



73rd Regular Session of the UN General Assembly
AFRICAN WOMEN LEADERS NETWORK HIGH-LEVEL SIDE EVENT

“Leveraging AU and UN New Partnership to enhance the role and leadership of women in Africa’s Transformation”

**26th September 2018 | 09:00 to 11:00 am |
AU Nelson Mandela Conference Hall
Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union to the United Nations**

CONCEPT NOTE / PROGRAMME

Summary

On 26th September 2018, the Group of Friends of the African Women Leaders Network to the UN¹, UN Women and the Office of the AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security are supporting the Members of the AWLN in co-organizing a high-level dialogue on **“Leveraging AU and UN New Partnership to enhance the role and leadership of women in Africa’s Transformation”** in line with the theme of the 73rd Regular Session of the UN General Assembly, in New York.

Background

The African Women Leaders Network (AWLN) is an African Women Leaders movement, supported by the African Union Commission and the United Nations, under the leadership of H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission and H.E. Amina J. Mohammed, United Nations Deputy Secretary General. It is operationalized through the joint leadership of the AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security, H.E. Bineta Diop, and UN Women Executive Director, H.E. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. The Network was launched in June 2017 during the **“Women Leaders Forum for Africa’s Transformation”**, held at the UN Headquarters and formally established during the second forum at the African Union Commission, in April 2018. It is composed of more than 300 hundred African women Leaders from various sectors.

Since the inception of the Network, key milestones have been achieved to bring the African Union and the United Nations closer to the people they serve particularly women and youth. These include:

¹ The Group of Friends of the AWLN to the UN is chaired by the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the UN and vice chaired by the Permanent Representative of Germany to the UN. The AWLN HL event will be co-chaired by AWLN Group of Friends Members The Gambia and Germany.

- Undertaking joint UN-AU AWLN solidarity missions to Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), South Sudan, Chad and Niger;
- Launching of national chapters led by women with the support of the AU and the UN Women (DRC and Cote d'Ivoire);
- Launching of the African Women Leaders Fund (AWLF);
- Supporting women to be part of decision-making processes, notably in peace, security and development;
- Establishment of the Group of Friends of the African Women Leaders Network to the UN, which was launched under the leadership of Ghana (Chair) and Germany (Vice-Chair) to advocate for the agenda of women's leadership at the UN and its Member States and Adoption of the Group's Plan of Action (2018-2019).

Objectives and Expected outcomes.

The central question of the High-Level Event is ***"How Can Women Leaders Make the AU and the UN More Relevant to All for Transformative Change? Experiences from the African Women Leaders Network Agenda for Transformation."***

Members of the "African Women Leaders Network, senior AU and UN officials, Members of the Group of Friends of AWLN to the UN and High-Level Government/ Institutional Representatives will share proven effective strategies on asserting influential leadership, promoting strategic negotiations and exercising influence to address the challenges in the context of peace, security and development processes in efforts to ensure that no one is left behind.

The overall objective of the High-Level event is to bring to light the actions undertaken by the African Women Leaders Network from its inception, with AU and UN support, and to explore avenues for opportunities to strengthen these initiatives with Member States and new partners (public and private sector, non-governmental organizations).

Specific outputs will include the following:

- AWLN perspectives and actions are highlighted and brought to the knowledge of decision-makers from across the world;
- Interest is enhanced to support transformative agenda of AWLN;
- Stronger mobilization of Women Leaders to foster peace, security and sustainable development worldwide;
- The work of AWLN Group of Friends to the UN is highlighted and serves as base for further support to AWLN.



Format and Invited Speakers

The joint high-level side-event will take the form of an interactive engagement with combined formal remarks, followed with a general discussion with high-level delegations to the UNGA. Delegations wishing to speak may contact the Secretariat.

Speakers are invited/expected

Moderator

Ms. Folly Bah Thibault, Principal Presenter, News Directorate English Channel, Al Jazeera

Keynote Segment

- H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, represented by H.E. Minata Samate Cessouma, African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs
- H.E. Ms. Amina J. Mohammed, UN Deputy Secretary-General and Champion of the African Women Leaders Network
- H.E. Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés President of the General Assembly, represented by Deputy Chef de Cabinet, H.E. Ambassador Yanerit Morgan

High-Level Panel

- H.E. Dr. Isatou Touray, Minister of Health & Social Welfare, Republic of the Gambia
- H.E. Ms. Bineta Diop, African Union Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security
- H.E. Ms. Asa Regner, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General Deputy Executive Director UN Women
- Dr. Bärbel Kofler, Federal Government Commissioner for Human Rights Policy and Humanitarian Aid of Germany,
- H.E. Ms. Bience Gawanas, United Nations Under Secretary-General & Special Adviser for Africa
- H.E. Ms. Bintou Keita, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations

Intervention on behalf of the African Women Leaders Network

- Hon. Dr. Joyce Banda, Former President of the Republic of Malawi & Member of the AWLN

High-Level Discussion with Delegations & AWLN Members

Ministers, registered delegations for floor contribution in attendance and international/regional organizations, Representatives of the African Women Leaders Network initiative will be given priority to intervene during the high-level discussion segment.

Nota bene: the high-level dialogue will focus on dynamic discussion among all participants. 3 minutes interventions are highly recommended.