



Communique

Feminist roundtable on engagement with the Africa union

Doubletree by Hilton, 14-15
Nairobi, Kenya **AUG
2025**

Between 14–15 August 2025, the Initiative for Strategic Litigation in Africa (ISLA) convened a Feminist Roundtable on Feminist Engagement with the African Union (AU) in Nairobi, Kenya. This closed, reflective space brought together feminist groups, including feminist activists, legal scholars, and movement actors, to respond to the growing fragmentation within feminist engagement with the AU.

While feminist organising has long advanced critical issues such as gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive rights, and economic justice, feminist participation in institutional and structural reform processes has remained limited. This gap has had consequences, as seen in processes such as the drafting of the AU

Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (CEVAWG), where expert feminist perspectives were insufficiently included despite the treaty's gender focus. Such exclusions highlight the risks of continued marginalisation of feminist expertise in shaping continental frameworks and accountability mechanisms.

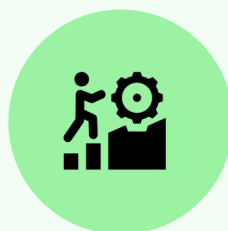
The roundtable was convened with the following objectives:



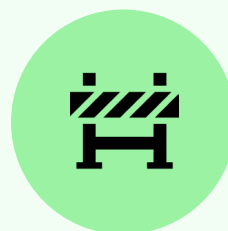
To map existing feminist constituencies engaging the AU, including youth and LGBTQI+ activists.



To analyse the scope and limitations of feminist engagement through platforms such as GIMAC and FEMNET.



To examine challenges encountered by feminists and CSO groups in accessing and influencing AU structures.



To interrogate structural and political barriers to feminist participation in AU processes .



To co-create a roadmap for sustained feminist engagement with AU institutions, identifying entry points, advocacy priorities, and coordination mechanisms.



To explore what a strengthened feminist ecosystem for AU engagement could look like, focusing on shared political identity, key actors, and new ways of working together.



To develop a shared feminist ecosystem vision for AU engagement rooted in political clarity, solidarity, and mutual accountability .

Over two days, participants reflected on historical and current feminist organising within AU spaces; mapped experiences of engagement with AU organs such as the ACHPR, ACERWC, the African Court, ECOSOCC, and the Pan-African Parliament; and assessed the scope and limitations of feminist advocacy through networks like GIMAC, FEMNET, and SOAWR . Discussions also examined “invented spaces” created by feminist movements, highlighting both their convening power and their limitations.

The deliberations identified persistent barriers to feminist influence, including opaque AU decision-making processes, fragmentation of feminist engagement, procedural hurdles, and tokenistic participation. At the same time, participants explored opportunities to strengthen solidarity across feminist constituencies, build collective political identity, and establish accountability structures that sustain feminist engagement in AU reforms and decision-making.

The roundtable concluded with an agreement to develop a Feminist Advocacy Framework and Roadmap for AU Engagement, which will be circulated to participants for further input and eventual endorsement. This framework will reflect the shared vision of African feminist groups to reposition feminist voices at the centre of AU reforms, strengthen the African Human Rights System, and ensure that feminist expertise informs the design and implementation of continental policies and institutions.

Nairobi, Kenya
25 August 2025