

COMMUNIQUE

REGIONAL DIALOGUE ON ENHANCING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN PEACE AND SECURITY IN WEST AFRICA

Participants from women's organizations, representatives of government, the United Nations (UN), regional organizations and others attending the Regional Dialogue on Enhancing Women's Leadership in Peace and Security in West Africa met at the Golden Gate Hotel in Monrovia, Liberia from November 6th to 7th, 2012 to share knowledge, exchange ideas and best practices on enhancing women's leadership in consolidating peace in West Africa in the framework of implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Conflict Prevention Framework (2008) and Revised 15th Protocol of the Mano River Union (MRU) (2012)

Having considered the issues of women, peace and security in the West African sub-region, in particular the urgent and critical cases of Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali and Nigeria make the following recommendations amongst others:

Governments should

- Provide all necessary material and political support to realize the recommendations of this Regional Dialogue.

UN, regional organizations and women's groups should

- Immediately come together to plan and implement peace missions to Guinea-Bissau and Mali in the shortest possible time that shall include women mediators trained by UNOWA and UN Women in 2011 for the purposes of solidarity, investigation, training and dialogue.
- Take immediate action to utilize the upcoming 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence to highlight the situation of women and girls in Guinea-Bissau and Mali and to call for immediate global action to the conflict.

And more generally:

United Nations should

- Strengthen support for expanded recruitment of women into the security sector, especially those working at the borders and ensure that security personnel are properly vetted.
- Prioritise women's mental well-being, especially as an integral part of peace consolidation and peacebuilding programmes in West Africa.
- Support the deployment of women who have received conflict mediation training to support peace consolidation efforts in the West Africa sub-region.
- Ensure that all transitions and draw down plans and processes take into consideration the need for local ownership and sustainability.

ECOWAS should

- Institutionalize women's access to the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council and the Union Ministerial Council of the MRU and their participation in ECOWAS peace missions.
- Synchronize with the MRU and intensify strategies for communication and information sharing on women, peace and security issues across the sub-region.
- Facilitate effective free movement of citizens across borders.

Mano River Union should

- Institutionalize women's access to the Union Ministerial Council of the MRU and their participation in MRU peace and security initiatives.
- Synchronize with the ECOWAS and intensify strategies for communication and information sharing on women, peace and security issues across the sub-region.
- Facilitate effective free movement of citizens across borders.

Women's organizations should

- To encourage reflection and adoption of peer review processes that will enhance accountability, transparency and internal democracy within women's organizations.
- To increase knowledge sharing, capacity building, mentoring and outreach in order to broaden young women's involvement in peace and security in West Africa.
- Identify capacity gaps and train women to address current and emerging security threats.

Monrovia, 7th November 2012