

AFRICAN UNION



UNION AFRICAINE



WPSI
Women, Peace & Security Institute

Round Table Discussion on Religious Radicalization & Violent Extremism and Executive Election Observation Training in the Context of the 15th Anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325



Organized Jointly by the Office of the AUC Chairperson's Special Envoy on WPS and the Women, Peace and Security Institute (WPSI) of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC)

October 5-8, 2015



Beyond the rhetoric, adequate mechanisms and accountability systems must be put in place to help translate good intentions into good deeds. As the Special Envoy rightly pointed out, "... We need solemn deliverables, no more solemn declarations."

HE Bineta Diop
African Union Commission
Chairperson's Special Envoy on
Women, Peace and Security

Table of Content

Acronyms	1
Executive Summary	2
Communique	4
Part One	
1.0 Background	6
1.1 Women, Peace and Security	6
1.2 AUC's Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security (AUC-SE-WPS)	6
1.3 Women, Peace and Security Institute (WPSI)	7
1.4 Program Objectives	7
1.5 Program Partnership and Linkages	7
1.6 Methodology	7
1.7 Program Participants	8
1.8 Outline of Report	8
Part Two	
2.0 Day 1: Roundtable Discussion - Summary	9
2.1 Opening Session	9
2.2 The Main Presentations	10
2.2.1 Violent Conflicts and Threats to Peace and Security in Africa: Overview	10
2.2.2 Religious Radicalization and Violent Extremism: Is There a Gender Dimension?	10
2.2.3 Strategies for Countering violent Extremism and Women's Participation: Country Examples – Boko Haram in Nigeria and Al Shabab in Somalia	11
2.2.4 Emerging Issue of the Use of Female Suicide Bombers: Excerpts from Ongoing Research	12
3.0 Key Points of Discussions	13
4.0 Recommendations: Strategies for Increasing Women's Participation in Peace and Security	15
5.0 The Way Forward	18
Part Three	
6.0 Executive Election Observation and Dispute Resolution Training	19
7.0 Facilitating Opportunities for Trained Women's Greater Participation in Election Observation and Election Dispute Resolution: The Way Forward	19
8.0 Conclusion	20
9.0 Appendices	23

AU: African Union
AUC: African Union Commission
AUC-SE-WPS: AUC's Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security
BBOG: Bring Back Our Girls
CSO: Civil Society Organization
ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States
FAS: Femmes Afrique Solidarité
GEWE: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
IDP: Internally Displaced Person
KAIPTC: Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre
OAU: Organization of African Unity
PSC: Peace and Security Council
REC: Regional Economic Community
UN: United Nations
UNSC: United Nations Security Council
UNSCR: United Nations Security Council Resolution
WPS: Women, Peace and Security
WPSI: Women, Peace and Security Institute

One of the strongest statements at the continental level showing the determination to mainstream gender and bring women's voices and perspectives into Africa's peace and security discourse is the designation in January 2014 of a Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security by the Chairperson of the Commission. This, coming nearly midway through the women's decade is a testament to the resolve to move gender issues and women's interests from the peripheries to mainstream. With these measures, there is reason for optimism about women's prospects in the development debate within the African context.

These hopeful trends notwithstanding, women in Africa continue to bear the brunt of the horrific impact of war and terror, as recent occurrences in the CAR, DRC, South Sudan and Nigeria among others show. The insurgence of religious radicalization and violent extremism on the continent also appear to affect women disproportionately. Women's limited access to peace processes also have implications for bringing their voices and perspectives to bear on efforts aimed at addressing these emerging challenges. The two-tier, four-day program jointly organized by the Office of the AUC's Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security (AUC-SE-WPS) and the Women, Peace and Security Institute (WPSI) of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in the context of the 15th Anniversary of the Resolution 1325 served as a platform to examine these threats using case studies of Nigeria and Somalia and identify strategies for harnessing and bringing women's expertise and perspectives to bear on efforts at combating these phenomena. The program also provided an opportunity to build the capacity of high ranking African women in election observation and election dispute resolution. The training highlighted election observation as a key mechanism of election dispute resolution, the importance of stakeholder consultations and the critical role that women play in preventing election related violence. Participants were given training on the women's situation room model which uses the triple 'M' factors of mobilization, mediation and monitoring as a mechanism for preventing election related conflict.

This report presents the proceedings of the roundtable discussion and the training on special election observation and election dispute resolution. It gives a summary of the various presentations of the roundtable and highlights the key points of discussions. It also outlines recommendations, both for combating religious radicalization and violent extremism as well as strategies for facilitating women's greater engagement and participation in efforts at countering the twin phenomena. A summary of the topics covered in the training and recommendations for ensuring gender balance, women's access and participation in election observation missions on the continent are also included in this report along with the communiqué issued at the end of the program.

The programme offered the following key policy recommendations, both for combating radicalization and extremism and for increasing women's participation in peace efforts, including election observation missions.

1. Recruitment, training and use of women in intelligence and peace processes;
2. Initiation and support of advocacy measures to help call attention to the threats posed by religious radicalization and violent extremism;
3. Establishment and engagement of community watch teams (which would include both women, men and the youth);
4. Creation of legal instruments and mechanisms to regulate extremist religious practices;
5. Promotion of youth economic empowerment;
6. Setting up of a team of eminent women envoys to go on solidarity missions to support women caught in violent conflict and in distress;
7. Appointment of more female envoys and special representatives in peacekeeping;
8. Ensuring gender parity (50/50) in the deployment of election observers;
9. Deployment of more women on long term election observation missions;



HE Bineta Diop and HE Lulama Xingwana, High Commissioner, South African High Commission (images from the opening session & roundtable discussion)

10. Building the capacity of women in areas of relevance to conflict prevention and resolution in electoral processes; and
11. Conducting research on issues of religious radicalisation and violent extremism and gender issues in elections.

Critical to the implementation of these recommendations is the availability of funds to resource these initiatives. As such, allocation of funds to address gender issues in peace and security is strongly recommended. More specifically, it is recommended that member states earmark and approve budgets for AUC peace and security initiatives.

Critical to the implementation of these recommendations is the availability of funds to resource these initiatives. As such, allocation of funds to address gender issues in peace and security is strongly recommended. More specifically, it is recommended that member states earmark and approve budgets for AUC peace and security initiatives.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION AND SPECIAL TRAINING ON ELECTION OBSERVATION AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION TO MARK THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADOPTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325

WE, a group of 30 African women from Burundi, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, and South Sudan came together in Accra to participate in a 4-day, two-tier program organized at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center (KA IPTC) to commemorate the 15th Anniversary of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325;

COMMENDING the Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Women, Peace and Security Institute (WPSI) of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KA IPTC) for co-organizing the event to discuss the role of African women in combating religious radicalization and violent extremism on the continent and to train senior women in election observation and dispute resolution;

THANKING the African Union Commission (AUC), the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KA IPTC), the UN Women Office in South Sudan and the South African High Commission in Ghana for the support extended in the organization of the roundtable and the training workshop;

COGNIZANT of the growing threat posed by religious radicalism and violent extremism to peace and security on the continent and noting with concern that women on the continent continue to bear the brunt of the horrors of religious extremism and violent conflict;

DISTURBED profoundly by the fact that more than a year after the abduction of the Chibok Girls, they remain captives of religious extremists under uncertain conditions and unknown locations in Northern Nigeria;

COGNIZANT of the persistent gaps that exists between the rhetoric of resolutions, declarations, and policies on the one hand and concrete actions to redress women's disadvantage, under representation and undervalued contributions to peace processes on the other;

