

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

Press Release

Date: 15 September 2026

Venue: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

AU Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security Launches 2026–2028 Strategic Plan



The African Union Commission, through the Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security (OSE-WPS), has launched its Strategic Plan 2026–2028, setting a new framework for advancing women's meaningful participation in peace and security across Africa.

The Strategic Plan responds to a persistent “conversion gap” between commitments and action, identifying practical barriers to implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and positioning the OSE-WPS as a convener, coordinator and catalyst for continental action. It places women's participation and leadership at the centre of AU-led peace processes, while advancing priorities on protection, conflict prevention, recovery and reintegration, accountability and predictable WPS financing. It also seeks to strengthen the capacity of the OSE-WPS to deliver on its mandate. Looking beyond the Plan period, it sets a vision for a peace and security architecture that delivers more consistent, accountable and adequately resourced WPS outcomes by 2029.

On behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, speaking at the launch, H.E. Ambassador Selma Malika Haddadi, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission, commended the Special Envoy and her team for bringing the Strategic Plan forward and recognised the contributions of Member States, women peacebuilders, civil society and partners who helped shape it. She emphasised that Women, Peace and Security cannot remain at the margins of institutional priorities, noting that it must be integrated into the way the Union approaches conflict prevention and mediation, peace support operations, governance, humanitarian action, recovery and reconstruction, and sustainable development.

She reaffirmed her commitment, as Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission, to ensuring that implementation of the Strategic Plan is sustainably supported within existing institutional resources and priorities, and that the work entrusted to the Office is increasingly anchored within the structures, systems and resources of the Union.

In her opening remarks, H.E. Ambassador Liberata Mulamula, Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security, expressed appreciation for the strong support and commitment of the leadership of the African Union to the Women, Peace and Security agenda. She highlighted

that the presence of the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Commissioners, Directors and Heads of Department at the launch demonstrates that Women, Peace and Security is not the responsibility of one Office alone, but an agenda requiring the collective ownership and engagement of the African Union.

The Special Envoy noted that Africa does not lack commitments on Women, Peace and Security, pointing to the continent's normative foundations, policies, frameworks, National Action Plans, declarations and decisions. She stressed, however, that “the question before us is therefore no longer whether we have made the commitment. The question is whether we are delivering on it.”

H.E. Ambassador Amma Twum – Amoah, Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development (HSS), welcomed the priorities of the Strategic Plan and highlighted the importance of addressing the realities experienced by women and girls in conflict and crisis situations. The Commissioner noted that conflict and crisis are experienced most directly through displacement, disrupted health and social systems, and profound pressures on individuals, families and communities.

The Commissioner stressed that protection cannot be considered only as a response after harm has occurred, but must be integrated into how crises are anticipated, humanitarian responses are designed and affected communities are supported. She also highlighted the importance of recovery and reintegration, noting that recovery is not simply about rebuilding infrastructure and institutions, but also about restoring livelihoods, services and social systems in ways that enable women to recover, participate and contribute to rebuilding their communities.

The following distinguished participants also delivered welcoming remarks, reaffirming their support for the Women, Peace and Security agenda and welcoming the launch of the Strategic Plan 2026–2028: H.E. Ambassador Adam Drury, Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the African Union; H.E. Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union and Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union; Ms. Natascha Skjaldgaard of the Royal Danish Embassy; H.E. Signe Guro Gilen, Deputy Permanent Representative of Norway to the African Union; H.E. Amb. Sekiguchi Noboru, Head of the Mission of Japan to the African Union; and H.E. Ms. Sophia Nyamudeza, Ambassador of Zimbabwe to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union.

The launch comes as the African Union continues to advance broader institutional reform. Building on the Office's institutionalisation in 2024, the Strategic Plan responds to that milestone by providing an important basis for ongoing reflection on the institutional sustainability and positioning of the Office within the Union, including the arrangements and resources needed to support its work over the longer term.

The OSE-WPS will work closely with the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS), the Women, Gender and Youth Directorate (WYGD), Member States, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms, civil society and partners to advance the Plan's priorities and strengthen coordination and accountability.

The launch marks an important step in shaping the next phase of the continental Women, Peace and Security agenda, with the Strategic Plan providing the framework for the Office's work from 2026 to 2028.

For further information, please contact:

Dr. Sally Wangamati | Ag. Office Coordinator & Women, Peace and Security Programme Specialist | Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security | African Union Commission | Email: WangamatiS@africanunion.org | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

For Media inquiries, please contact:

Mr. Abraham Kebede Gizaw | PAPS Digital Communications Officer | Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security | African Union Commission | E-mail: AbrahamK@africanunion.org | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Information and Communication Directorate, African Union Commission | E-mail: DIC@africanunion.org | Web: www.au.int | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia | Follow Us: [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [YouTube](#)