

## ***Event report***

***SALMA Dialogue for Gender Equality***

***GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
FOR MORE INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES IN AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA***

***From 28 to 31 August 2022,  
The Residence Hotel Gammarth\_Tunis***



## **GENERAL CONTEXT**

"Strategic Alliances: Latin America Meeting Africa" SALMA DIALOGUE is a program launched in Tunisia in 2019, in collaboration with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) regional program "Alliances for Democracy and Development with Latin America" (ADELA).

The objectives of this initiative are to strengthen the links between the two continents, boost interactions between the two regions and create synergies between program stakeholders.

## **SPECIFIC CONTEXT**

Focusing on inclusion, justice and equity, SALMA DIALOGUE orients its interventions towards sustainable development issues. Conferences are regularly organized in Africa and Latin America in order to

- achieve the program's objectives,
- increase impact,
- and consolidate the network.

In this context, SALMA DIALOGUE organizes each year a conference on supporting gender equality in African and Latin American countries.

## **SALMA Dialogue for Gender Equality CONFÉRENCE 2022**

### **PRESENTATION**

The SALMA DIALOGUE 2022 conference for the promotion of gender equality is entitled "GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: FOR INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES IN AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA".

This event was realized in Tunis from August 28 to 31, 2022 and will host women and men committed to gender equality.

### **OBJECTIVES**

SALMA DIALOGUE for Gender Equality 2022 will aim to create a positive transnational dynamic between African and Latin American countries to establish the framework for collaboration in the design, implementation and monitoring of public policies for gender equality.

The Tunis conference will thus constitute the launching of joint gender strategies in both regions, promoting the exchange of good practices in partner countries.

### **Participants**

The conference was attended by more than 50 people representing countries such as Tunisia, Ivory Coast, Argentina, Honduras, Costa Rica, Germany, Panama, Algeria, among others. As well as the participation of international organizations such as the European Parliament, UN WOMEN, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the Latin American Parliament.

## About the conference

The SALMA Dialogue for Gender Equality: GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: FOR MORE INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES IN AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA conference started with the opening ceremony with the words of **Amina Magouri** from SALMA Dialogue, and **Winfried Weck** as the head of KAS ADELA. Both speakers pointed out the need to discuss and implement measures to ensure gender equality in the different regions in order to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda. In particular, they emphasized the need to coordinate collective work, taking into account the social, political, economic and cultural specificities of countries. This was important in view of the problem of access to initiatives with a gender perspective that promote the empowerment of women in sustainable development and an outcome of the SALMA WOMEN DIALOGUE CONFERENCE 2021, held in Panama in November 2021.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Panama, **Erika Mouynes**, thanked for her participation in the conference and stated in her opening speech "Talking about gender matters means talking about gender matters between Africa and America." Data from the two regions, for instance, are similar, she pointed out, in terms of teenage pregnancies, violence against women, and the economic setback caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Latin America and Africa shared a number of discussion points in the political, economic, and social spheres that would bring change and opportunity to the continents. Women play a strategic role in sustainable development at the international and local levels, and therefore the positioning of gender in national agendas must be promoted, shared, and supported through cooperative work to achieve these goals.

**Hildegard Müller**, member of the board of KAS and president of the German Association of the Automotive Industry (VDA), also stressed that gender issues are not an individual matter, but a collective effort for the social progress of countries. Conferences such as the SALMA Dialogue, are an example of how prosperity and development can be achieved through dialogue and cooperation between countries, especially in the difficult geopolitical context in which we find ourselves due to cases such as the war in Ukraine and its global repercussions. Developing gender equality is a critical part of the global agenda. In Europe, a lot of progress has been made in terms of equality, but in many countries women are struggling to be heard and to have their needs taken into account. For this reason, the work of the SALMA dialogue should be highlighted, as it is one of the few initiatives working to bring together two neighboring continents with similar challenges (such as migration, economic development, security, and others), but also capable of creating opportunities for women and gender equality. The discussion on gender equality should be seen as an important opportunity for all regions to promote this dialogue for sustainable development.