WELCOMING the call for the formulation of a continental results framework on women, peace and security in Africa and women demand for "no more solemn declarations but solemn deliverables" in order to accelerate the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda in Africa;

HEREBY Pledge to:

- Participate in efforts to raise the voices of women and their roles in conflict prevention, management and resolution and peace building processes and advance the rights of women on the continent;
- Identify and mobilize women to be trained and participate in election observation missions across the continent so as to significantly increase the number of women election observers;
- Advocate for and mobilize a network of centres of excellence on women, peace and security with the aim to build synergies and strengthen the areas of training and research;
- Contribute to the development of partnership with women's groups and other stakeholders from across the continent and to mobilize their expertise, knowledge and experience to accelerate the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda;

We CALL for and **DEMAND URGENT ACTION** on the following:

1. Increased funds to address gender issues in peace and security;
2. Setting up of a team of eminent women envoys to go on solidarity missions to empower women caught in violent conflict and in distress;
3. Appointing more female envoys and special representatives in peacekeeping;
4. Ensuring gender parity, i.e. 50/50 deployment of males and females (particularly those from civil society) on observation missions;
5. Deployment of more women on long-term election observation missions;
6. Creation of a database of skilled women to participate in election observation to help identify and address gender related issues;
7. Conducting of research on issues of religious radicalism and violent extremism and gender in elections;
8. Building the capacity of women in areas of relevance to conflict prevention and resolution in electoral processes;
9. Facilitation of Training of Trainers programs that can be cascaded to reach as many beneficiaries as possible;
10. Promotion of South-South cooperation to foster knowledge and experience sharing among women; and
11. Documentation and replication of the Women's Situation Room model to suit local situation.

Accra, 8 October 2015

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

In October 2000, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 to help pave the way for women's greater involvement in peace efforts. This was a landmark recognition of the disproportionate impact of violent conflict on women and their largely undervalued and under-utilized contribution to conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. The resolution enjoins national governments to facilitate mechanisms for women's full and active participation as agents of peace.

The adoption of the resolution and related subsequent ones brought about intense activism and advocacy for the inclusion of a gender perspective in peace and security processes and for policy and action. At the continental level, African leaders at the Inaugural Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in July 2002 took a historic decision on gender parity. They implemented this decision with the adoption of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa – commonly referred to as the Maputo Protocol – with the attendant election of five female and five male Commissioners in 2003. The designation of 2010 – 2020 as the African Women's Decade with the aim of advancing "gender equality by accelerating the implementation of the Dakar, Beijing and AU Assembly Decisions on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) through a dual top down and bottom up approach" to ensure grassroots participation, also provided a critical framework for mainstreaming women's needs as a core continental agenda. These initiatives sought to facilitate women's greater representation and participation in those processes at the national, regional and international levels.

However, obstacles to women's full access and participation persist even with these proactive initiatives and frameworks. Thus, measures need to be put in place for achieving concrete results that empower women on the continent.

1.2 AUC'S SPECIAL ENVOY ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY (AUC-SE-WPS)

In January 2014 the AUC Chairperson appointed a Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security to spearhead efforts at integrating the gender dimension and women's voices and roles in conflict prevention and ensure that they play an active role in peace processes as well as advancing their rights, particularly of those affected by conflict. The appointment was both in recognition of, and a response to the gaps and obstacles that have continued to inhibit women's full and active participation in the continental peace architecture. The naming of a Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security at the continental level has contributed significantly to galvanizing support for the African women's empowerment agenda in the lead up to the declaration of 2015 as the Year of Women's Empowerment and Development Towards Agenda 2063. Having a Special Envoy to champion issues on women, peace and security provides an important platform for rallying the perspectives of female WPS advocates, experts and actors from across the continent. It serves as a vital and strategic link to the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU to ensure that African women's voices can be heard directly and their priorities and interests can be taken into account in determining strategies for securing peace and stability on the continent.

Following her appointment, HE Madam Bineta Diop has undertaken a number of initiatives to help raise women's voices and draw attention to their concerns, particularly with respect to their security and protection in conflict regions. She has undertaken solidarity missions to conflict areas like the Central African Republic, Somalia, South Sudan and Nigeria where some two hundred girls were kidnapped from their school. The Envoy in a bid to better understand the operations of the AUC, introduce her mandate, and establish linkages to the various departments and divisions within the Commission, her office held a number of meetings with some of the key actors. In December 2014, she also held a two-day meeting with a number of women's networks and experts to seek technical support and consultation on women, peace and security in order to formulate

strategies that help to empower women in peacebuilding. The discussions of the meeting which was held on the eve of the Open Session of the AU PSC, focused on women's vulnerabilities and the particular challenges they face in conflict situations as well as their role in building peace across the continent. The forum served to harness women's perspectives, particularly with regard to Agenda 2063 and the Campaign to Silence the Guns by 2020, which she presented to the PSC as key inputs for the implementation of her mandate.

The consultation meeting provided an important platform for mobilizing the expertise, knowledge and experience of women's networks and served to build partnerships for the implementation of the Envoy's mandate going forward.

1.3 WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY INSTITUTE (WPSI)

The Women, Peace and Security Institute (WPSI) of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) is an institutional platform established in 2010 with the primary aim of supporting the full implementation of Resolution 1325 (and 1820) in Africa. It functions as a mechanism for the expansion of technical capacity through training, research and analysis on women, peace and security within the broader framework of African peace and security architecture. As a follow up to the December 2014 consultative meeting, the WPSI and the Office of the Special Envoy undertook to establish a collaboration and pursue efforts to strengthen capacity in the women, peace and security agenda in Africa.

1.4 PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The roundtable and executive election observation training were aimed at providing support for the ongoing efforts of the Special Envoy at bringing women's voices, perspectives and contributions to bear on the continent's peace and security processes. The roundtable was aimed at:

- Enhancing understanding of the role of women in ongoing efforts at combating religious radicalization and violent extremism in Africa;
- Identifying opportunities and strategies for a greater participation of women in combating religious radicalism and violent extremism on the continent; and
- Making recommendations for facilitating and advancing women's participation in preventing and addressing religious radicalization and violent extremism in Africa.
- The executive election observation and election dispute resolution training sought to:
- Build the capacity of high ranking African women in preparing them for roles in election observation and dispute resolution;
- Enhance skills of women in mediating election-related conflicts; and
- Increase the pool of skilled women that can be deployed for election observation and dispute resolution in Africa.

1.5 PROGRAM PARTNERSHIP AND LINKAGES

The program was jointly organized by the Office of the AUC-SE-WPS and the WPSI of the KAIPTC to mark the 15th anniversary of UNSCR 1325. The event is the first in a series of planned collaborative program initiatives to be implemented jointly between the Office of the AUC-SE-WPS and a network of Training Centres of Excellence and facilities across the continent that are engaged in the promotion of the gender dimension in peace and security and African women's greater participation in peace processes. The second in the series is slated for December 2015 in Dakar, Senegal under the auspices of the Pan African Centre for Gender, Peace and Security. The Dakar program will focus on Women and Electoral Mediation as a follow-up to the training on Election Observation and Dispute Resolution.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

This was a four-day, two-tier program organized jointly by the Office of the AUC Chairperson's Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security and the Women, Peace and Security Institute (WPSI) of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC). The first tier featured a

one-day roundtable discussion that looked at efforts at countering religious radicalization and violent extremism and women's role and contribution to those efforts. The discussions focused on the cases of Nigeria and Somalia and the measures at countering Boko Haram and Al Shabab respectively, and women's role and contributions to these measures.

