

PRESS RELEASE

Launching The “Media Women and Women Mediators Network” (MWMN)

It is with great pleasure that we announce the official launching of the “Media Women and Women Mediators Network” (MWMN), today, July 31, 2023, on the occasion of Africa’s Women's Day”.

The creation of this network was recommended during the Round Table on "Peace and Security in Africa: The Role of Media Women and of Women Mediators", which was organized on May 20, 2023 by the information website www.lesafricaines.net.

The MWMN is a dynamic initiative that aims at establishing a fruitful collaboration between women in the media and women active in mediation and peaceful conflict resolution, in order to contribute to peace and security in the continent, prevent violence and conflicts and address the need for greater representation, empowerment and collaboration among professional media women and women mediators in Africa.

The network initiative was founded in the context of women's under-representation in conflict resolution and mediation processes. Its ambition is to create a platform where women from both sectors can meet, exchange experiences and harness their collective expertise to bring about positive change.

The political and security situation in Africa is of concern to its leaders, who are constantly multiplying strategies to deal with terrorist threats. However, despite constant efforts, the continent is still struggling to counter the progression of extremism and its related activities.

Against this backdrop of uncertainty, women often pay the heaviest price. Their vulnerability has increased in recent years. Faced with the problem of population security in general, the actors highlighted the need to build on positive synergies to meet the highly complex challenges facing Africa.

These challenges are multi-faceted, and include persistent economic instability, extreme poverty, climate change, drought and desertification, demographic growth, with no real prospects for education, youth unemployment, political and social fragility, and growing terrorist threats.

Involving African women in the search for solutions to these challenges would help to tackle the root causes and define strategies likely to offer new opportunities.

Women in the media and women mediators should work together and explore appropriate solutions to address security issues and guarantee peace and sustainable development.

Convinced that the media can play an essential role in the search for solutions to conflict prevention, mediation and peace, women mediators and media experts have decided to work together to raise awareness of the issue and help states promote effective measures to guarantee peace and security.

The Network will constitute a pan-African framework, integrating women journalists, mediators and also women working in the field of research on peace and security; It will be a means for them to learn from each other.

This involves specifically:

1. Encouraging cooperation and exchanges between professional media women in Africa and women mediators, by promoting a space for sharing experiences and best practices.
2. Strengthening the technical and professional skills of the MWMN through training, workshops and accessing to educational resources.
3. Providing a space for knowledge sharing, mutual learning and professional support.
4. Promoting a balanced and diversified representation of women in African media and in mediation and peaceful conflict resolution processes, combating gender stereotypes and valuing women's contributions in different spheres of society.
5. Encouraging the creation of national networks of professional media women and women mediators in different African countries, in order to strengthen local capacities and promote greater regional collaboration.
6. Advocating gender equality in the media and in mediation, and recognizing the essential role of women mediators as agents of peace and conflict resolution in Africa.
7. Organizing events, conferences and workshops to foster exchanges and fruitful collaboration between the members of the Network and with networks working in the same field at the international level.

By leveraging the power of women mediators and women of the media, the Network seeks to improve the effectiveness and inclusiveness of mediation efforts in Africa, particularly by addressing conflicts which have a disproportionate impact on women and marginalized communities.

The Network will also serve as a platform for networking, advocacy and knowledge sharing. It will organize events, conferences and workshops to facilitate exchanges

between its members and stakeholders in the fields of media and mediation. Through partnerships and collaborations, the Network aims to influence public policy, raise awareness of gender equality and peacebuilding and foster greater recognition of the crucial contributions of professional women in these fields.

Activities:

1. Organization of conference to launch the MWMN, bringing together leaders of media women, women experts in mediation, government officials, civil society organizations and international partners.
2. Development of a strategic plan for the Network, including specific objectives, actions to be undertaken and monitoring indicators.
3. Establishment of an online platform to facilitate exchanges, sharing of resources and coordination of network activities.
4. Organization of thematic trainings, workshops and seminars for the members of the Network, covering topics such as investigative journalism, crisis communication and conflict mediation.
5. Raising public awareness and advocacy through communication campaigns, articles, reports and media events highlighting the achievements and challenges of media women in Africa.

The MWFN will mostly strive to create a supportive and empowering environment for professional media women and women mediators in Africa. It envisions a future where women's voices are heard, valued and integrated into the fabric of African societies, contributing to a more inclusive, peaceful and equitable continent.

The MWMN will have a simple structure, incorporating the persons who gave presentations and those who took part in the May 20, 2023 round table on "Peace and Security in Africa: The Role of Media Women and of Women Mediators", as well as the future members of this network (including a Steering Committee, an Honorary Committee and a General Council).

The MWMN is open to professional media women, women mediators and women researchers, all of them sharing a commitment to gender equality, women's rights and the promotion of peace.

By joining this Network, you will have the opportunity to meet inspiring and influential women, forge strong links with your peers and actively contribute to the promotion of women's rights and gender equality, through your work in the media and as mediators.

We invite professional media women, including journalists, editors, directors, animators, as well as women mediators working in conflict resolution, community and intercultural mediation, diplomacy and negotiation to join our Network.

We would be honored to welcome you into our Network and work with you to promote change and women's empowerment through media and mediation.

Together, we can create a positive and lasting impact by strengthening women's voices in the media and fostering a culture of peace and equality.

Together, we can make a difference!

MWMN Structure

Honorary Committee

1. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs (Senegal)
2. Mady Ibrahim Kanté, University Professor (Mali)

Founding members (Council)

1. Ndeye Magatte Kebe, Journalist, (Senegal)
3. Khadija Elmadmad, Mediator (Morocco)
4. Salwa Sahloul, Mediator (Tunisia)
5. Maimouna Diado Amadou, Journalist (Niger)
6. Rahmata Diaouré, Journalist (Mali)
7. Valentine Zoungrana Journalist (Burkina Faso)
8. Diyé Ba, Mediator (Mauritania)
9. Salimata Fofana, Journalist (Mali)
10. Bouchra Chakir, Journalist (Morocco)
11. Seynabou Ka, Journalist (Senegal)
12. Marie Mbounzi, Mediator (Ivory Coast)
13. Christine Lenzo, Journalist (Democratic Republic of Congo)

Steering Committee

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2. Khadija Elmadmad

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