

Communique on 50/50 advocacy campaign and women's manifesto launch

Under the theme: Constitutionalism, gender equality and the future of women's leadership in Zimbabwe

The entire gender machinery gathered at the HICC, the Speaker of Parliament, Hon Mudenda, Zimbabwe Women's Parliamentary Caucus Chairperson, Hon Mutsvangwa, Chairperson of the Parliamentary Women's Caucus and her vice, Honourable Pauline Mpariwa, Chairperson on Parliamentary Portfolio on Women and Youth, Hon Misihairabwi-Mushonga, Zimbabwe Gender Commission, Women in Local Government Forum on behalf of ZILGA, WCoZ and its membership, representatives from political parties, religious actors, other CSOs, Womankind supported by HIVOS, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, UN Women, UNDP and all protocols observed;

- all committed to the tenets of the National Constitution and all the 17 pieces of legislation speaking to women empowerment, underpinned by section 56 which speaks to gender equality and non-discrimination
 - also committed to regional and international protocols including the SADC, AU Gender Protocols and SDG 5 on gender equality and non discrimination
 - committed to working with each other to promote the realisation of these provisions,
 - in acknowledgement of this gathering as having been held in the women's month of March 2018,
 - celebrating collective strength across socio-economic and cultural differences as fundamental to women's diversity
 - appreciating the support for gender equality from all partners who made this gathering possible:
1. Celebrate the women who have gone before us for all the milestones covered to date in the advancement of women's rights, protesting and demonstrating, and taking various actions to make their voices heard;
 2. Celebrate the current Constitution of Zimbabwe and all its provisions promoting gender equality;
 3. Acknowledge the elusive nature of the realisation of the 50/50 parity, hence the need for collective strategy including getting male champions in through platforms such as the 'HeForShe' campaign and;
 4. Acknowledge the seeming lack of political will by various agents of patriarchy;
 5. Acknowledge support by Parliament through the Speaker's reiteration of the role of Parliament to ensure laws are in sync with the promotion of gender parity;
 6. Acknowledge international support for 50/50 from SADC, AU and the UN;
 7. Condemn in the strongest possible terms violence in general particularly recent reported events nationwide;

Therefore the women commit to:

1. Availing able, willing and ready women candidates to take up positions of leadership in all sectors;
2. Taking the government to account as far as even pursuing litigation in seeking gender parity;
3. Holding political parties to account prior to elections to field 50/50 candidates;
4. Mobilise regional and international support for this action;
5. Build high levels of awareness of women's active participation in political spaces as leaders from the lowest possible level;
6. Pursue key issues as articulated in the women's manifesto in relation to women's economic; development, social services, transport and energy, access to effective justice systems and the law, and women's effective participation and fair representation in governance;
7. Hold leadership accountable to taking on board women's voices;
8. Demand the speedy alignment of the laws and instruments pertaining to Gender Equality in Zimbabwe;
9. Hold public and private institutions accountable for having their boards comprising gender parity;

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10. Hold government accountable to equitable distribution of wealth including in agro-economics i.e. the distribution of land;
11. Renounce continued politically motivated violence which deters women to participate in electoral processes taking up positions of leadership;
12. Demand access to resources that will enable the women to participate in elections freely and fairly without being intimidated overtly and privately;
13. Demand that traditional leadership be non-partisan if 50/50 parity is to be realised as this contributes to victimisation of women;
14. Effective monitoring and evaluation frameworks and systems to ensure women are continually encouraged to take up leadership positions socially, economically, politically;
15. Demand the deliberate inclusion of marginalised groups such as women living with disabilities;
16. Demand the continuance of the quota system implementation until realisation of the 50/50 parity;
17. Call upon ALL Chapter 12 institutions to investigate violations without necessarily waiting for reportage from survivors of violence and recommend prosecution in accordance with the law;

We as Delegates believe that the launch of the women's manifesto is a key milestone in the journey towards the realisation of gender equality and that this will be achieved in this our lifetime!!!

We therefore call upon ALL political parties to commit unreservedly this evening to the gender parity pledge.

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