



FOR WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS



Press Release

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For Immediate Release

African Women Leaders Powering Beijing Forward

Thursday, March 12, 2015 – 50 dynamic women leaders and transformative actors from 30 African countries working in diverse fields and thematic areas convened at Harvard Law School in Boston, MA, USA from March 9th -10th for round table discussions on The Role of African Women in the Post 2015 Development Agenda and the +20 Beijing Review Process.

The event, organized by Urgent Action Fund–Africa (UAF-Africa), in close collaboration with The Human Rights Program at Harvard Law School and Ford Foundation, marked the much-anticipated progress that builds from the objectives of the Post 2015 Development Agenda and the +20 Beijing Review Process. Building on the two frameworks that shaped and instructed the thinking and actions on women’s leadership, the convening affirmed and reclaimed gender equality as a powerful requisite towards sustainable development.

Over the course of the convening, participants attended a series of high impact and innovative side sessions and events in the form of think shops that provided in-depth and practical treatment of issues inter alia bridging feminist theory and practice in leadership for social justice in ‘live’ narratives of women’s leadership in conflict and post-conflict Africa, economic justice, women’s strategic interaction with the media and communications fraternity as well as on women in ‘hot’ political seats. In addition to the sessions, participants also expanded their social and professional networks among women leaders and social justice activists in an environment that sparked and fostered knowledge generation.

As deliberations of the Post 2015 Agenda and +20 Beijing Review Process continue, it is critical to particularly ensure that gender equality is central to the

framework. Women need to lead and guide the discussions that essentially shape and orient their day-to-day lives. Gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment need to be integrated consistently across the entire framework through data collection disaggregated by sex and gender, sensitive targets and indicators. Therefore, the Post 2015 Agenda and +20 Beijing Review Process are critical spaces for African citizens, civil society organizations and particularly for African women, youths, and other marginalized groups to engage in.

During the closing remarks, Ndana Bofu-Tawamba, Executive Director of UAF-Africa reiterated that *"Africa is experiencing fundamental structural socio-political and economic renaissance which others have coined: The African Moment. Therefore, it is important for African women leaders to fracture the status quo, reflect and to renew energies and spirit into catalyzing newer political and economic discourses for Africa."*

The recommendations and solutions galvanized by participants during the convening are worthy subjects of follow up actions by governments, NGOs, private sector and policy makers alike in a bid to centralize women's leadership in the inclusive growth of Africa.

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