The second tier consisted of a special executive election observation and election dispute resolution training for high ranking African women to help build their capacity and enhance their prospects and opportunities for participation in high level election observation missions. The training highlighted the importance of election observation as a mechanism for conflict prevention. The three-day workshop examined the gender dimension of the electoral process and the importance of facilitating spaces for women's increased participation. The concept of the women's situation room as a critical tool for preventing election related conflict/violence was also emphasised.

1.7 PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Both the roundtable and the executive election observation & election dispute resolution training targeted key stakeholders and leading women, peace and security advocates drawn from civil society, security institutions, government agencies/ministries the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the media and multilateral agencies and representatives from academia.

1.8 OUTLINE OF REPORT

The current document is a report of the proceedings, both of the roundtable discussion and the executive election observation and election dispute resolution training for high ranking African women. The report is divided into three parts consisting of seven sections. The first part, made up of section one, presents the background to the women, peace and security agenda and outlines the program objectives, partnerships and linkages as well as methodology among others. The second part, spanning sections 2-5 provide a summary of the opening session which includes the various anniversary goodwill messages from African women, the international community as well as the welcome and keynote addresses by the Commandant of the KAIPTC and the AUC Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security respectively. Also included in the part two are the specific presentations and the key points of the discussion as well as the range of recommendations, both for combating radicalization and for the promotion of women's greater participation in peace and security strategies at the national, regional and continental levels.

The third part, comprising sections 6-8 present a brief summary of the training modules/subject areas covered and the series of recommendations outlined for facilitating women's greater role in election observation missions across the continent and ends with a final conclusion highlighting some of the key issues and points raised in both the roundtable and the training. Also included as appendices, are the list of participants, facilitators/resource persons and program team as well as the program agenda for both the roundtable and the training workshop.

2.0 DAY 1: ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION - SUMMARY

The first component of the two-tier program involved a one-day roundtable discussion that focussed on the emerging issues of religious radicalization and violent extremism. The various speakers and discussants provided the critical context and the security threats posed by radicalization and extremism and explored the critical role of women in finding solutions to the problem. Calls were made for concerted efforts at facilitating strategies and avenues for women's increased engagement and participation in peace and security processes at all levels. The calls came in the form of anniversary goodwill messages, a welcome remark, a keynote address and topical presentations by WPS advocates, activists and experts. Discussions focused on two key radicalized extremist groups – Boko Haram in northern Nigeria and Al Shabab in Somalia. Presenters outlined the historical trajectory, modus operandi and incidents of violence and measures at national, regional and continental levels at countering their activities. Also presented were highlights of advocacy initiatives and efforts by activists groups such as Bring-Back-Our-Girls Campaign to demand action on the fate of the 200 school girls captured from their school dormitories by Boko Haram in 2014; and the excerpts of an ongoing research on the reported use of females as suicide bombers.

2.1 OPENING SESSION

In setting the context and rationale of the program, attention was drawn to the results-based framework advocated by the office of the AUC-SE-WPS as a critical tool for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the agenda of women's greater representation and participation in peace processes in Africa. The various opening remarks underscored the chequered nature of the gender outcomes and gains to women in the 15 years since the United Nations Security Council adopted the resolution to facilitate women's increased role in leadership, governance and peace efforts. Some countries such as South Africa appear to have made significant gains, particularly in facilitating women's upward mobility in public institutions, including the security services. For example women make up 30 percent of the country's defence force. At the continental level, various initiatives and mechanisms have been facilitated as a result of relentless advocacy and agency of some key actors and stakeholders. The AU Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, i.e. the Maputo Protocol and the resulting 50/50 commissioners of the AUC, the establishment of the Gender Directorate, the declaration of the Women Decade and the more recent appointment of a Special Envoy are examples of the continent's commitment to gender equality and women empowerment

These hopeful examples notwithstanding, the prospects of comprehensive gender equality and women's comparative advantage, particularly in the areas of peace and security as well as economic empowerment remain a critical concern. As the continent continues to be plagued by poverty, narcotics and human trafficking, terrorism and religious radicalization and violent extremism, the African women's situation remains largely precarious, particularly in countries where these phenomena are on the rise. This, in the view of some of the speakers constitute a new frontier that may be characterized as 'domestic wars' that destabilize families and tend to make the youths vulnerable to religious radicalization and other extremist views.

On her part, Mme Bineta Diop, the AUC-SE-WPS recalled the persistent violent conflicts in various countries across the continent with devastating impact on women. She noted particularly the distressing use of women's bodies as tactic of war and as suicide bombers on the one hand and the relatively minimal involvement of women in peace and security, pointing out that "the majority of the initiators of war are men. Yet, it is left to men to mediate the end of conflict; the majority of those who keep peace are men, the majority of those who lead reconstruction are men". Nevertheless, she applauded the increasing male participation in efforts at mainstreaming gender in peace and security. She urged action, among others, in the context of Agenda 2063, with a vision of "THE AFRICA WE WANT" in the next 50 years. An Africa where women are fully

empowered and all forms of violence against them are eliminated. She called for the political will and financial commitment from all governments and the promotion of accountability to the WPS agenda, stating that “No more solemn Declarations but Solemn Actions and Solemn deliverables”

2.2 THE MAIN PRESENTATIONS

The presentations ranged from theoretical to empirical discourse on religious radicalization and violent extremism, the gender dimension of the phenomena, strategies for countering terrorism and activism aimed at drawing attention to the plight of victims of radicalization and violence against women and the use of females as suicide bombers. The following are highlights of the various presentations:

2.2.1 VIOLENT CONFLICTS AND THREATS TO PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA: OVERVIEW

The presentation outlined the various ‘drivers’ and operating ‘strategies’ that threaten peace and security, as well as the gaps in responses. Central to the presentation was the question of “how to move from rhetoric to praxis or informed actions?” It was clear that the threats to peace and security on the continent go beyond the geo-political borders. Prominent among the drivers of violent conflict include elections, political opportunism, i.e. the use of political power for personal gain, state failure and terrorism. The presenter linked economic well-being to terrorism and extremism noting the proposition that where the state is unable to support economic resilience, young people are likely to be attracted to the monetary offers of terrorists and extremist groups. The presenter also noted the collusion between public servants and criminals to advance criminal activities such as the trafficking of narcotics. While the presentation referenced the various responses to violent extremism, including the AU which has in place systems/structures for carrying out preventative and intervention initiatives, it was evident that challenges to combating extremism and violence on the continent persist. Funds are limited. Stipulated contributions from member states are not always forthcoming. There are often competing demands on our financial resources as nation states face the reality of having to forgo other needs such as schools and clinics in order to invest in peace mechanisms and tools. The speaker concluded with an appeal for an approach to security governance that entails a broad and far reaching engagement with multiple stakeholders, noting the pertinence of creativity, trust and willingness to share information within and among member states

2.2.2 RELIGIOUS RADICALIZATION AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM: IS THERE A GENDER DIMENSION?

The presenter offered an activist’s perspective on the events of the Boko Haram militants and the group’s abduction of the over 200 girls from Chibok in north eastern Nigeria in 2014, highlighting the responses from civil society and a critique of the responses. The speaker pointed to several aspects of life in which women in Nigeria have been marginalized even though the country is party to a number of regional, continental and international instruments and policies for securing the rights of women. The presentation noted that law enforcement agents have largely been insensitive to females’ concerns. Attributing the history of Boko Haram and its expansion to state failure, the speaker described the atrocities of Boko Haram on this remote agrarian town of Chibok, including the abduction of the school girls. The presentation lamented the unresolved plight of the school girls who were abducted from their government school dormitory since April 14, 2014, and reminded the gathering that October 5, 2015 marked 539 days since their disappearance. The presenter pointed out that even though there are various speculations that the girls may have been taken out of the country, married off, being used as suicide bombers or killed for refusing to convert to Islam, the community remains resolute in their hope and anticipation of the imminent return of the girls.

