Roadmap for the elimination of violence against women and girls

Statement

We, members of the parliaments of Cameroon, Guinea Conakry, Mali, Niger, Central African Republic, Senegal and Togo, recognise the importance of investing in ending violence against women and girls to achieve human and social development.

As the outcome of our workshop, we commit to support efforts in our respective countries to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 5, which aims at achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls and to:

5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.
5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

In order to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls, we commit to:

• Ensure that the national legislative framework acknowledges the link between violence against women and gender discrimination; that violence against women and girls is both a cause and a consequence of gender inequality and discrimination, and that a transformation of gender relations is necessary in order to achieve a more equal and just society.

• Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

• Adopt a comprehensive legal framework that criminalises all forms of violence against women and girls and includes provisions on prevention, protection and support for survivors, prosecution and accountability of perpetrators.

• Sign, ratify and implement international and regional treaties, such as the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol, and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol).

• Revise existing legislation and/or enact new laws that meet international standards.

• Acknowledge that, in efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls, prevention of violence plays a particularly important role, and that efforts are needed to elaborate ambitious policies in this area.

• Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation

• Ensure that laws and policies addressing these harmful practices take into account best practices in the region and adopt a comprehensive approach encompassing provision of comprehensive health care services for survivors, prevention measures, measures to raise awareness and understanding among all stakeholders (including outreach to community and religious leaders and communication in local languages), and sanctions for perpetrators. Measures can include behaviour change communication, the inclusion of information on harmful practices in school
curricula, training for service providers, emergency hotlines and capacity-building measures in the criminal justice system.

- Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels, and advocate for a gender-sensitive, multi-sectoral and participatory approach when drawing up our budgets.

- Ensure that provisions for regular and consistent monitoring and evaluation are included in laws and policies, in order to measure progress and to assess the need for legislative change (including databases and statistics documenting violence against women and girls).

- Exercise budgetary powers to ensure that allocated resources match the requirements for effective implementation of national laws and policies.

- Engage and involve all actors concerned with the implementation of the legislation, ensuring particularly that civil society organisations are involved in law and policy development, implementation and monitoring.

- Motivate the regional economic communities to put gender inequality and violence against women and girls at the centre of their agenda.

- Advocate for the harmonization of legislation at the regional level and explore the possibility of developing a framework law on ending violence against women and girls at the continental level.

We will continue to advocate for the advancement of cooperation programmes and political dialogue interventions for women and girls of West and Central Africa. We will endeavour to ensure that international agreements on ending violence against women and girls are discussed in our respective parliaments. Our parliamentary networks on population and development, and our hosting organisations, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Future Council (WFC), the African Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (FPA) and the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF), will support the follow-up to this commitment in our parliaments at the national, regional and continental level.

Together, let us build a world free from violence and discrimination against women and girls.

SIGNATORIES:

Hon. Ms. Marie-Rose Nguini Effa, MP, Cameroon,
President of the African Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (FPA)

Hon. Mr. Edgard Mbaïkoua Bemaïde, Member of the National Transitional Council, Central African Republic

Hon. Mr. Holomo Koni Kourouma, MP, Guinea Conakry

Hon. Prof. Mr. Kalilou Ouattara, MP, Mali

Hon. Dr. Mr. Moussa Zangaou, MP, Niger

Hon. Dr. Ms. Mame Mbayame Gueye Dione, MP, Senegal

Hon. Mr. Seydou Diallo, MP, Senegal

Hon. Ms. Manavi Isabelle Ameganvi, MP, Togo