The Africa We Want
– The Perspective of African Women

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Outline

- The African Union and the hopes it raised for African Women
- Key Priority areas
- The Role of Civil Society, the case of Solidarity for African Women’s Rights Coalition
- Progress and gaps
- Conclusion
The African Union and the hopes it raised for African Women

- Constitutive Act of the Union Parity – 50/50 in the Union’s Governance
- Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004)
- African Women’s Decade 2010-2020
The African Union and the hopes it raised for African Women

- First Female Chairperson - Nkosazana Clarice Dlamini-Zuma (July 2012)
- Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security - Ms. Bineta Diop (January 2014)
- End Child Marriage Campaign (May 2014)
The African Union and the hopes it raised for African Women

- **AU Theme 2015**: African Women’s Empowerment Towards Agenda 2063

- **AU Theme 2016**: Human Rights with particular emphasis on Women’s Rights
Key Priority areas

- Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
- Ending Violence against women including harmful traditional practices
- Decision making
Key Priority areas

- Access, Control and Ownership of Land and other properties
- Valuing the Care Economy
Solidarity for African Women’s Rights Coalition (SOAWR)

- A Coalition of 46 Members across 24 African countries but with regional and continental focus as well
- Formed in September 2004 with goals:
  - Ratification and expediting the Protocol’s entry into force
  - Popularization of the Protocol
  - Domestication and implementation of the Protocol
Solidarity for African Women’s Rights Coalition (SOAWR)

- 36 out of 54 countries have ratified the Protocol
- Protocol entered into force half the time it took other human rights instruments (28 months!)
- 18 countries have been introduced to a multi-sectoral approach framework to fulfill their obligations under the Protocol. 3 (Benin, Kenya and Senegal) appear to have taken action using the approach
Solidarity for African Women’s Rights Coalition (SOAWR)

- Over 300 lawyers trained in litigating on women’s rights using the Protocol
- Five cases taken up with two resulting in favorable outcome (Zimbabwe and Kenya) one currently at African Commission, and two in progress
- Training of Judicial officials on rights provided for under the Protocol and their role has also commenced at East African Community level
Solidarity for African Women’s Rights Coalition (SOAWR)

- Commission adopted reporting guidelines for member states. Malawi first state to comply
- Commission also adopted General Comments on Article 14; currently developing general comment on Article 6 (b) - child marriage
- Resolution on Land Rights (2013)
- Resolution and publication on Nationality
Progress and gaps

- Adequate Normative Standards and laws in place but low application

- Progress seen in Women’s Decision-making but majority of countries lagging behind

- Primary education enrollment up but drops high as girls advance to higher education
Progress and gaps

- Maternal deaths is high in many countries due to unsafe abortion and poor maternal health services in rural communities especially.

- Progress seen in some countries in addressing Discrimination in Law and more countries need to revoke such laws
Progress and gaps

- Sexual violence continues to be widespread and of grave concern in most countries in Africa
- 71% FGM practicing countries in Africa now have laws criminalizing the practice but enforcement is very poor
- Hardly any progress in ending sex trafficking
- Women organizations are driving the change for a better life but they are under-resourced!!
CONCLUSION

- Thank you for the opportunity to share progress, gaps and priorities of women in Africa
- Thank you for hosting this annual event and we hope next year you would again dedicate it to African Women’s Rights
- Please join hands with African women and support them in any way you can.
Thank you
And hope you found it useful!!