From an African perspective, **Dr. Raymonde Goudou Coffie**, Minister and Governor of the Autonomous Province of Lagos in Côte d'Ivoire, explained how since her participation in the SALMA conference in Panama 2021, she has shared this idea with her President in her country to give it continuity and how she has established a link with the former Vice President of Costa Rica, Epsy Campbell, to build a bridge between the regions and African American women to work together. **Mary Munive Angermueller**, Vice President of Costa Rica, also attended the conference virtually and expressed her interest and gratitude to the program for identifying government actions and strategies in finding solutions to the problems caused by inequality as a



violation of human rights. Ms Munive emphasized that the ability to ensure gender equality in society is an important element for the fulfillment of the United Nations 2030 Agenda. Providing the necessary skills and tools to the population is therefore a prerequisite for ensuring a sustainable future for all, she said. According to the vice president, the SALMA dialogue program enables the identification, description and quantification of gender-specific problems in each country through public action to eliminate gender inequality.

The first panel discussion focused on "Gender Mainstreaming in Politics: Towards Equality in Leadership Positions." Speakers included **Raymonde Goudou Coffie**, Minister and Governor of the Autonomous District of Lagos, Côte d'Ivoire; **Erika Mouynes**, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Panama; **Epsy Campbell Barr**, Vice President of Costa Rica (2018-2022); and **María Noel Vaeza**, Regional Director for the Americas and the Caribbean, UN Women, Uruguay. This panel discussed the speakers' experiences in high-level leadership positions in political offices and international organizations. In particular, instances of political violence and a negative discourse about their functions and capabilities were seen as a common element of their experiences. In light of this, it was necessary to bring about social change through discourse tools in which support networks are created to address these issues, particularly through the use of current digital media. Therefore, the participation of women in decision-making processes is crucial to bring about change in public policy and cultural-social change in order to achieve real change towards gender equality.

The second panel focused on "Public policies for gender mainstreaming and the implementation of gender equality policies in decision-making". **Prof. Dr. Angelika Niebler** MEP, Germany, stated that we need to implement the parity agenda and that it is not a "women's issue". In this sense, she believes that we should not talk about quotas, but about parity, as difficulties have been observed in this area in the European Parliament, for example, unresolved issues such as maternity existed, which were an obstacle to maintaining parity. There is also a need to ensure transparency and equal pay rules to encourage more women to participate in the economy. Although the EU is at the forefront of gender equality issues in all its bodies, it needs to continue to review its policies on women's empowerment as an ongoing process.

For her part, **Silvia Giacoppo**, Senator of the Argentine Senate and President of the Latin American Parliament (PARLATINO), expressed that the strengthening of African-Latin American relations has been limited for years by a considerable knowledge gap in cultural, political, social and economic relations between the neighboring continents, which have great potential for cooperation, as the historical relations between Africa and Latin America are much deeper than most people generally believe. The senator cited PARLATINO's "Model Law for the Consolidation of Parity Democracy" as a vivid example of knowledge sharing, saying that this legislation, which she aims to implement in Latin America, could also serve as a model for Africa. This model law seeks to move from numerical parity, i.e. "how many" women are in power, to substantive parity, which has to do with their role in politics, and most importantly, to symbolic parity, where women actually exercise power in institutions. **Sabine Heimbach**, Managing Director of the Bavarian Banking Association, Germany, noted that we were still discussing how different the regions were but in terms of gender issues they were very similar. In Germany, where one would expect greater parity in parliament, the national parliament is composed of only 35% women, she pointed out. In the business sector in Germany, only 28% of management positions are held by women, 13% in supervisory boards and 4% as managing directors in their companies. Although there are still many obstacles, the "glass ceiling" in women's networks should be discussed and the benefits of diversity in these networks should be highlighted; other women in their leadership roles should also be supported and fraternized, and experiences should be shared to identify patterns of discrimination and find solutions.