The presentation shed light on the advocacy and activism that have emerged in solidarity with the abducted girls and their families. Foremost among these is the movement, Bring Back Our Girls (BBOG) coalition. The coalition predominantly spearheaded by members of the Chibok community

has succeeded in attracting national and international support, including the support of eminent personalities like the First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama, Former Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, British Prime Minister David Cameron and several leading Nigerians. Some of the notable advocacy campaigns carried out till date include:

- Sit-outs at strategic locations on a daily and weekly basis and during periods of important milestones within Nigeria and elsewhere;
- Marking of milestones like 30, 100, 200, 356 and 500 days since the abduction;
- Advocacy visits to relevant individuals, Missions and Embassies of countries;
- Solidarity visits to Embassies of countries that have been affected by similar attacks such as Kenya (Garissa attacks) and India;
- Development of advocacy publications to educate the public; and
- Audience with the newly elected President Muhammadu Buhari to press for action to address the plight of the abducted girls and the ending of the militant insurgency among others.

The presentation affirmed the gender dimension of religious radicalization and violent extremism and the disproportionate toll on women and urged measures to help address the threats. Specific recommendations include the enforcement of policies that protect the rights of girls; investment in citizen/community sensitization programs; building the capacity of law enforcement agencies to respond adequately to the threats; undertake community peace initiatives and support family judiciary processes. It is also important not to undermine/disregard community intelligence. Regarding the abducted school girls, the presenter called for efforts to ensure that the girls are brought back alive and urged restitution for the losses to victims' families. The presentation further underscored the power and importance of collective will and action at all levels – global, continental, national, state, local, and community – and reiterated the need to work together in ensuring a safe space for all genders to thrive.

2.2.3 STRATEGIES FOR COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION: COUNTRY EXAMPLES – BOKO HARAM IN NIGERIA AND AL SHABAB IN SOMALIA

Both Nigeria and Somalia have been plagued with religious radicalism and violent extremism. The two presentations looked at the genesis and the factors fuelling the continuing insurgency and measures to combat the activities of Boko Haram in Nigeria and Al Shabab in Somalia.

Boko Haram started as a little known sect that until 2009, operated in a remote settlement called Kanama in Yobe state. The sect was characterized by proselytization that took the form of verbal attacks on secular traditional and modern authority. The jihadist onslaught on the Nigerian state was quickly repelled by the combined forces of the country's security agencies between the periods spanning 2003 – 2005. The evolution of the group into what it currently is, begun in 2009 amidst intense proselytization, recruitment, indoctrination and radicalization of members. The primary motivation of the group was to discredit the state by portraying it as chronically unable to meet the development aspirations of citizens.

The Al Shabab militant group of Somalia flourished because of the protracted conflict in that country, the failure and absence of the state and lack of rule of law. The intervention of neighboring countries, lack of alternative opportunities such as education and employment all combined to create a 'fertile ground' for the recruitment and jihadist indoctrination that targeted children at the highly impressionable age of 10-12 years. Ideologically, the absence of the state ceded the political space to these groups which in turn capitalized on the prevalent social injustice to offer a political Islam that seemed attractive, particularly to the marginalized segments of the population. It is noteworthy that for negligible economic rewards, some women were prepared and willing to throw in their lot with the jihadists.

With regard to strategies for countering radicalization and violent extremism, both speakers noted among others the importance of addressing the root causes in order to make the phenomenon

less attractive to current and would be adherents. Measures that tackle youth unemployment and poverty are considered critical. Social injustice can be countered with improvement in the rule of law that facilitates a judicial system as recourse for addressing social grievances. In addition to the provision of quality education, it is important to promote technical and vocational education in order to enhance the prospects for youth productivity and sense of purpose in life.

2.2.4 EMERGING ISSUE OF THE USE OF FEMALE SUICIDE BOMBERS: EXCERPTS FROM ONGOING RESEARCH

The presentation offered insights into this new phenomenon and the associated assumptions of women's participation in suicide bombings, historic and on-going policy efforts to protect females and children against this threat, and policy options drawing on the case of Boko Haram. The presenters attributed an overwhelming 85% of suicide bombings in Nigeria from June 2014 to July 2015 (34 successful and two failed attempts with about 338 people killed and 49 injured) to females. Females are recruited by widows and female relatives of 'martyred' fighters and through abductions and families sacrificing girls to assist with this extremist cause. The use of female bombers is thought to be on the rise because they are less likely to come under scrutiny. Female illiteracy and the perception of women as 'disposable' make them easy targets for recruitment as suicide bombers.

The political and policy context of Nigeria and how these have fostered such extremism were highlighted with particular emphasis on the impacts of colonization and centralization of power. This structural arrangement tends to significantly undermine government responsiveness and accountability for economic recovery and social development – resulting in economic exploitation by criminal groups that attract victims to become fighters.

Although Nigeria has ratified and domesticated policy frameworks of the UN, AU and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) aimed at protecting women and children in peace times and against being targeted in armed conflict situations, there remains a wide gap between the rhetoric of policy and action. The presenters urged strategies for intelligence gathering and cooperation with neighboring countries, the AU, ECOWAS and the international community as part of efforts for countering the activities of the militant group. They also called for measures that target youth unemployment, including the provision of basic to secondary education.

Although mothers or female guardians are strategically positioned to monitor and manage the media engagements of their wards because of the extensive amount of time they spend with wards, relative to fathers, it is not always possible for them to monitor their children's social media activities ...The high level of illiteracy among African women greatly undermines their ability to utilize their strategic position in the children's lives for the benefit of peace and security.

3.0 KEY POINTS OF DISCUSSIONS

The discussions that followed the presentations centred on issues such as the entities and factors that help to radicalize and nurture extremism; the exclusion of key stakeholders and inadequacy of resources for facilitating women's greater involvement in the fight against radicalization and violent extremism, The role of some cultural norms as enablers of extremism; the unregulated religious space (the relationship between the state and religion), mental health and the somewhat acquiescent tendency of women and their attendant readiness to undertake any task at hand were all discussed as factors with implications for radicalism and extremism on the continent. Highlights of the discussions are outlined below.

i. MISSING KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Although several stakeholders can play a critical role in countering religious radicalization and violent extremism, a crucial barrier is the predominantly state-centred approach rather than a people-centred (citizen-centred) approach. A people-centred approach implies that this endeavour of peace and security becomes everybody's responsibility with the state providing leadership. It was generally felt that the input of key stakeholders required for peace and security efforts to be effective are not sufficiently involved. Not only are women's representation and participation low; other segments of society such as, religious and traditional leaders and the youth, civil society organizations, local government institutions, schools and the like are not adequately engaged. The question then is: how can we make a difference with only a partial selection of stakeholders involved?

ii. THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY

The social connection that parents have with their children is fundamental to identifying unusual behaviours that can provide leads to any potential for extremist orientations and activities. However, it was pointed out that this avenue is not well-explored. A young person in the process of religious radicalization is likely to exhibit particular self-disclosing actions at home or within the family. Such actions may persist, if parents and guardians are not equipped to engage the appropriate entities/authorities upon noticing potentially harmful signs and activities of their wards.

