. SPECIAL ENVOY MANDATE

The mandate of the Special Envoy is a political mandate centered on the promotion of the protection and advancement of the rights of women in particular those affected by violent conflicts in Africa. In addition the Special Envoy's work aims to close the gap between policy and implementation.

The mandate focuses on the following areas:



In addition, the Special Envoy is intended to support other departments within the African Union to mainstream gender into the Africa Peace and Security Architecture (APSA and the African Governance Architecture (AGA).

IV. OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

4.1 Goal and Objectives

The overall goal of the Special Envoy's programme is to accelerate the implementation of a Women, Peace and Security agenda in Africa and contribute to the overall African Peace and Security Architecture.

Specific Objectives of the Special Envoy

- *Develop the continental framework focused on the Women, Peace and Security agenda;*
- *Advocate for the continental framework's implementation at regional and continental level;*
- *Monitor, evaluate and report on the implementation of the framework;*
- *Promote women's leadership and initiatives while showcasing best practices for replication at various levels;*
- *Strengthen the effort of the AU on Women, Peace and Security for better impact; and*
- *Build partnership with various stakeholders including developmental agencies, and peace and security partners.*

4.2 Strategies

There are four main strategies for achieving the objectives of the Special Envoy mandate:



V. KEY ACTIVITIES IN 2014

5.1 Policy Implementation

Several policies and normative frameworks exist at both the national and regional level to address women, peace and security. Some of these include:

- *The African Union Gender Policy framework;*
- *The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, "Maputo Protocol";*

- *The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) to accelerate gender equality at all levels of society; and*
- *The AUC declaration of 2010-2020 as the African Women’s Decade.*

Implementation of such instruments has been slow over the years. The Special envoy Office is developing a results-oriented continental framework to accelerate the implementation of Women, Peace and Security instruments and sensitize Member States for the adoption of the agenda at all decision-making levels.

In that vein, the Office convened a ***consultative meeting of women’s groups and experts, followed by an Open session of the Peace and Security Council.***

Key Outcomes
Establishment of a nucleus of women’s organisations and experts as a base for regular consultations with women to build ownership of the undertakings
Preparation of a questionnaire to be used in the process of implementation surveys
Preparation of submission to Open Session of the PSC
PSC request to develop a Continental Results Framework to monitor the implementation by AU Member States and other relevant stakeholders of the various instruments and other commitments on women, peace and security in Africa
PSC request for regular briefings on the activities of the Special Envoy on women, peace and security including through open sessions

**476th Meeting of the Peace and Security Council,
Addis Ababa, 16 December**

(Under the PSC Presidency of The Republic of the Gambia)

Council urged the AU Commission, through the coordination of the Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security to formulate a Continental Results Framework to monitor the implementation by AU Member States and other relevant stakeholders of the various instruments and other commitments on women, peace and security in Africa.

Council and Participants recognized the responsibility of AU Member States for ensuring the protection of women and children in situations

where they are threatened or affected by violence, in line with relevant AU and international instruments. Council and Participants further recognized the fact that, whilst the necessary instruments for the protection of women and children in armed conflict and for the promotion of their rights exist, the pace of their implementation is deplorably slow. Council accordingly, called all stakeholders concerned to fully implement them in the promotion of the rights of women and children in conflict situations.

Excerpt from Press Statement on Peace and Security Council 476th Meeting, 16 December 2014, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Way Forward

The office of the Special Envoy aims to report back to PSC with a draft implementation framework in the first quarter of 2015



5.2 Advocacy

The advocacy aspect of the programme aims to promote women's participation and leadership and effective integration of their agenda in peace processes. The strategy uses every opportunity to amplify the voices of women in conflict situations and to support women's initiatives.

In 2014, The Special Envoy undertook three solidarity missions to Central African Republic, Somalia and Nigeria.

5.2.1 Central African Republic

The Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security, HE Mme Bineta Diop and the Executive Director of UN Women, HE Dr. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, undertook a joint solidarity mission to the Central African Republic in May 2014. The mission comprised also the Economic Community



Joint AU/ UN Women Solidarity Mission to the Central African Republic - May 2014:

Centre - President of CAR, Catherine Samba-Panza, left - UN Women Executive Director, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka; right - AU Special Envoy, Women, Peace and Security, Bineta Diop

of Central African States (ECCAS) and the African Union Department of Peace and Security (PSD). During this visit, the delegation met with several key stakeholders including the President, Mme Catherine Samba-Panza, members of the International Contact Group, African ambassadors, UN Agencies and various ministries. The Special Envoy and UN Women partners also met with women’s groups within the internally displaced people’s camps to deliver messages of solidarity and to gain an understanding of the impact of the conflict on these groups. In addition, the delegation met with women who have been at the forefront of reconciliation initiatives in the Central African Republic.

