

**DECISION ON COMBATTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
AND GIRLS IN AFRICA, PARTICULARLY THE ROLE OF
SECURITY ORGANS IN ENDING IT
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The Executive Council,

1. **TAKES NOTE** of the Item proposed by the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria on «Combatting Violence against Women and Girls in Africa, particularly the Role of Security Organs in Ending It»; and **WELCOMES** the convening in the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria of the Fifth General Assembly of the Kigali International Conference Declaration on 7 and 8 March 2016, in Algiers, and the adoption on that occasion of «the Algiers Platform on the Role of Security Organs in Ending Violence against Women and Girls in Africa»;
2. **RECALLS** Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec.842 (XXV) declaring 2016 «African Year of Human Rights, with particular focus on the Rights of Women»;
3. **RECALLS** Decision Assembly/AU/Dec. 19(11) of July 2003 adopting the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, particularly Article **4§2 a), b), c), e) and f)** on the prohibition of all forms of violence against women, and appropriate measures to prevent and punish the perpetrators of such violence;
4. **ALSO RECALLS** Declaration Assembly/AU/Decl. 12(111) of July 2004 adopting the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, which in Paragraph 4 stipulates «(...) initiate, launch and engage within two years sustained public campaigns against gender-based violence as well as the problem of trafficking in women and girls; Reinforce legal mechanisms that will protect women at the national level and end impunity of crimes committed against women in a manner that will change and positively alter the attitude and behaviour of the African society»;
5. **FURTHER RECALLS** that violence against women constitutes a violation of human rights and an offence to human dignity; and **STRESSES** that violence against women and girls in Africa still constitutes a scourge to which Member States of the African Union should react effectively and resolutely by virtue of their national, regional and international commitments;
6. **FURTHER STRESSES** that effectively combatting violence against women requires a synergy of action between organs responsible for enforcing the law, institutional partners, the civil society, the media, etc.;
7. **NOTES WITH CONCERN** the persistence of acts of gender-based violence committed against women and girls, particularly in countries ravaged by armed conflicts;

8. **REAFFIRMS** in this context, as underscored by the Algiers Platform, the key role of security services in Africa, with the support of AFRIPOL, in terms of exchange of information, capacity building, sharing of experiences and good practices, and the development of databases, particularly data on violence against women and girls in the Continent;
9. **ENDORSES** «the Algiers Platform on the Role of Security Organs in Ending Violence against Women and Girls in Africa»; **APPROVES** the recommendations contained in the Kigali Principles and **INVITES** Member States to implement them, particularly through, *inter alia*:
 - a) **Adoption** of legal frameworks on violence against women and girls and the adaptation of ratified international and regional instruments in order to end such violence and facilitate investigations, legal proceedings and care for victims;
 - b) **Elaboration** of programmes of action aimed at eliminating all forms of violence against women, in accordance with Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals;
 - c) **Development** of the professionalism of African security organs with a view to strengthening their effectiveness by promoting the different partnership formulas, and improving data collection for the elaboration of adequate policies to end violence against women and girls and **Encouraging** policies for the recruitment of women at all levels of security organs, while ensuring their access to posts of responsibility;
 - d) **Adoption** of appropriate measures to improve cooperation between the security services of Member States of the African Union, through the African Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL), particularly in terms of exchange of information, capacity building, sharing of experiences and good practices, and the development of databases, including data on violence against women and girls, provided for under the 2016-2018 Plan of Action, as well as the **Harmonization** of Standard Operation Procedures, joint training and simulation exercises in order to end violence against women and girls in the Continent.
10. **REQUESTS** the Commission, in collaboration with its development partners as well as other stakeholders, to launch an African media campaign on sensitization about violence against women and girls, particularly in cyberspace to mitigate its impact on potential targets.