iii. RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH INFORMATION SHARING

The risks and consequences can be grave if key informants are not protected. Trust is necessary for increasing the willingness to share information about potential seeds of non-peaceful behaviours. Participants thought that it will be useful to interrogate why some women are unable to report the people they know are involved, or are perpetrators of extremist views and activities. It was also felt that women may find it difficult to come forward with such information because they do not have/or are not assured of available measures and resources to protect them.

iv. THE POVERTY FACTOR

The issue of poverty was identified as a fundamental reason why young people are joining radicalized and extremist groups thus making the situation more complex. People who have a stake in their community tend to maintain the peace and security of the space and vice versa. A lack of economic empowerment is viewed as having a direct link to non-peaceful behaviour. The discussion referenced the case of Somalia where the absence of a normal stable society with a well-functioning educational system for more than two decades due to civil war, has largely fostered the growth of Al Shabab. The militant group's appeal to young people is due largely to the promise of alternative lifestyle and economic sustenance. If poverty is left unattended to, societies will continue to be vulnerable to radicalization and violent extremism. This is particularly true of fragile and failed states.

v. MENTAL HEALTH

The mental conditions of individuals are important for understanding the risk factors in religious radicalization and violent extremism. People who are facing mental health challenges such as low self-esteem, negative self-concept, anger management problems and stress from failed expectations or other sources, in their quest to express their frustration are more likely to exercise self-destructive behaviour or violent tendencies. People who value their lives and others' will be mindful not to destroy life. A strong mind and a healthy self-concept are at the core of an individual's resilience to life regardless of circumstances. It was clear during discussions that a lack of resilience expresses itself in radicalized attachments and violent extremism.

vi. RISKS OF FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND UNREGULATED RELIGIOUS SPACE

Individual freedoms of association in any form of religion may be impinging on the rights of others and security of society in general. While individuals may be socialized early on in life into particular violence-laden religions without their choosing, others who possess the freedom to choose may decide to affiliate with radicalized and extremist groups. Individuals who join radicalized groups become both victims and perpetrators. Most secular societies advocate for a separation between state and religion. As a result religious institutions are left unregulated and with no adequate legislative mechanisms to guide their activities. Registration of religious entities that may be required in certain national contexts is often voluntary. This situation can make it difficult to track and prosecute religious groups that may be indoctrinating members into non-peaceful ideologies and practices.

vii. INADEQUATE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Women's role in combating religious radicalization and violent extremism cannot be over emphasized, but yet they are a minority presence in the peace and security sector. Although considerations of the gender perspective in the development discourse has become somewhat routine in the last few decades, it remains a relatively new and emerging dimension in peace and security, both as a category for scholarship and as an organizing principle for peace efforts. This fact, coupled with the near absence of female leaders in the security services significantly undermines efforts at integrating the gender dimension. Women traditionally have been 'confined' to the peripheries, not only of the security agencies but also of most government institutions that are typically the preserve of men.

viii. INADEQUATE DIALOGUE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

There are limited avenues where young people can share freely with adults and feel safe. Young people have experiences that could be shared to identify any potential threats to peace and security. In many homes face-to-face dialogue with children has become less frequent. The increasing use of social media on the one hand and the pressure on working parents having to juggle domestic responsibilities with the demands of job and careers has significantly reduced family time between children and parents. Parental absence over extended period of time can have implications for children's emotional wellbeing. It can also mean a lost opportunity for parents and guardians to detect and address any signs of exposure to radical or extremist views that the child may present.

ix. WOMEN LACKING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

Although mothers or female guardians are strategically positioned to monitor and manage the media engagements of their wards because of the extensive amount of time they spend with wards, relative to fathers, it is not always possible for them to monitor their children's social media activities. This is because women for the most part do not possess the requisite knowledge and skills to do so effectively. Restrictions to harmful websites and monitoring of cell and cyber web use can help to detect and prevent any potential for religious radicalization. The high level of illiteracy among African women greatly undermines their ability to utilize their strategic position in the children's lives for the benefit of peace and security.

x. ILLITERACY AS A HINDRANCE TO WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

The high level of illiteracy among women also tends to curtail their ability to engage their families in informed communication so as to dispel any religious misconceptions that are inimical to peace and security. Inability to read can significantly impede a woman's ability to access the written text and may therefore be unable to engage in religious dialogue to undo any dangerous religious notions that their wards may have been exposed to. Women's limited knowledge and understanding of their religion can inhibit their role as peace educators in their homes.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PEACE AND SECURITY

In order to facilitate women's greater representation and active participation in peace and security, particularly in combating religious radicalization and violent extremism, a number of recommendations and actionable solutions were put forward by the group. These recommendations target multiple key stakeholders, including African governments, the AU, the RECs, CSOs, training & research institutions, UN agencies, and the international as well as donor communities. The identified stakeholders are called upon to facilitate viable mechanisms for implementing the recommendations in order to increase women's participation in peace processes, particularly with regard to combating radicalization and violent extremism. Specific recommendations were given as follows:

i. CRITICAL POLICY REVIEW

Critically examine policies and how they trigger and promote religious radicalization and violent extremism. It is important for policies to be reviewed for relevance in order to ensure that they do not produce unintended consequences. Special attention should be given to those policies that inherently or blatantly undermine gender equality and treat women as a sub-class to men. Assessing existing policies and their implications, with a view to identifying potential threats can help to weed out and amend those that inhibit peace and security at all levels – international, continental, regional, national and domestic. Training and research institutions and centres of excellence could serve as avenues or platforms for such policy reviews and research. The policy reviews and research being recommended will require the necessary funding and support from other stakeholders, including the AU, the RECs, UN and the donor community.

ii. RECRUIT, TRAIN AND UTILIZE WOMEN IN INTELLIGENCE AND PEACE PROCESSES

Women's abilities at inter-cultural and cross-cultural dialogue for peace and for gathering intelligence could be utilized. This is possible if the proper channels of intelligence communication, training, protection and recognition are setup within their communities. It was noted that women's diplomatic skills in communication across a variety of cultures can be beneficial to conflict prevention, mediation and resolution processes. The facilitation of a training to equip women with election observation and dispute resolution skills in order to increase the pool of women for deployment was lauded as a step in the right direction.

Women should also be trained on how to 'move' information to safe space and there should be incentives and protection for them. Barriers to their access and use of information technology should be eliminated to enhance their capacity to regulate and monitor their wards' cyber and phone activities.

Law enforcement agencies and bureaus of intelligence should work closely with communities to establish viable protective infrastructure and training on their uses. This will facilitate women's sharing of intelligence information from the home and community as they encounter or find such information.

