



Femmes Africa Solidarité



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PRESS RELEASE

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF SENEGAL ADOPTS LAW ON ABSOLUTE PARITY

The network of African women and the members of the "Gender is My Agenda" (GIMAC) Campaign coordinated by Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) welcomed the adoption by the National Assembly of Senegal, on Friday, May 14th, 2010, of the law upholding absolute parity between men and women in elective bodies of Senegal. The adoption of this law, which was announced by Abdoulaye Wade, President of Senegal on the 3rd April 2010 in Dakar during the dinner banquet awarding Mozambican President Armando Emilio Guebuza the African Gender Award, has been hailed as a breakthrough by Senegalese women's organizations, all of religious, political, apolitical or cultural backgrounds.

Before an audience of Heads of State and representatives of governments of African countries taking part in celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of the State of Senegal, the Senegalese President discussed extensively the question of parity between men and women in Senegal. "I have a very simple reasoning. Why should a country deprive itself of half its population? That's what we realized very early on in Senegal" had said President Wade, who since decided to move up a gear "to convince the more hesitant" by adopting a draft law on absolute parity between men and women in elective bodies first by the Council of Ministers on 1st April 2010 and then by Senegal's National Assembly. "I decided to adopt absolute parity in institutional assemblies: the National Assembly, the Senate, the municipal and regional councils, and that then I would be satisfied," had highlighted the President Wade in front of his African peers.



"Women represent 52% of the total population. And only 23% are represented in the National Assembly, about 10% in government, 12.97% in the Regional Councils, 20.03% in municipal councils and 27% in rural communities" had noted President of the National Assembly, Mamadou Seck on the occasion of the session of parliament.

President Wade who had introduced a first attempt to establish gender parity in Senegal in 2007 by a bill which was challenged before the Constitutional Council has welcomed the adoption of this law as a major breakthrough for women in Senegal who will now be represented on the same level as men in decision-making bodies including elected assemblies from 2012.

We would like to recall that the African Gender Award (AGFA) was awarded in 2005 on the occasion of its first edition to Presidents Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal and Thabo Mbeki of South Africa for their initiatives for adopting the principle of parity between men and women in the African Union.

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