<i>Key Outcomes</i>
Engagement with relevant political and government stakeholders in CAR
Interaction with Central African women directly affected by the violence and conflict and living in IDP camps
Support to remarkable initiatives are already being undertaken by civil society, the youth and especially women at the grass root level
Discussion of launch of an AU and ECCAS joint long-term project, “Wali Tisiriri” (women for peace), to support women of CAR participate in the peacemaking, peacebuilding and reconstruction of the country

5.2.2 Somalia

In November 2014, the Special Envoy undertook a solidarity mission to Somalia to convey support to the women of Somalia, advocate for their needs at the highest levels and reiterate the necessity to prioritise women’s active participation in the rebuilding of the country. The visit was



Members of Somali Women NGOs

undertaken with the support of AU member states and included meetings and convenings with the President and First Lady of Somalia and relevant government representatives. The Special Envoy met with women’s political caucus members, women leaders, women entrepreneurs and women’s NGOs, traditional elders and religious leaders. The visit included interaction with the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) peacekeepers where the Special Envoy placed emphasis on the protection role that peacekeepers play.

The Special Envoy delegation included the following:

- HE Amb. Ann Namakau Mutelo, Ambassador of the Republic of Namibia in Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union Commission (AUC) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Member of the Peace and Security Council (PSC)
- Mme Juliene Lusenge, President, SOFEPADI, Women Umbrella Organization, Kinshasa, DR Congo
- Ms. Mumbi Mathangani, AUC Staff
- Mr. Marsden Momanyi, AUC Staff
- Media

<i>Key Outcomes</i>
Conveyed the need to increase the participation of women in political processes in Somalia at the highest level of state and government including the Head of State
Engagement with variety of stakeholders including members of civil society, traditional elders and religious leaders to gain an understanding of their views on the development priorities of women in post-conflict Somalia
Exploring ways to strengthen participation of women in elections in 2016

Support to AMISOM and Reiteration of AU Zero tolerance policy on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

Way Forward

The office of the Special Envoy will continue to engage with women's groups towards the increased participation of women in political processes, with a particular emphasis on peace building and post conflict development and recognition of Somali women as agents of change. In addition, the Special Envoy will continue to emphasise the AU Zero tolerance policy on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

5.2.3 Nigeria

The Special Envoy travelled to Nigeria to meet women affected by the terrorist activities of the militant islamist group, Boko Haram. During the visit, the Special Envoy echoed the voices of the women of Nigeria in their efforts to end all gender based violence and in particular, the sufferings of the Chibok girls abducted by members of the Boko Haram earlier in the year. The Special Envoy held a roundtable discussion with members of the Women, Peace and Security Network of Nigeria and met with members of the "Bring Back Our Girls" Campaign. They also met with government officials, members of the diplomatic corps and the media.

The mission in Nigeria was co-organized with the Commissioner for Women and Social Affairs of the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) and the support of UN Women and Femmes Africa Solidarite (FAS).



AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security with school girls - Northern Nigeria

The Special Envoy delegation included the following:

- HE Amb. Diallo Amina Djibo, Ambassador of the Republic of Niger to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union Commission (AUC) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Member of the Peace and Security Council (PSC)
- Justice Sophia Akuffo: Former President of the African Court of Human and People's Rights
- Ms. Harriette Williams Bright: Executive Director, Femmes Africa Solidarite and Board Member, Gender is My Gender Campaign -GIMAC
- Mr John Ikubaje: AUC Staff
- Mr. Charles Akinwale Adedayo, AUC Staff



Consultation with "Bring back our Girls" Campaign Members

Key Outcomes

Support to Women of Nigeria in their fight for the release of the Chibok girls; albeit with a sense that AU was rather late to respond

Active interaction with "Women, Peace and Security Network of Nigeria" with prospects for collaborative action in view of upcoming elections

Highlighted the plight of IDPs, especially the increased vulnerability of women and children as a result of the activities of Boko Haram

Interaction with schools to stress the importance of education especially for girls in the face of the Boko Haram campaign against education

Way Forward

In response to the requests of various stakeholders, the Special Envoy

will continue to amplify the voice of the Chibok girls at every level and especially with Heads of State and Government of the AU. In addition, the office of the Special Envoy will continue to monitor the situation of IDPs and provide support where possible to women's organisations in affected states of Yobe, Bornu and Adamawa during the forthcoming elections.

