

**'Strengthening the Voices, Perspectives and Visibility of African Women
Politicians in Elections and Governance'**

**Three-Day Media Encounter between African Journalists and Women Politicians
November 26-November 28, 2007**

Venue: The Cottages, Johannesburg South Africa

**Venue for the 'Meet the Press' Press Conference: Nelson Mandela Foundation,
Johannesburg South Africa**



The three-day encounter between African journalists in the IPS Africa network and African female politicians is a major activity situated within the framework of a larger project funded by the UN Democracy Fund, managed by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and implemented by the Africa region of Inter Press Service (IPS) Association.

This project entitled, 'Strengthening the Voice and Visibility of Women in Elections', seeks to strengthen independent reporting of African elections and governance that fully reflects gender dimensions. Through linked communications and training activities, the project will achieve higher visibility of female candidates and gender platforms in the media during the election process. Linkages between media and politically active women will be created and strengthened.

The November 26-28 meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa addressed the (a) training component of the project for both African journalists and female politicians and (b) the project's aim of linking the media and politically active women. The four female politicians who attended this encounter (*see Section on Participants below*) formed greater links with the IPS African journalists from their countries during the three-day encounter. Through a pre-conference assignment given to the journalists to begin to find out information about the female politician, to interview her and at least three other sources within the country who know of her work, the IPS Africa journalists in Ghana, Lesotho, Cameroon and Kenya, began the initial links with the politicians which were strengthened throughout the three days both during the encounter and informally. It is envisioned that these links will continue within country as the journalists seek out these women as sources for stories on various issues, and as they follow their political careers at both the local and national government levels.

The IPS Africa editor prior to the three-day encounter had already begun the work of mentoring and commissioning independent electoral reporting with a strong gender lens during the election processes held prior to the encounter, as well as planning coverage with the journalists for upcoming electoral processes. The three-day encounter provided the opportunity to build the knowledge of the IPS African journalists, in particular, of key gender and governance issues in Africa to illustrate new angles and to increase their understanding of the links between gender, governance and issues such as Gender-Based Violence, the AIDS pandemic and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), among others. The IPS Africa Editor also facilitated a session using the IPS Checklist developed for reporting on women in elections and governance in Africa to further illustrate to the IPS Africa journalists, female politicians and partners how stories can be strengthened and presented in interesting ways with context and depth.

The content of the programme developed also targeted the female candidates with tips, pointers and skills on how to use the media to get their messages across. Representatives from UNIFEM West Africa (Sierra Leone) and East Africa (Kenya) also attended the three-day encounter. The female politicians were immediately given the opportunity to work with the skills given during the two days in a press conference with the South African media joining the IPS Africa journalists on November 28 at the Nelson Mandela Foundation. The press conference was organized by Paula Fray Associates and journalists and photographers from the South African media attended, joining the IPS Africa journalists who were present at the encounter. All of the female candidates were interviewed by the South Africa media, with two (the aspirant MP from Kenya and the female mayor of a district in Cameroon) being interviewed live on SABC television (English and French services).

The content of the encounter during the first two days also provided the opportunity to pilot the various sections of the electronic toolkit being developed by the Project Coordinator. The sessions on 'Issues' (see Programme in the Annex of this report) reflect the chapters in the toolkit on these areas and the 'Practicals' made use of handouts and activities in the toolkit that can be used in training of the media, female politicians and gender civil society organizations.

The IPS Project Officer facilitated a session on Tuesday evening with the participants to assess whether an electronic forum will be the most effective means of networking the female politicians in Africa and to canvass their views on valuable content for a newsletter targeted at female politicians in Africa.

'Meet the Press' Snapshots



Marie-Helene Ngoa, Mayor, Cameroon



Mathato Rosemary Mants'o – Local councilor, Lesotho



Akua Sena Dansua,
Member of Parliament, Ghana



Pamela Mburia, aspiring MP in forthcoming December 2007 Kenya elections, Kenya



Programme

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– November 26-November 28, 2007
The Cottages, Johannesburg**

DAY ONE, Nov 26/TIME	ACTIVITY	WHO/FACILITATORS
8:00 – 9:00	Registration	Faith Dube Gwaze
SETTING THE SCENE		
9:00 – 9:30	Introductions, Encounter Objectives and Programme	Pat Made
9:30 – 10:00	Welcome address	Dr. Michele Ruiters, Institute for Global Dialogue
TEA BREAK		
ISSUES		
10:30 – 11:30	Women in Politics and Governance, Key Issues, GL + Discussion	Colleen Lowe Morna, Executive Director of Gender Links
11:30- 12:30	Women, Politics and News + Discussion	Ferial Haffajee, Editor-in-Chief of the Mail & Guardian
LUNCH BREAK 12:30-13:30pm		
ISSUES		
13:30 – 14:30	Finding Gender in the MDGs + Discussion	Jan Moolman, Women'sNet
14:30- 15:30	Putting Violence against Women and Girls on the Media and Political Agendas + Discussion	Liesel Gernholtz , Director Tshwaranang Legal Advocacy Centre
15:30 BREAK FOR FREE AFTERNOON		
DAY TWO, Nov 27/TIME	ACTIVITY	WHO/Facilitator/Chair:
08:30 – 9:00	Recap of Key Threads from	Pat Made

	Day One	
ISSUES		
9:00 – 10:00	Gender, HIV/AIDS and Governance + Discussion	Sisonke Msimang, HIV and AIDS Programme Manager, Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa
10:00 – 10:30	TEA BREAK	
10:30- 11:30	How Democracy is Weakened when the Media and Women Politicians Shy Away from Issues of Gender Equality and Women’s Rights + Discussion	Susan Nkomo, former senior official in the Office of the Status of Women, South Africa; independent consultant
PRACTICALS		
11:30-12:30	The IPS Checklist on Reporting on Women in Elections and Governance – Elements of Good Journalism	Jackie Hobbs, IPS Africa Editor
12:30- 13:30	LUNCH	
13:30-14:30	Understanding the media and tips and pointers for engaging with the media	Pat Made and Trevor Davis
14:30 – 16:00	Interviewing Techniques -	Pat Made and Trevor Davis
16:00 -16:30	TEA BREAK	
16:30 – 17:30	Interviewing Techniques and Prep for Press Conference	Pat Made and Trevor Davis
EVALUATION and Discussion on electronic forum and news letter		Faith Dube Gwaze, Project Officer
DAY THREE, Nov 28/TIME	ACTIVITY	
09:30 – 11:00 am	‘Meet the Press’ – Press Conference at the Nelson Mandela Foundation	Moderator: Paula Fray
DEPARTURE OF PARTICIPANTS		