

REMARKS BY H.E MME BINETA DIOP

SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

ON WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY DURING THE

UNSC MINISTERIAL MEETING ON WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY

*THEMED, KEEPING THE PROMISES: THE ROLE OF REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
IN IMPLEMENTING WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY IN THE FACE OF POLITICAL
TURMOIL AND SEIZURES OF POWER BY FORCE".*

15TH JUNE 2022

- **Your Excellency Olta Xhacka**, The Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania, and the president of the UN Security council in the month of June 2022.
- **Your Excellencies Members of the Security Council**,
- **Mrs. Sima Bahous**, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, and Executive Director of UN Women
- **H.E Stella Ronner-Grubačić**, European Union Ambassador for Gender and Diversity
- **H.E Helga Maria Schmid**, Secretary General of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
- **Dr. Haifa Abu Ghazaleh**, Assistant Secretary General, Head of Social Affairs Sector at the League of Arab States
- **All protocols observed**

Allow me, Your Excellency Olta Xhacka to congratulate you, and through you the Republic of Albania, for steering the work of the UNSC in the month of June 2022. I am glad, your excellency, for devoting this open debate at ministerial level to **Women, Peace, and Security**, focusing on "**Keeping the promises: The role of regional organizations in implementing women, peace and security agenda in the face of political turmoil and seizures of power by force**".

Indeed, this is a timely topic especially now that unconstitutional changes of government, including a resurgence of military coups and constitutional amendments to extend leaders' time in power, have accelerated in our continent, with dire consequences to the security of women and girls in affected countries.

Before I proceed, let me bring you greetings from HE Moussa Faki Mahamat, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and a true champion of peace, security and development that is women led and owned.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by stating that, often, the conditions that lead to a military coup are in so many ways a result of gender inequality. Where one half of humanity constantly endures economic and social exploitation, political disenfranchisement, and inadequate healthcare and education. Indeed, violence against women, gendered poverty, the exclusion of women from decision-making in politics and economics are not only examples of gender inequalities but also indicators of poor undemocratic governance, where respect for human and people's rights is absent.

We know, and research has proved that gender equality is the number one predictor of peace. Because the full participation of all citizens, both men and women, is the best way to build and sustain democracies, reduce conflict, and achieve human development. This is what WPS stands for, thus one way of preventing military coups is by ensuring full implementation of the WPS agenda.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In Africa we have continued to advance the women peace and security agenda despite the emergence of coups and deterioration of security situations. We have now had 58% of our member states with NAP, up from 54% in last year.

This progress has been made possible because at the African Union we have strong instruments to deter military coups. They include the African Governance Architecture which is the core organ mandated to promote good governance and bolster democracy. This instrument is complemented by the the AU Constitutive Act; the Protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. These instruments have helped us to protect the implementation of the WPS in the face of proliferation of military coups and seizures of power by force. To enhance their effectiveness, we appeal for more investments from all our development partners and friends.

Your excellency, ladies, and gentlemen,

There are several ways that regional organizations can support women's full equal and meaningful participation in peace and security efforts especially in contexts of military coups where due to military coup, the constitution is suspended with a direct impact on the suspension of all state institutions, thereby limiting fundamental rights and freedoms, service delivery and protection from violence and abuse of women.

In the African Union, we have deployed several tools including conduct of solidarity missions to affected countries, where we advocate for inclusion of women in the political transition, constitutionalism and emphasized zero tolerance to violence against women and elimination of impunity. Good examples include missions to Burundi, and Mali. Femwise is another platform that we are using to promote the inclusion of women in peace and security efforts, through which women are deployed as mediators and peace monitors.

To promote collaboration between the security council and the regional organizations in enhancing accountability to violence and abuses against women and girls, I am convinced that speaking in one voice is one way that can enhance visibility and attention to the issue, which can further increase preventive responses from different actors.

I also believe harmonizing standards and processes for accountability to violence against women can have a far-reaching effect. And finally, through knowledge and experiences sharing we can expand our understanding, promote opportunities, and strengthen the quality of our response programmes.

In Africa we are using the Men's Conference on Positive Masculinity in Leadership for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls to address impunity and call for accountability. We are also deploying the continental results framework to track the delivery of the commitments by our member states to end violence against women and girls and to provide quality and efficient responses.

Your excellency, ladies, and gentlemen,

As I end let me congratulate the Council for its numerous initiatives for promoting the WPS agenda including through dedicating rotating presidencies focused on WPS. This is an initiative that can be replicated in our organization to advance the various initiatives we have. In the African Union, the Peace and Security Council has dedicated a standing open session on the WPS agenda every October. Increasingly a good practice is emerging where the monthly PSC chairpersons are also allocating an open session focused on the WPS during the month of their chairmanship. I believe, it would be valuable also to have this important matter included in closed sessions as well.

Thank you for your kind attention.