On the topic of women's representation in decision-making institutions and economic performance, the discussion focused on how women in representative positions provide a holistic perspective and agenda in the face of the impact of inequality. **Prof. Pamela Mbabazi**, Chair of the National Planning Authority in Uganda, shared from her experience that gender mainstreaming is not only a political issue, but also an issue of smart economics, where gender inequalities are a barrier to achieving the transformative sustainability needed for nations. In response, she suggested that women should have

access to and control over resources and that they should have the productive capacity to achieve results in the short and medium term. This would lead to improved education, health, and rights. Economic benefits for women also impacted the new generations for their benefit, and therefore discrimination against women entrepreneurs in the commercial sector due to the wage gap and public policies closely linked to the economic space needed to be reduced. However, Uganda has made great strides on gender, with 32% of parliamentary seats held by women, and participation in the cabinet, which is headed by a female prime minister, has increased from 30% to 40%, but major challenges still exist: Most women live in poverty, illiteracy among children is due to a lack of government planning, and cultural practices that oppress women need to be mitigated. **Laura Bonilla**, Minister of Agriculture in Costa Rica, drew on her experience to show how economic development and women's participation offered a unique approach to addressing inequality, especially in rural areas. The visibility of women's work, she added, enables the transformation of business ecosystems and, in the long run, the achievement of sustainability. She stressed that her remarks were in the context of the current international crisis due to the economic impact of the pandemic and war in Ukraine, where the rise in product costs, shortages of goods, and the threat of famine in various parts of the world threatened the 2030 Agenda and gender equality.

Addressing the topic "Inclusive development strategies and public policies for gender equality: an imperative for economic growth", were **Edlam Abera Yemeru** of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), **Begoña Lasagabaster**, representative of UN Women in Tunisia and Libya, **Akram Zaoui**, director of the Public Policy Laboratory of the Policy Centre for the New South in Morocco, and **Maha Marouane**, associate professor at Pennsylvania State University. In terms of the African context, ECA first believes that to achieve economic growth and smart economics, the existence of wage gaps and the setback in gender equality due to the pandemic must be addressed. The economic cost of gender inequality in the region is up to \$95 million per year, and the WTO estimates that it will take 135 years to achieve equality. Ideally, the African continent would earn an average of \$1 trillion by 2025 if gender equality were achieved in the workplace. There are three pillars of action to consider in this area: 1) Technology: ensuring women can benefit from technology, 2) Financial inclusion of women, 3) If inequalities were not effectively measured, they could not be effectively addressed. Data allowed us to understand the challenges and the reality.

Discussing the mobilization of actors for the successful implementation of gender mainstreaming, one of the relevant actors is the International Criminal Court in The Hague, discussed by Judge **María del Socorro Flores**, where gender equality is a particular focus and improvements have been achieved within the institution based on three pillars: 1) safe workplace, 2) work-life balance, 3) gender parity, pay parity. At the same time, a gender focal point has been created within the institution to advise the different areas of the Court, including gender aspects, and is the only international court that has such a focal point. It is important to emphasize that the figures on violence against women are alarming and affect all states and all social classes, and that immediate action is needed. For these reasons, not only are laws needed, but also awareness of the concept of violence against women. States must review their legislation, which they have committed to do by signing international conventions to eliminate violence. At the same time, public, private, and civil society actors must provide progressive and continuous support to create a platform for women's inclusion in the economic sector and raise awareness that their participation in the sector is an asset to GDP growth and redistributes wealth as a collective measure of women's empowerment.

The panel concluded with a discussion on "Innovation, a performance accelerator for advancing gender equality", presenting the use of technology as a key factor for gender equality. In particular, the IT sector has traditionally been dominated by men, and technological tools must be made available to women to develop their skills and support their participation in an increasingly digital world. At the same time, female entrepreneurship needs to be strengthened by bringing together joint actions from the private sector, the corporate sector, and the policy ecosystem. Entrepreneurs and business people, as "project implementers," need to work with policymakers to develop initiatives with an inter-sectoral approach that relies on data to develop a project or policy/law. In light of this, training programs such as STEAM training targeted at young women can open up new spaces for inclusion both in the labor market and in the science and innovation space for the new generations.