In order to minimize the burden on women due to their multiple roles, the financial implications and time constraints, incentives in the form of adequate recognition/affirmation is important. Women can be effective 'whistle blowers' only when barriers such as the costs (as for example the cost of placing phone calls communicate a piece of information), and their safety and security do not become additional burdens to them.

iii. ESTABLISH AND SUPPORT ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

There should be advocacy programs at all levels by the various stakeholders, including women's groups, CSOs, RECs and the international community to help draw attention to the threat posed by radicalization and violent extremism to peace and security. Female envoys should organize solidarity missions to affected areas to show support for, and urge action on behalf of those caught in violent conflict and in distressing situations. The example of the AUC-SE-WPS visits to countries like Nigeria, South Sudan and Central African Republic are examples that should be replicated. CSO efforts such as that of the Bring-Back-Our-Girls Campaign to demand the safe return of the abducted Chibok School Girls should be supported and enhanced.

iv. ESTABLISH AND ENGAGE 'COMMUNITY WATCH' TEAMS

Making peace and security everybody's business means it needs to start from the home and reach out to 'Community Watch' teams whose responsibility will be to be the 'eyes and ears' of the community. Surveillance by community members can be effective if they have proper training and skills to be able to identify and provide information to appropriate security enforcement and intelligence agencies to intercept activities that potentially harm the peace of communities. Working closely with law enforcement agencies and intelligence services for guidance and support, Community Watch teams consisting of both males and females (including the youth), can afford citizens the opportunity to take ownership and leadership of their peace and security efforts in their communities.

v. ESTABLISH LEGAL INSTRUMENTS AND MECHANISMS TO REGULATE EXTREMIST RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

It is important for there to be legal instruments and institutions in place to assess and permit the existence of religious groups that practice pro-peace behaviour. Freedoms of a person need not impinge on the right to a harm-free life of others. Freedom of religion as a human right should be guided by universal values that promote the well-being, not only of religious loyalists, but also that of society at large. The current adhoc and laissez-fair terrain that allows religious establishments to operate without any form of 'scrutiny' in most communities may have to be re-examined. There needs to be legislation with strategies for vigorous enforcement so that violence-laden religious activities can be treated as criminal and offender(s) prosecuted.

vi. ESTABLISH AND OPERATE NATIONAL PEACE COMMITTEES

Establish national mechanisms that will as part of their operations enhance the implementation of the mandate of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security. These mechanisms can take the form of Peace Committees established in each country. Such committees would have equal representation of males and females. They would have the responsibility to oversee the peace and security efforts in their respective nations while liaising with the various civil society groups, law enforcement, defence structures and other stakeholders.

vii. INCREASE THE PRESENCE OF WOMEN IN ALL PEACE AND SECURITY STRUCTURES

It is important to increase the visibility and active engagement of women in all peace and security institutions and efforts. Although it may sometimes be difficult to find qualified women to occupy vacant positions, a plan of action focussed on achieving gender parity by a target date will allow for concerted efforts aimed at increasing their numbers in these institutions. One success story is the case of South Africa where the Minister of Defence is female and with women comprising 30% of the defence staff. It was noted that women were mostly in support

and health disciplines. They have developed a feeder system to promote women to higher ranks. The AUC's parity principle is also an excellent example of efforts at raising the numbers of females in leadership positions. Five out of 10 Commissioners are women. The AUC should appoint more female envoys and special representatives in peacekeeping. There is need for a 'women resource strategy' that clearly sets targets in building women's capacity in order to attain gender parity within peace and security structures.

This process of achieving greater gender parity can start with a gender analysis of the human resource of peace and security institutions within each member state. A wealth of information on the gender composition of the sector will form the basis for understanding any challenges and opportunities, and for setting clear targets for closing existing gender gaps.

viii. PROVIDE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

The mental health of all individuals especially those at risk of being drawn into or who have had exposure to religious extremism need to be targeted for capacity building in aspects such as women or men self-esteem development, stress management, and anger management as well as psychological support through counselling. These opportunities will build healthy minds and positive self-concepts from such emancipatory education where participants are able to self-reflect on their lives, awaken to better behaviour choices and to change their biographies. Similarly, a re-orientation through counselling and training of those who have experienced extremism as perpetrators or victims or both is necessary to enable them to co-exist peacefully in the society and to prevent being drawn into further engagement. Mental health training and counselling that builds the mental health starting from elementary schools at a young age will be a strategic preventative measure for combating religious radicalization and violent extremism.

ix. PROMOTE YOUTH ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Developing and making available vocational and technical training opportunities in preparing young people who are suited for self-employment is imperative. It is equally important to facilitate opportunities for youth to be productively engaged in order to reduce 'idleness' and 'boredom'. Economically empowering young people is critical to combating religious radicalization and violent extremism. It is important to make available meaningful economic capacity building and career development alternatives to refrain the youth from associating with "bad company" in order to keep them away from the monetary attractions of radicalized groups.

Research into training opportunities for young males and females is necessary. An assessment of youth capacity building initiatives to understand the extent to which existing programs hinder their participation in extremist activities is important for decisions regarding program investment. The perspective of young people in such research will be valuable in shaping youth empowerment programs.

x. ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE FOR INTELLIGENCE AND PEACE EDUCATION

Engaging young people in programs such as peace education and mentoring to build trustful relationships and model peaceful lifestyles is another important strategy. This requires the facilitation of forums for intergenerational recreation and interaction. The peace education can take the form of workshops in which young people have the opportunity to help design and organize. It can also be built into school curricular. It will require a well structured and formalized program approach where the goal is for adult mentors to build relationships with young people. Civil Society Organizations, religious groups, schools and sports teams need to increase these efforts with the necessary support from all stakeholders.

xi. EMPOWER WOMEN THROUGH LITERACY TRAINING WITH INCENTIVES

Empowering women through literacy training is imperative for women to effectively participate in peace dialogue with their wards. While there is the need to scale up literacy programs, women's multiple roles can prevent or limit their participation. Literacy programs can be

accompanied with relevant incentives such as child care, transportation and completion grant. Literacy training can be expanded for high risk populations such as the poor, young boys and girls, and groups that practice faiths with frequent radicalized extensions.

xii. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

Each AU member state should be able to demonstrate progress on what they are doing to advance women's involvement, and to combat religious radicalization and violent extremism. Each country should set goals and define indicators for monitoring progress and be able to report/provide information on the collective status of women in relation to peace and security.

xiii. NATIONAL GENDER SENSITIVE BUDGETS

It is critical for parliaments of member states to ensure that national budgets are gender sensitive and allocate adequate resources to the women, peace and security agenda.

5.0 THE WAY FORWARD

The partnership between the Office of the AUC's Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security should be strengthened and sustained in order to translate the recommendations into concrete action. The Special Envoy's initiative to engage with, and build a network of advocates, actors and training & research facilities from across the continent to serve as resource for enhancing African women's engagement in the continental peace architecture should be mainstreamed and funds made available for the purpose. In this regard, in addition to the specific recommendations outlined above as strategies for increasing women's role in combating radicalization and extremism, participants also called for urgent action in the following areas:

- Increasing funds to address gender issues in peace and security;
- Setting up a team of eminent women envoys to go on solidarity missions to help empower women caught up in violent conflict and distress; and
- Conducting research on issues of religious radicalization and violent extremism.



Training session: the Executive Election Observation and Election Dispute Resolution Training

Building the capacity of women in peace and security is a critical first step to increasing their access and participation in peace processes.

6.0 EXECUTIVE ELECTION OBSERVATION AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION TRAINING

The second tier of the anniversary program took the form of a three-day executive election observation and election dispute resolution training. The training primarily targeted high ranking African women drawn from governments, civil society, security agencies, academia and regional economic communities. The goal of the training was to build the capacity of African women as part of initiatives of the AUC SE WPS to facilitate a pool of women who can be called upon to take up leadership roles in election observation missions.

The training included a special focus on election observation as a mechanism for conflict prevention with an emphasis on the resolution of election-related dispute. Participants were also exposed to the AU's election observation methodology and missions. Also discussed in the training is the concept of the (election) situation room as a platform for women's agency and activism to prevent elections related conflict and violence. This concept of women making peace revolves around what is described as the "triple M" factor, i.e. Mobilization, Mediation and Monitoring. The presentation used the case of Senegal, showing women's active engagement in mobilizing, mediation and monitoring of the 2012 elections in that country, which contributed to the prevention of an election related crisis.

