



Pre-Tana Regional WPS Dialogue
Implementing the WPS Agenda: Picking up the Pace
4-5 September 2024/ InterContinental Hotel/Lusaka Zambia
Concept Note





Section I. Introduction

The Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa is an independent initiative of the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS), Addis Ababa University, the African Union (AU), and eminent African personalities. The Forum is a response to the Tripoli Declaration of August 2009 that calls for “African-centered solutions” and designates peace and security as a collective “intellectual challenge”. The Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa, also known as the Tana Forum, brings together African leaders, personalities, and stakeholders to engage and explore African-led security solutions. The centerpiece of the Tana experience is the baobab tree which, through its symbolism of dialogue, invites participants to sit down in a spirit of commonality and moral duty toward finding solutions for peace and security in the continent. The Forum is a platform for formal meetings between African heads of state and governments by assembling them in an informal and collaborative environment. In this regard, the 11th Tana Forum will be held in October 2024 at Bahir Dar on the theme “**Africa in an Evolving Global Order**”.

The Forum brings together approximately 200 multi-stakeholders and representatives from the continent and beyond. Given the limited space to accommodate pressing participation demands, the Multi-stakeholder Dialogues have been introduced to fulfil three objectives:

- I. To take the Tana debates beyond the shores of Lake Tana to reach more constituencies across Africa;
- II. To popularize the outcomes of the forum among a wider constituency with a particular focus on the Regional Economic Communities (RECs);
- III. To further contribute to the creation of a platform where ideas and synergies on African-centered solutions in peace and security can converge with wider objectives to inform decision-making, policy formulation, and implementation at the AU, RECs, and Regional Mechanisms (RMs) levels.

Accordingly, the Tana Forum Secretariat will hold a **Pre-Tana 2024 Regional Dialogue on Women’s Peace and Security in Lusaka, Zambia in partnership with AU ECOSOCC**.

Section II. Brief About the Pre-Tana 2024 Regional Dialogue on Women Peace and Security Theme

Since the Windhoek Declaration 2000 which framed the Women, Peace and Security agenda, Africa has made progress in terms of providing legal and policy frameworks and establishing institutional mechanisms for implementation of the WPS agenda.¹ One of the key outcomes is the adoption of the

¹ <https://www.un.org/shestandsforpeace/content/state-women-peace-and-security-agenda-africa>





Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol). Some of the key institutional mechanisms put in place are the appointment of the AU Special Envoy for WPS, the establishment of FemWise-Africa, the adoption of the Continental Results Framework (CRF) for tracking the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on WPS by member states and the WPS recognition as an Agenda of the PSC. Thirty-five Member States and six Regional Economics Communities (RECs) have developed National Action Plans (NAPs) and Regional Action Plans (RAPs) on UNSCR 1325 to implement the WPS agenda.² However, challenges of the localization and progress in the implementation of policies and action plans linger on.

Over the years, considerable progress has been recorded showing strong commitment by the AU and its Member States to the WPS agenda. The establishment of strong and diverse continental networks of women leadership and mediators is one example. Similarly, peace agreements are increasingly adopting gender-sensitive language. In recent years, there has been a considerable increase in the inclusion of women, women’s groups, and gender experts in peace processes, serving as official negotiators, mediators, signatories, witnesses, or members of advisory bodies.³ Yet, deeply entrenched gender norms and perceptions that propagate or amplify women’s exclusion and non-participation continue to constitute major constraints at all levels. Consequently, compared to the thresholds set at national, regional, and international levels, women’s inclusion and meaningful participation in mediation and negotiation is considerably below par.⁴

Financing and monitoring of the implementation of NAPs have also remained weak. A large number of Regional and National Action Plans on WPS are not budgeted. As a result, the development of the laws and other legal instruments essential to integrating gender perspectives into peace and security policies and programs have been lagging. Strong monitoring and evaluation frameworks of the progress, achievements, and weaknesses in the implementation of UNSCR1325 National Action Plans and related resolutions are not in place either at either Regional Economic Community or Member States dragging progress and clear recognition of the impact of the agenda on the lives of women. Besides that, monitoring and evaluation of different sectors of peace and security do not adequately address/include gender dimensions as well.⁵

Limited capacity has also been exhibited by African member states in collecting and reporting gender issues in conflict-affected countries. Various actors engaged in Women, Peace, and Security at the regional and national levels also lack coordination and cooperation among themselves. Women’s civil society organizations working on peace-building, conflict prevention, and gender equality remain

² <https://www.un.org/shestandsforpeace/content/state-women-peace-and-security-agenda-africa>

³ <https://www.un.org/shestandsforpeace/content/state-women-peace-and-security-agenda-africa>

⁴ AUC, Report on the Implementation of Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa, 2020

⁵ AUC, Report on the Implementation of Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa, 2020





underfunded and not well integrated into the mainstream policy discussions on WPS in the region.⁶ In addition, in most cases, civil society organizations' inclusion in the WPS agenda seldom go beyond the development of National Action Plans limiting their participation in government-initiated WPS despite the various gender-related programs.⁷

As the global peace and security architecture is currently going through reforms, this call for a deeper look into the implementation of the WPS agenda to create a multilateral system that is gender-responsive and inclusion of women becomes a widely accepted and practiced culture.

Section V. Expected Outputs

The following are the expected outputs of the Regional WPS Dialogue;

- Face-to-face dialogue on the theme and coverage of the dialogue proceedings on IPSS and Tana Forum social media platforms;
- A comprehensive outcomes document to be shared with the Tana Forum Participants to complement the conversations, and sustainable and practical policy recommendations targeting stakeholders;
- A policy brief to be developed based on a theme to be selected;
- Identification of areas requiring further research or study.

Section IV. Expected Outcomes

The 11th Edition of the Tana Forum, scheduled for October this year, aims to enrich the conversations on "Africa in An Evolving Global Order" through the pre-forum. The dialogue will provide deeper reflections on the challenges of women's inclusion and explore ways to overcome them. Moreover, as the Summit of the Future will be held in September, discussions from this forum are expected to complement the conversations at the Summit. Overall, as peace and security reforms are an ongoing process, the dialogue aspires to contribute to the development of a gender-sensitive and responsive global order, and African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA).

Section VI. Proposed Approach

The dialogue will comprise experts, practitioners' inputs, and political and technical consultations resulting in practical recommendations and networking opportunities for stakeholders working in the

⁶ <https://www.un.org/shestandsforpeace/content/state-women-peace-and-security-agenda-africa>

⁷ AUC, Report on the Implementation of Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa, 2020





field of peace and security. The consultation will take place in a face-to-face format where not more than 50 participants will be physically present.

Section VIII. Participants Profile

Participants will include representatives from AU Member States, AUC, RECs/RMs, experts, funding partners, development partners, and representatives of foreign governments, research organizations, think tanks, academics as well as media based in Lusaka, Zambia.

Section VIII. Forum Language

The dialogue will take place in English with simultaneous interpretation in French.