## **Results and Recommendations:**

There was consensus among all participants that education remains a very important factor in evaluating gender mainstreaming. A mentoring program for women would provide an opportunity to bring about change in leadership positions and advance gender equality. Role models of women involved in the decision-making process should be identified to present their obstacles and solutions based on their experiences, not only in the political or economic sphere, but also as personal stories of successful women. In this sense, women's networks are an element to analyze, as it is necessary to know whether they are able to achieve their goals, learn from their experiences and implement the recommendations they make.

In addition, the term "fields of action" needs to be broadly defined to have more impact, with women in high positions of great responsibility being an inspiration to "everyday" women seeking support. A "top-down" approach should be sought to cover as many sectors as possible and be present in different "terrains" to achieve more impact. SALMA Dialogue should seek to create momentum to reach more people and give them an action plan. In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary to establish means, indicators, actions and accountability at both the state and societal levels, targeting the new generations so that women's already acquired rights are not subjected to the positions of current decision makers. For this reason, it is recommended to share information and innovations on the four crises of energy, food, health and governance (challenge of democracy), as they are the same crises that affect both continents.

### **Specific comments and recommendations from the conferees include:**

*Salma Dialogue is an innovative space for a more structured dialogue between Africa and Latin America. Institutionally, this is a space that aims to serve as a bridge between Africa and Latin America. For a third edition, the perspective should be broadened to include other voices that contribute to this logic and promote the process of forming new ideas.*

**Epsy Campbell**, former vice president of Costa Rica

*The conference is amazing in that it brings together people from different backgrounds and experiences. The gender theme is ambitious, and gender mainstreaming is a very broad topic, so the next conference should focus more on a specific theme and hold small workshops to share strategies with very specific goals. The SALMA Dialogue is a pilot project that has just begun, and its implementation requires the support of all stakeholders.*

**Maha Marouane**, Associate Professor, Pennsylvania State University, USA

*We should sign a commitment with AFROLAC: Alliance between Africa and Latin America as a South-South cooperation. The SALMA Dialogue Conference bridged the gap between the two regions, as all the topics discussed were practical and told through real life examples. Women's knowledge is the greatest strength of women, and the PARLATINO political leadership will designate a PARLATINO focal point to track progress and the transferability of normative frameworks to all countries in the region.*

**Silvia Giacoppo**, Senator of the Honorable Senate of the Argentine Nation and President of the Latin American Parliament, Argentina.

*The integration of women in positions of responsibility can have a positive impact on the situation of women in general. Issues that should be addressed in the future: 1. raising awareness among stakeholders, 2. technical and financial support for women: Access to information and promotion of spaces to facilitate the formation of networks, 3. public policy development: the exchanges at the meeting can help develop this type of policy, especially in countries such as Costa Rica, Tunisia, Panama and Côte d'Ivoire, in order to achieve equality.*

**Mohamed Dakhli**, SALMA Dialogue

# About the organizers and participants

## SALMA Dialogue

SALMA Dialogue, "Strategic Alliances Latin America Meeting Africa", is an international program implemented to create a positive dynamic between the countries of Africa and Latin America. This initiative aims to stimulate South-South cooperation between the two continents and create an efficient space for open dialogue. SALMA Dialogue now includes more than fifty countries from Africa, the Americas and Latin America.



## Konrad Adenauer Stiftung – Contact

### Regional Program Alliances for Development and Democracy with Latin America (ADELA)

The Konrad Adenauer Foundation has established the new regional project "Alliances for Democracy and Development with Latin America (ADELA)" based in Panama in 2019. This project aims to contribute to the strengthening of cooperation between liberal democracies in the Americas, Europe and other regions of the world such as Africa, as well as to provide opportunities for dialogue between the different actors. The target groups are multipliers of economic, social, foreign, security and development policy, as well as young professionals from science, politics, business associations and civil society, representatives of international and regional organizations.



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