Specific topics covered over the three-day period included; the role of election in democracy; elections, good governance and democracy; the role and challenges of election management bodies; understanding the electoral process & systems; election observation mission methodology and the conceptual issues & case studies in gender, women and elections. As a special emphasis, the training looked at the issue of conflict prevention and how election observation serves as a mechanism for the prevention of election related conflict and violence. The segment also discussed the value of stakeholder consultation in mitigating elections related conflict and violence.

Also included in the training was the subject of the observer's personal security in the field which addressed best practice issues such as self awareness, alert systems, communication for security and guidelines about sexual harassment and rape in the field.

7.0 FACILITATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRAINED WOMEN'S GREATER PARTICIPATION IN ELECTION OBSERVATION AND ELECTION DISPUTE RESOLUTION: THE WAY FORWARD

As evidenced in the discussions and interventions that emerged in the course of the training, building the capacity of women in and of itself will not automatically result in their increased participation in conflict peacebuilding and conflict prevention processes. Building the capacity of women in election observation and dispute resolution is just a first step. There is need for concrete measures in place to facilitate avenues for women to participate actively in these processes. Some specific recommendations for women's greater participation in election observation include:

1. The development and implementation of measures to attain gender parity (i.e., 50/50) in deployment of males and females (particularly those from civil society) on observation missions;
2. The deployment of more women on long-term election observation missions in order to deepen their knowledge and ensure that information gathered that will influence future electoral processes;
3. The creation of a database of skilled women to participate in election observation, this is

- crucial for identifying and addressing gender related issues in elections;
4. The facilitation of training of trainers programs in election observation that can be cascaded to reach as many beneficiaries as possible;
 5. The promotion of South-South cooperation to foster knowledge and experience sharing among women; and
 6. The document and replicate the Women's Situation Room model to suit local situation.

8.0 CONCLUSION

As clearly demonstrated in both the roundtable discussions and the training program, the adoption of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 has contributed a great deal in drawing attention to the critical link between women and violent conflict at the national, regional and continental as well as international levels. Several countries in Africa have been able to initiate processes aimed at domesticating and implementing the demands of the resolution. At the continental level, the AUC has led the efforts with a number of initiatives and protocols for mainstreaming gender into its structures and processes. Notable among these are the Maputo Protocol that resulted in the achievement of gender parity within the AUC, where we now have women accounting for 50 percent of the commissioners. The establishment by the AUC of a gender directorate and the formulation of the Gender, Peace and Security Program are some of the key continental measures to promote gender in the peace and security debate.

The designation in January 2014 of a Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security by the Chairperson of the Commission is the strongest statement yet of the determination at the continental level to mainstream gender into Africa's peace and security architecture. This, coming nearly midway through the women's decade is a testament to the resolve to move gender issues and women's interests from the peripheries to the mainstream. With these measures, there is reason for cautious optimism about women's prospects in the development debate within the context of Africa.



Mrs. Pauline Adobea Dadzawa, Lead Facilitator: Executive Election Observation and Election Dispute Resolution Training



Major Gen O.B. Akwa, Commandant of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre delivering the welcome remark

These laudable developments and initiatives have however not resulted in the transformation of women's status with regard to the impact of religious radicalism and violent extremism. As demonstrated in the cases of Boko Haram in Nigeria and Al Shabab in Somalia, women continue to bear the brunt of the effects of these twin phenomena. Women are disproportionately targeted as in the case of North Eastern Nigeria where hundreds are either abducted or killed regularly. Their economic disadvantage and the absence of viable legal avenues for redress of injustice due to the failure of the state make them easy targets for recruitment as agents for the radicalized extremists as demonstrated in the case of Somalia. Even more disturbing and consequential for women is the newly emerging trend in which women, particularly the youth, are being used as suicide bombers.

Building the capacity of women in peace and security is a critical first step to increasing their access and participation in peace processes. However, as noted in the election observation and election dispute resolution training, beyond the training, there is need for adequate measures to be in place to ensure gender equity in recruitments and deployments in order to make sure that trained women are given equal opportunity to actively participate. Beyond the rhetoric, adequate mechanisms and accountability systems must be put in place to help translate good intentions into good deeds. As the Special Envoy rightly pointed out, "...We need solemn deliverables, no more solemn declarations.



Participant – a Colonel from South Africa at the opening session & roundtable discussion



Dr. Izeduwa Derex-Briggs, UN Women Country Representative, South Sudan



Participants, Facilitators and Resource Persons pose with their certificates from the Executive Election Observation and Election Dispute Resolution Training

i. PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS (NAMES, ORGANIZATIONS, COUNTRIES)

	Name	Email	Gender	Country	Organization/ Position	Tel.
1	Col. Patience Lorana Mosima Masisi	masisipat@yahoo.com	F	South Africa	South African High Commission DA	0507011808
2	Madam Betty Ayagiba	womghana2000@yahoo.com	F	Ghana	Peace Council U.E.R	0505220092
3	Ms.Nana Firdausi Bala	nanafbala@gmail.com	F	Nigeria	Defense Intelligence Agency Nigeria	+2347032234662
4	Madam Diye Ba	diieba@yahoo.fz	F	Mauritania	ACZD President	0022246430514
5	Dr. Priscilla Joseph Kuch Maakuc	adorpuou2@gmail.com	F	South Sudan	South Sudan Women's Peace Network	+211955777669
6	Mr. Abdoulaye Diallo	laayablaye@yahoo.com	M	Senegal	PAC	+221781352048
7	Hon. Elizabeth James Bol	Elizabirthbol12@yahoo.com	F	South Sudan	Ministry of Petroleum and Mining, RSS	+211925522272
8	Dr. Noami Akpan-Ita	mails4nai@yahoo.co.uk	F	Nigeria	Impact for Change Development (IMPACT)	+2348033019575
9	Dr. Khadja Ali	Khadijali9@gmail.com	F	Somalia	Electoral Commission (Resource Person)	252615549925
10	Me Christine Ndayishimiye	christine.ndayishimiye@yahoo.fz	F	Burundi	Burieuu du Burundi	(257)75857373
11	Hon. Philister Baya Lawiri	philister.baya@yahoo.com	F	South Sudan	South Sudan Civil Service Commission	+211912989693
12	Me Patricia Lake Diop	pdiop@orange.sn	F	Senegal	Association Juristes Senegalaise (AJS)	+211912989693
13	Ms. Kemealo Telou	telouk@un.org	F	Togo	United Nations Office For West Africa (UNOWA)	+22177637688
14	DCOP Beatrice Vib-Sanziri	vibeatrice@yahoo.com	F	Ghana	Ghana Police Service	+233(0)547596506
15	Hon. Mabobori Catherine	malolori@yahoo.com	F	Burundi	Women and Girls Movement For Peace	+25779923587
16	Mrs. Comfort Dauda Iliya	comfortdaudailiya@yahoo.com	F	Nigeria	Bring Back Our Girls Advocacy group	+2348033082916
17	Ms. Esther Ikere Ehurai	Estherikere36@gmail.com	F	South Sudan	Ministry of Gender RSS	+211(9)55657755
18	Hon. Susan Wasuk	suziwasuk@yahoo.com	F	South Sudan	National Legislative Assembly	+211955196299
19	DDP Patience Baffoe-Bonne	Nasbee1122@yahoo.com	F	Ghana	Ghana Prison Service	0244258142
20	Mrs. Mercy Osei-Konadu	mokonadu@gmail.com	F	Ghana	Civil Society Advisor/Consult	0244224811
21	Ms. Elinam Georgina Torkornoo	gina.wilpfg@gmail.com	F	Ghana	WILPE-GH Project Coordinator	0268859031

