The Africa Platform on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts Undertakes a Solidarity Mission to Mozambique to Advocate for the Rights of Children in Conflict Situations

The Africa Platform on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts (AP CAAC) is undertaking a solidarity mission to Mozambique from 28 to 30 November 2022 to advocate for children’s rights in conflict situations. The mission aims to support the efforts of the Government of the Republic of Mozambique and other stakeholders to promote the welfare of children affected by armed conflicts, provide a high-level platform to build on efforts rallying international support for the children in Mozambique, and to provide technical support to stakeholders towards enhancing the rights and welfare of children in conflict situations. The mission is in line with the objectives of the AP CAAC, to engage and sustain advocacy for the protection of children in conflict and humanitarian situations on the continent.

H.E. Jainaba Jagne, Permanent Representative of The Gambia to the African Union (AU) cum Co-Chair of the AP CAAC, is leading the mission, which comprises H.E. Crisantos Obama Ondo, Permanent Representative of Equatorial Guinea to the AU, Ms Doris Mpoumou, Director of the Save the Children Liaison Office to the AU, and other members of the Platform.

Members of the delegation will, through this field visit to Maputo, engage with critical stakeholders in Mozambique, including representatives from the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action, the Ministry of Justice, Constitutional and Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Human Development, the Ministry of Health, the Secretariat of State for Youth and Employment, Partner organisations and Civil Society Organisations among others. Through these consultations, the delegation will appreciate the work the Government of Mozambique is undertaking in addressing the plight of children affected by armed conflicts, and advocate for the protection of the children.

It must be noted that the AP CAAC promotes the mainstreaming of the rights of children and the Children Affected by Armed Conflicts agenda in the AU Commission and the Member States, together with relevant mechanisms like the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. The Platform aims to protect children from the six grave violations against children in armed conflicts as identified by the United Nations Secretary-General through policymaking and reporting at the AU level. These include the killing and maiming of children, the recruitment or use of children as soldiers, sexual violations, abduction, attacks against schools or hospitals and the denial of humanitarian access. In this regard, the AP CAAC continues to work closely with Member States to address the humanitarian situations which affect the protection of the rights and welfare of children.
The Platform is therefore undertaking this inaugural mission to Mozambique as part of a series of field visits to various AU Member States aimed at supporting and advocating for the welfare of children in situations of conflict in Africa, including by conducting consultations with children to ensure their best interests, concerns and recommendations are well reflected in policy outcomes and further implemented. Furthermore, the Platform will also visit Member States in post-conflict situations to learn the best practices on the programmes that have been put in place to rehabilitate and re-integrate children affected by armed conflict and explore funding mechanisms, among others, to recommend suitable measures for countries which are experiencing armed conflicts.

The Republic of Mozambique is commended for being a party to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) and having endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration (SSD). Therefore, the field mission aims to advocate for the implementation of the ACRWC and the domestic implementation of the SSD and its guidelines. Lessons learnt from the field consultations are expected to improve the protection of children in conflict situations in Member States by enhancing a shared understanding of collective responsibilities by relevant actors towards taking concrete measures to entrench the safety of children in conflict situations.

It should be recalled that the AP CAAC Platform was inaugurated on the 23rd of September 2021. The Platform brings together individual AU Ambassadors and key child protection stakeholders committed to engaging and sustaining advocacy for the protection of children in humanitarian situations during armed conflicts in Africa. Ambassador Jainaba Jagne, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Gambia to the AU and Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, co-chair the Platform.

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