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Shedding Light on Violence towards Women in Africa

At the initiative of the Sector for Social and Human Sciences of UNESCO, two important meetings on women in the African Great Lakes region will be held in Mombasa (Kenya), from 2 to 4 June 2009: the Second Forum of Ministers for Women's Affairs of the Great Lakes Region and a "Policy Dialogue" on strategies for combating violence against women.

The 2nd Forum of Ministers for Women's Affairs of the Great Lakes will evaluate the progress of the project to establish a [Women's Research and Documentation Centre for the Great Lakes region](#), by examining the implementation of the [Action Plan adopted at the first Ministerial Meeting](#) held in Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo) in July 2008. The results of the national consultations conducted over 6 months to identify areas and priorities of the future Centre and its national associate bodies will also be discussed.

The project aims to promote protection and respect for women rights and gender equality in **the Great Lakes Region**. It will also contribute to building human and institutional capacities of the countries concerned and policy-oriented research, awareness raising and advocacy regarding these issues.

In addition to UNESCO and the governments of the countries concerned, the main partners involved in this project are -: the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank.

At the second meeting which will be held on the sidelines of the Forum in **Mombasa**, researchers and Ministers are invited to discuss the results of several policy-oriented studies. These studies bring to light the various forms of violence suffered by women in the region - by trying to provide recognition and a legal response to the atrocities committed, and to break the wall of silence and connivance which often contribute to ensure impunity for their abusers.

Providing a unique opportunity to transform scientific recommendations into policy actions, the "dialogue" is an approach developed by UNESCO's Social and Human Sciences Sector to guide the research results towards public policy-making which, in this case, would promote the respect of women's rights and support the development of strategies for combating violence against them.

This strategy is also inspired by the [United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325](#) which reaffirms the importance of the role women play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, and the need to fully implement international humanitarian and human rights laws that protect the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts.

Other events relating to UNESCO's Social and Human Sciences programme in June 2009:

- **1-5 June:** 34th Annual Caribbean Studies Association (CSA) Conference under the theme: Centering the Caribbean in Caribbean Studies, Kingston, **Jamaica**.
- **8-9 June:** Plenary Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport (CIGEPS), UNESCO House, Paris, **France**.
- **8-9 June:** High-level Meeting on Teaching Philosophy in Latin America and the Caribbean, Santo Domingo, **Dominican Republic**.
- **8-10 June:** Assisting Bioethics Committees (ABC): Training Session on Working Methods, Libreville, **Gabon**.
- **8-11 June:** International Economic Forum of the Americas / Conference of Montreal, Montreal, **Canada**.
- **15-16 June:** Workshop on "Ethics Information Centres and Mass Media: Fostering Public Debate", Vilnius, **Lithuania**.
- **16-19 June:** Sixth ordinary session of the World Commission of the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST) in Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, **Malaysia**.
- **17-19 June:** International Conference on Bioethics and Human Rights, Baku, **Azerbaijan**.
- **18-21 June:** United World Games 2009 - One World - A Thousand Friends, Klagenfurt, **Austria**.
- **22-23 June:** High-Level Meeting on Teaching Philosophy in Africa, Port-Louis, **Mauritius**.
- **30 June - 2 July:** Regional Seminar on Poverty, Brasilia, **Brazil**.

Just published:

- [Migration without Borders](#). Also available in the following languages: [Français](#) / [Español](#) / [Русский](#). The Chinese version is forthcoming.
- [From curse to blessing? Using natural resources to fuel sustainable development](#), International Social Science Journal, Wiley-Blackwell publishing. Monograph available in English only.
- [Introducing Democracy: 80 Questions and Answers](#).

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