ii. RESOURCE PERSONS/FACILITATORS AND PROGRAM TEAM

Name	Institution/Country
HE Mme Bineta Diop	AUC Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security – Ethiopia/Senegal
Mrs. Comfort Dauda Iliya	Bring Back Our Girls Advocate - Nigeria
Dr. Izeduwa Derex-Briggs	Country Representative, UN Women – South Sudan/Nigeria
Mr. Emmanuel Bombande	Peacebuilding Scholar-Practitioner - Ghana
Mrs. Pauline Adobea Dadzawa	Electoral Commission of Ghana - Ghana
Dr. Kwesi Aning	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) - Ghana
Prof. Audu Nanven Gambo	University of Jos - Nigeria
Ms. Serwaa Brewoo	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) - Ghana
Lt. Col. Lawrence Deku	Ghana Armed Force - Ghana
Mrs. Afua Lamptey	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) - Ghana
Dr. Jean-Bosco Butera	Office of the Special Envoy, AUC – Ethiopia/Rwanda
Ms. Margaret Alexander Rehoboth	Women, Peace and Security Institute WPSI of the KAIPTC – Ghana
Ms. Rahima Moomin	Women, Peace and Security Institute WPSI of the KAIPTC – Ghana
Mr. Baffour Asare Amankwah	Women, Peace and Security Institute WPSI of the KAIPTC – Ghana
Mr. John Baah	Women, Peace and Security Institute WPSI of the KAIPTC – Ghana
Ms. Emily Clark	Women, Peace and Security Institute WPSI of the KAIPTC – Ghana/USA
Mrs. Cynthia Arku	Independent Consultant– Ghana/Canada

iii. PROGRAM AGENDA

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Roundtable Discussion On Women, Peace And Security In The Context Of The 15Th Anniversary Of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

October 5, 2015

Religious Radicalization And The Role Of Women In Countering Violent Extremism In Africa

TIME	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
08:30	Departure from hotel	Participants
09:00-09:30	Registration	WPSI
09:30-09:40	Opening Session Introductory Note: Programme Context and Rationale	Moderator – Dr. Jean Bosco Butera
09:40-10:10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Remarks Anniversary Goodwill Message – African Women Anniversary Goodwill Message – International Community Opening Remarks to reflect on the implications of the program for Women, Peace and Security in Africa 	<p>Major Gen O.B. Akwa, Commandant KAIPTC</p> <p>H.E Lulama Xingwanar South African High Commissioner</p> <p>Lady Justice Sophia Akuffo, Judge of the Supreme Court of Ghana</p> <p>HE Mme Bineta Diop, AUC Chairperson's Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security</p>
10:10-10:30	Pictures/Refreshments	KAIPTC Corporate Affairs/WPSI
10:30-10:50	Violent Conflicts and Threats to Peace and Security in Africa: Overview	Dr. Kwesi Aning, Director, Faculty of Academic Affairs and Research (FAAR), KAIPTC
10:50-11:10	Religious Radicalization and Violent Extremism: Is there a Gender Dimension?	Mrs. Comfort Dauda Iliya Member, Bring Back Our Girl Advocacy Group (BBOGA), Abuja, Nigeria
11:10-11:30	Discussions & Recommendations	Dr. Izeduwa Derex-Briggs Country Representative, UN Women, South Sudan
11:45-12:45	Strategies for Countering Violent Extremism and Women's Participation: Country Examples - <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Nigeria – Boko Haram Somalia – Al Shabab Emerging Issue of the use of female suicide bombers: Excerpts from ongoing research 	<p>Professor Audu Nanven Gambo, University of Jos, Jos Plateau, Nigeria</p> <p>Dr. Khadijah Ali, Member, Independent Electoral Commission of Somalia</p> <p>Ms Afua Lamptey/Ms Serwaa Brewoo</p>

TIME	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
12:45-13:05	Experiences from Other countries	Dr. Jean-Bosco Butera
13:05-13:20	Discussions and Recommendations	
13:20-13:40	The Way forward: Harnessing the Expertise and Contributions of African Women at the Continental Level – Summary of Recommendations for the AUC PSC	Margaret Alexander Rehoboth
13:40-14:00	Closing Remarks	HE Mme Bineta Diop, AUC Chairperson's Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security Major Gen O.B. Akwa, Commandant KAIPTC
14:00	Lunch & Departure to hotel	

EXECUTIVE ELECTION OBSERVATION AND ELECTION DISPUTE RESOLUTION TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR SENIOR AFRICAN WOMEN - OCTOBER 6 – 8, 2015

AGENDA

Time	Topic	Facilitator
DAY 1 – October 6, 2015		
09:00 - 09:15	Program outline/overview	Dr. Butera/ Margaret Rehobot
09:15 - 09:30	Introduction	Dr. Butera/Margaret Rehobot
09:30 - 11:30	UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF ELECTION IN DEMOCRACY/ELECTION GOOD GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY/ THE ROLE AND CHALLENGES OF ELECTION MANAGEMENT BODIES	Mrs. Pauline Dadzawa Electoral Commission, Electoral Commission of Ghana
12:00 - 13:00	LUNCH	
13:00 - 14:10	UNDERSTANDING THE ELECTORAL PROCESS/ SYSTEMS	Mrs. Pauline Dadzawa Electoral Commission, Electoral Commission of Ghana
14:10 - 15:10	ELECTION OBSERVATION – GENERAL OVERVIEW	Mrs. Pauline Dadzawa Electoral Commission, Electoral Commission of Ghana
1510 - 1525	Coffee BREAK/Group Photograph	
1525 - 1635	GENDER, WOMEN AND ELECTIONS: Conceptual Issues	Dr. Izeduwa Derex-Briggs Country Representative, UN Women, South Sudan

Time	Topic	Facilitator
DAY 2 - OCT 7, 2015		
09:00 - 09:30	Election Observation – General Overview	
0930 - 10:30	GENDER, WOMEN AND ELECTIONS: Case Studies	Dr. Izeduwa Derex-Briggs Country Representative, UN Women, South Sudan
1030 - 10:45	Coffee Break	
10 45 - 12:30	ELECTION OBSERVATION AS A MECHANISM FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION	Mr. Emmanuel Habuka Bombande Peacebuilding Scholar-Practitioner
1230 - 13:30	LUNCH	
13:30 - 14:30	THE VALUE OF STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION IN CONFLICT MITIGATION	Mr. Emmanuel Habuka Bombande Peacebuilding Scholar-Practitioner
14:30 - 14:45	BREAK	
14:45 - 17:15	ELECTION DISPUTE RESOLUTION	Mr. Emmanuel Habuka Bombande Peacebuilding Scholar-Practitioner
17:15 - 17:30	WRAP UP	WPSI/AU
DAY 3 - OCT 8, 2016		
0900 - 10:30	AU ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION METHODOLOGY	/Mrs. Pauline Dadzawa
10:30 - 11:45	Coffee Break	
11:45 - 12:45	PERSONAL SECURITY IN THE FIELD	Lt Col Lawrence Deku
1245 - 13:45	LUNCH	
13:45 - 15:15	THE ROLE OF AFRICAN WOMEN IN ELECTIONS AND ELECTION RELATED CONFLICT PREVENTION (FAS/PANEL DISCUSSION)	Mme Diop/Mrs. Dadzawa
15:15 -16:00	Official Closing	

AFRICAN UNION



UNION AFRICAINE

Office of the Special Envoy in
Women, Peace and Security
African Union Commission,
Addis Ababa



WPSI
Women, Peace & Security Institute

Women, Peace and Security Institute
Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping
Training Centre,
Accra