

African Women and Peace, Position of African Women in Beijing August-September 1995

Recommendations

We, the African women participating in African Women and Peace Day commit ourselves to following recommendations and transmit them to the NGOs engaged in the drafting of the global NGOs document for consideration.

1. All African women, in full awareness of the diversity in the way in which government, religions and cultures have developed in the African continent, demand that in order to maintain peace, every government formalises and include peace reconciliation to be part of the school curriculum.
2. We, African women demand that the traditional mechanisms for prevention, peace resolution be rehabilitated and institutionalised and that women be fully involved in these processes.
3. Conscious that refugees and displaced as well as the population receiving them are both victims of the same situation of war, we demand that :
 - innocents be separated from the murderers who took part in genocides in order to back up the wishes of refugees and displaced to go back to their home countries or the regions they are from;
 - possessing and acquiring arms in refugees' camps be prohibited;
 - the international community give legal, material and psychological assistance to the victims of genocides and conflicts.
4. In order for women to fulfill their role as peace-makers, we need and environment which offers, promotes and supports justice and equity at all levels.
5. In this spirit, we commit ourselves to intensify their efforts to help create an atmosphere which promotes ethnic and religious diversity and enables all African women to be peace-makers.
6. Considering that justice is the backbone of national reconciliation and lasting peace, we demand that the authors of genocides be promptly brought to court and judged according to International Law and standards.

7. Giving tribute to the United Nations as peace-makers and peace-keepers on our continent, we insist that UN-missions be neutral and equally benefit the populations involved in a conflict.
8. Aware that women are the first teachers of children girls and boys, we call upon our sisters and reaffirm our commitment not to promote violence but a culture of peace, justice and tolerance.
9. Concerned by the fact that peace is often a state of very short duration, we insist that the indirect causes of a conflict should be addressed in any conflict resolution process, so that national reconciliation be not threatened by other deep-rooted conflicts.
10. Considering that African women have been excluded from negotiation processes, we demand our full participation in peace mediation, peace promotion and peace keeping processes.
11. We also demand full participation of women in all institutions of the United Nations, including in the UN Security Council. We are calling for an implementation of the 'Agenda for Peace' by Boutros Ghali based on preventive conflict resolutions and according to women's perspectives.
12. Concerned by the fact that religious antagonisms are reinforced or artificially created, we urge the States of the world not to use religious differences as political tool.
13. We urge the abolition of all forms of slavery
14. We reaffirm that all African people have the right to decide upon their future according to democratic principles and urge all African governments to respect this right.
15. Concerned by the situation of children and women who have been forced to fight in wars, we insist that no warring faction should forcefully recruit anyone, and urge that all children combatant be demobilized unconditionally.
16. Conscious of the negative effects of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), especially on women, we therefore urge for the cancellation of our external debts and for transparency, accountability of all financial and monetary institutions as well as for the respect of all international Human Rights conventions.
17. Reaffirming our faith in the ability of African women to be equal partners in the process leading to the fulfilment of our aspirations, we call upon all African women to unite and strengthen our solidarity in order to reduce poverty and build up our communities hand in hand with our brothers, in order to assure that all African people can live in dignity.
18. We insist that all our African governments, in collaboration with the existing Women's Peace organisations, implement the Kampala Peace Action Plan.

19. Aware of the strength we can gather through joined actions and unity, we call on the various African Movements for Peace to affiliate with the existing networks for peace in Africa and demand that FEMNET and UNIFEM collaborate in this efforts in order to create a central coordinating body.