5.2.4 Special Assignment - African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan

In March 2014, the Peace and Security Council passed a resolution for the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan. The Commission was mandated to investigate the genesis of the conflict that continues to tear apart the newly established Republic of South Sudan and unveil the human rights violations committed during the crisis with the aim of making recommendations on ways to address the crisis and rebuild the country. The Commission was led by HE Olusegun Obasanjo, Former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The Special Envoy was appointed as one of the five members of the Commission with a particular focus on the gender aspects of the overall Commission mandate and a view to the violations perpetrated against women. The Special Envoy spent a significant part of her time in South Sudan in 2014.



Special Envoy in Nasir, South Sudan with UNMISS Peacekeepers and IGAD Monitors

5.3 Building synergy within the AUC

A key component of the Special Envoy's mandate is to multiply the effect of the ongoing efforts within the women, peace and security agenda and to ensure that individual activities within various departments of the AUC compliment and build upon one another. To this end, the office of the Special Envoy held regular meetings with the gender focal persons in relevant departments to gain a clearer understanding of the various

departmental priorities, plan activities and provide feedback on initiatives implemented. In addition, the Special Envoy invited Member States sitting on the PSC, Namibia and Niger, to participate in Solidarity missions. She also invited Experts from the Department of Peace and Security and the Department of Political Affairs as well as members of the civil society.

Key Outcomes
Establishment of interdepartmental approach to implementing women, peace and security agenda
Development of feedback loops and regular information sharing platform

Way Forward

The Special Envoy will continue to contribute to and participate in ongoing activities and initiatives to further the work of women, peace and security in Africa. These activities exist at the national, regional and global level and she will work with state, non-state, regional and UN entities. Where activities are already underway, the Special Envoy will participate and ensure all relevant elements of her mandate are incorporated.

5.4 Building partnerships

Under this strategy, the Office of the Special Envoy will develop linkages with various partners in pursuit of 3 key objectives:

- *Build the capacity of individuals and groups working on issues related to women, peace and security;*
- *Generate and share knowledge; and*
- *Mobilize financial resources.*

Key Outcomes
Participation in the development of the International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict that definitively features the input of Africans.
Fostering relationships with journalists with an interest in issues of women, peace and security and with a commitment to reporting accurately and knowledgeably on the same.
Developing relationships with universities and research institutions where knowledge is generated and providing alternative narratives on women, peace and security

Way Forward

The office of the Special Envoy will continue to nurture and deepen existing partnerships and engage with various networks for the advancement of the continental goals on women, peace and security. In addition, the Special Envoy will mobilise human resources and create a data base of expertise, skills and solid networks for the promotion and implementation of Women, Peace and security agenda on the continent.

VI. Office of the Special Envoy

The Office of the Special Envoy intends to be a compact and synergetic office working to deliver on the mandate of the Special Envoy. In addition to work under the strategic pillars of the programme, the office covers cross-cutting issues:

6.1 Communication

In order to effectively achieve the mandate of the Special Envoy, the office has developed a robust, consistent and effective communication strategy. A variety of methods were used in 2014 to communicate her activities including press conferences, interviews by different media houses, social media platforms such as YouTube videos, twitter handles and press releases.

6.2 Research

The primary research activities undertaken by the Special Envoy during 2014 centered on her work during the AU Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan.

6.3 Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

At the outset of the Special Envoy's mandate, the office engaged in a scoping and mapping exercise within the AUC in order to inform the strategic and programmatic approach. The Special Envoy undertook this exercise with focal persons from the various AUC departments working on issues related to women, peace and security.

Key Outcomes

Effective communication, popularisation and sensitisation of the existence and purpose of the office of the AU Special Envoy on women, peace and security

Increased visibility to issues of women, peace and security in Africa and communication that Africa takes these seriously

Developed a comprehensive programme for the office of the Special Envoy, with clear goals, objectives and strategies for achieving the mandate

Way Forward

- *In 2015, the Special Envoy Office will endeavour to finalize the results framework and submit it to the Peace and Security Council.*
- *The Office will follow up to ensure the implementation of commitments taken in 2014, organise follow up missions to countries affected by conflict and insecurity.*
- *The office of the Special Envoy will also continue to undertake solidarity missions to support women and raise profile on their priority issues.*



Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security
Bureau of the Chairperson
African Union Commission
P.O. Box 3243
Addis, Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel: 251 11 518 2022
Email: DiopB@africa-union.org, ButeraJ@africa-union.org
www.peaceau.org
www.au.int