

**ON THE OCCASSION OF THE 15TH SUMMIT OF THE AFRICAN UNION
HELD IN KAMPALA, UGANDA, 25TH -27TH JULY 2010**

**DECLARATION OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN FIRST LADIES AGAINST
HIV AND AIDS, IN SUPPORT OF THE “MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH AND
DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA”, THEME OF THE AFRICAN UNION**

We, the African First Ladies, meeting at the 8th Organization of African First Ladies against HIV and AIDS (OAFLA) General Assembly in Kampala, Uganda, on 27 July 2010, express our appreciation and congratulate the African Union (AU) for adopting “Maternal, Infant and Child Health and Development in Africa” as the theme for its 15th Summit.

We recognise and acknowledge the importance of promoting Maternal, Infant and Child Health and Development in Africa, in the framework of the Maputo Plan of Action on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, the African Health Strategy and other related policies, as well as the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in particular 4, 5, and 6.

We acknowledge the responsibility entrusted to us as First Ladies of Africa, to promote this agenda in our respective member countries and the continent as a whole. The fact that the African Union has endorsed this agenda during this Summit provides the momentum for us and others to continue working towards creating a future where, “*no woman dies while giving life and no child is born with the HIV virus*”. We note that prior to the AU Summit, maternal and child health has been a major area of focus for OAFLA, as clearly articulated in its new strategic plan.

Individually and collectively, all the members of OAFLA are implementing activities to address the most vulnerable segments of their societies, including women and children. OAFLA campaigns on “Save the Unborn Child” have saved the lives of countless children from being born with the HIV virus. Additionally the campaign to “*Treat each Child as your Own*”, has created ownership of the agenda, regarding Prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV (PMTCT) and orphans.

The First Ladies of Africa are at the forefront of safe motherhood campaigns throughout the Continent. Therefore, the commitment we are putting forward will be to accelerate and intensify those activities, in order to create a meaningful change within our continent. We are mindful of the fact that the long term success of this agenda is within the scope of the MDGs.

In this 8th General Assembly, we reaffirm our commitment and ask the African Union to consider us as true partners in achieving its goals. We commit ourselves to continue to scale up the following activities:

1. OAFLA will mobilise the First Ladies in African countries, to promote safe motherhood and child health through advocacy, awareness raising, and, where possible, implementing activities to reduce maternal and child mortality;
2. OAFLA will continue to create awareness in the community about the importance of PMTCT. We will champion the well-being of HIV-positive mothers and the elimination of paediatric HIV. We will support national and/or regional campaigns and programs to increase PMTCT.
3. OAFLA will address safe motherhood by creating awareness on issues which contribute to negative health outcomes such as harmful traditional practices, early marriage, and gender-based violence;
4. OAFLA will encourage and support African First Ladies to become advocates for women's reproductive rights and access to reproductive health services;
5. OAFLA will provide support to African First Ladies to mobilise resources from partners, in order to support vulnerable women and children; and
6. OAFLA commits to strengthen partnerships and establish new ones in order to contribute towards achieving the goals of preventing the deaths of mothers, the birth of children with the HIV virus and the abandonment of orphans.

We, the members of the OAFLA look forward to cooperating closely with the African Union and our governments, for the wellbeing of women and children of Africa.