

PRESS RELEASE | 04 DECEMBER 2019

Promoting gender equality in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Rwanda: **European rhetoric in view of the facts**

The Hague (NL) – Today, the European Network for Central Africa (EurAc) launches its latest policy report titled “[Promoting gender equality: European rhetoric in view of the facts](#)”, focusing on women’s political and civic participation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and in Rwanda. In this document, EurAc proposes concrete actions and recommendations for a truly transformative European approach to promote the political and civic participation of women, and advocates for a better recognition of deeply rooted societal norms and practices in which gender inequalities in the domain are entrenched.

Gender equality and women’s full enjoyment of their human rights in the same way as men is essential to the full realisation of equitable and sustainable development. As such, the European Union (EU) and European countries promote gender equality as one of their priority objectives for cooperation.

Building on the strong strategic commitments made by both the EU and some European states, EurAc wishes to look at how these European political commitments were implemented in Rwanda and the DRC.

In that framework, EurAc focusses on the strategies and actions undertaken by the EU, Switzerland, France and Belgium in the domain of enhancing the political and civic participation of women and their participation in decision-making bodies at all levels.

This analysis focuses on the situation of the political and civic participation of women in the DRC and Rwanda, the main challenges in the domain, as well as the strategies and programmes implemented by the European donors (in particular the EU, France, Switzerland and Belgium) and proposes concrete recommendations for a truly transformative approach.

The report will be presented during a [public conference](#) on 4th December 2019 in The Hague (The Netherlands).

Some of the recommendations:

- Member States should make a strong commitment to developing a gender strategy launched by the Delegation of the EU (DEU) in the DRC and ensure its implementation in a coordinated manner.
- Member States and the DEU should support Rwanda in updating its National Gender Policy and Action Plan.

Also:

- Integrate into the job description of all personnel of the DEU, embassies and cooperation agencies of the Member States, the responsibility to promote gender equality in their programmes and external relations. This should be the priority for Ambassadors, Heads of Cooperation and Programme / Project Managers.
- Further promote political dialogue as an integral tool for promoting gender equality.

- In general, provide an envelope for the implementation of the objectives of GAP II with regard to shifting the institutional culture.

Links

- ▶ The **full report** with all recommendations is available on EurAc's website: https://www.eurac-network.org/sites/default/files/20191204_eurac_genderreport_en_vf_web.pdf
- ▶ The **public conference** is organised by Cordaid and EurAc. More information: <https://www.eurac-network.org/en/press-releases/public-conference-promoting-gender-equality-drc-and-rwanda-european-rhetoric-view>

About EurAc

Created in 2003, the European Network for Central Africa (EurAc) gathers member organisations from civil society in several European countries. These organisations work on and in the Great Lakes region. They support civil society organisations in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda in their efforts to promote peace, the defence of human rights and development.

EurAc's mission is to carry out advocacy work towards the European Union to ensure a strong, coherent and sustainable engagement by the EU and its member states, integrated to a regional approach, in order to help the Great Lakes region build a better future.

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