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African women crave role in attainment of peace

Dakar, Senegal (PANA) - The executive director of "Femmes Africa Solidarité" (FAS), Bineta Diop, Sunday said the integration of African women into peace processes was an essential ingredient for attaining lasting peace and stability on the continent.

"Efforts aimed at settling conflicts and resolving their deep causes will only be fruitful with the empowerment of all those who suffered from it, in particular women, who disproportionately are bearing the consequences," Diop told the opening session of the Africa Forum on Gender convening here 1-2 May.

She stressed that "when women play a significant role, equal to that of men, we will be able to lay the foundation of lasting peace," which she defined as good governance, human rights and justice, and development.

Diop said this realisation prompted the forum, which brings together African and Arab women in an effort to lay the groundwork for dialogue and coordination to meet the challenges facing Africa and the Arab world.

"Our aim will be largely reached if, at the end of our meeting, we manage to identify obstacles in the implementation of the different platforms adopted at world level and determine the relevant operational criteria likely to help in the march of Africa and the Arab world towards peace and progress," the activist, who heads the Dakar-based Pan-African NGO, said.

The FAS executive director said African and Arab women understand their responsibilities to undertake in concert with their peoples the requisite steps towards economic progress, lasting peace, security and human dignity.