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ORGANIZAÇÃO DAS PRIMEIRAS DAMAS DE AFRICA
CONTRA O VIH/SIDA (OPDAS)



ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN FIRST LADIES
AGAINST HIV/AIDS (OAFLA)

ORGANISATION DES PREMIÈRES DAMES D'AFRIQUE
CONTRE LE HIV/SIDA (OPDAS)

**Communiqué from
OAFLA High Level UNGA Side Event
'Building on MDG's to invest in the Post 2015 Development Agenda'
28 September 2015, NYC**

We, the African First Ladies, as members of the Organization of African First Ladies Against HIV/AIDS (OAFLA),

Recognize the African Union endorsed 'Declaration 2015 Year of Women's Empowerment & Development towards African's Agenda 2063 and the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) of the "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", which reiterates a people-centered sustainable development agenda with a special focus on women, young people and vulnerable groups, to ensure access to sexual and reproductive health services.

Reiterate our commitment to invest in the health and education of women and adolescents and protect their rights in line with aspirations strongly expressed in the OAFLA Addis Ababa Declaration on the Post 2015 Development Goals adopted by the OAFLA General Assembly in January 2014 as well as to continental and international policy instruments and frameworks namely the Common African Position (CAP) on the Post 2015 Development Agenda, the Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA), the Maputo Plan of Action (MPoA) for implementing the Continental Policy Framework on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development in Africa beyond 2014.

We call on the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), other UN agencies, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and development partners to actively support continental initiatives on strengthening health systems, by providing continued technical and financial support and resources, and by facilitating innovative partnerships.

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We call on our governments and national institutions to ensure law enforcement and the domestication of international and regional instruments and legal frameworks that protect women and young people and their Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).

We call on the national, regional and continental coordinated efforts towards the accelerated reduction of maternal, newborn and child mortality and the elimination of all forms of gender-based violence and harmful practices

We call on the global community, convened at the 70th United Nations General Assembly, to reaffirm their commitment to assuring a safe future for women and adolescent girls, in particular, using the 2030 Agenda and its SDG's as a guiding framework for this coordinated effort.

Reaffirm our commitment to Stop new HIV infections among children and keep their mothers alive, by championing the end of early marriage and adolescent pregnancy, improving access to services that eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV and ensuring that all children diagnosed with HIV receive treatment.

Continue to advocate for gender equality and the empowerment of women and adolescent girls to exercise their reproductive rights including access to safe, voluntary family planning services and ensure access to sexual and reproductive health information and services in line with regional and global instruments.

Accelerate continued advocacy for the introduction of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education that includes modules on gender and power dynamics and is consistent with the evolving capacities of young people, in order to build the skills of adolescent girls to make informed decisions about their own lives, and to prevent sexual abuse, early sexual debut, unintended pregnancies and sexually-transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and Human Papillomavirus (HPV) empowering them as agents for change and contributors to the collective aspirations for a transformative sustainable development of the continent.

Commit to Stop new HIV infections among young women and adolescent girls and ensure AIDS is no longer the leading cause of death among adolescents by Championing the *All In* Initiative in our respective countries.

Coordinate with the African Union Commission (AUC) and national governments to adopt and endorse national legislation to raise the minimum age of marriage for girls to 18 years and promote the enforcement of laws to end child marriage and Harmful Traditional Practices on the continent. We shall also take steps to ensure that the campaign to End Child Marriage is launched in all our countries as a way to draw attention of all key stakeholders and mobilize support to end this harmful practice.

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We support the call on the African Union Member States to extend the Maputo Plan of Action on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) beyond 2015.

Acknowledging that underfunding for SRHR has been a major impeding factor to achieving universal access to SRHR in the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and MDGs

We support the establishment of a conducive environment across the continent that allocates domestic resources, promotes global investments, encourages private sector partnership, and ensures community involvement to increase investments towards, ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030, increasing access to SRHR, empowering adolescent girls, eliminating child marriage and improve Maternal, Newborn Child and Adolescent Health (MNCH) services including cervical cancer screening programs as well as treatment facilities through the holistic strengthening of health systems in our region.

Considering our contribution to MDG 3, 4, 5 and 6 through our advocacy and public mobilization initiatives supported by local, regional and international partners

We commit to continue our collaboration with our existing partners as well as encourage the establishment of new partnerships including with the private sector to ensure that issues concerning the health, education, wellbeing and empowerment of women and adolescent girls remain central in global deliberations on the unfinished business of the MDG's and the implementation of the just adopted "*Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*" and we recommit further to sparing no efforts in implementing the SDG's.

OAFLA Member States
28 September 2015