

DECLARATION AFFIRMING SUPPORT FOR GLOBAL AND PAN-AFRICAN ACTIONS TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

(THE BENONI DECLARATION)

We, the 170 Delegates representing 23 African Countries gathered in the City of Benoni, South Africa from 23-27 November 2006 for “The Gender Justice in Africa Colloquium coming to share information on African Best Practices for the management of Gender Based Violence;

Being **mindful** of the oneness and dignity of humanity;

Being **informed** by the provisions of the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights and, **guided** by the requirements emanating from the Millennium Development Goals as well as the recommendations of the United Nations Secretary General’s Studies on Violence against Women and on Violence against Children;

Giving due regard to the responsibility of enhancing the African initiatives for purposes of systemic transformation for effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and expeditiousness within the framework of relevant Continental Structures and Regional Formations; and

Having **observed** the rising awareness and commitment about Gender Based Violence, while continuing to denounce Violence Against Women and Children;

Now therefore, we the Delegates having **reached** consensus on the way forward do hereby affirm our commitment to, under the auspices of the African Union:

- 1. Undertake** the promotion, encouragement, support and facilitation of legal reforms and formulation of appropriate and adequate legislation, policies and strategies aimed at enforcing human rights as well as ending all forms of Violence Against Women and Children across our continent.
- 2. Accelerate** this growing awareness while ensuring efficient and effective mechanisms to expeditiously transform the prevention and management of Gender Based Violence within our respective countries by creating speedy and efficient mechanisms for mutual technical assistance and collaboration.
- 3. Support** the initiatives of the continental structures established for the sustainable development of Africa and improvement of its peoples' lives.
- 4. Join** forces collectively to promote 365 days of consistent prevention, response, support and development programme of 'Non-Violence Against Women and Children' and due observance of relevant commemorative dates.
- 5. Recognize** the importance of national and international partnerships and, **pledge** to continuously forge and strengthen collaboration with Civil Society i.e. Non-Governmental and Faith Based Organizations; Organized Labour and Businesses; the Media, etc.; Traditional Leadership; Bilateral and Multilateral Institutions including the African Union and the United Nations; and,
- 6. Agree** to convene periodically to continuously monitor and evaluate our demonstrable achievements and share new and emerging issues, challenges and best practices.

Done this 25th Day of November 2006