DECLARATION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN'S PEACE TABLE

We, the women who live in South Africa in all our diversity, attended the South African Women's Peace Table, convened on 19 July 2021. This peace table sought to (1) engage in conflict de-escalation, management and prevention; (2) create unity of purpose and social cohesion; and (3) rebuild South Africa's peace infrastructure. The framework for this response is informed by the South Africa's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

We, the women who live in South Africa in all our diversity:

- **reaffirm** our commitment to democracy, the rule of law and the civil, political, socio-economic and cultural rights promised in our country's Constitution. We recommit to the promotion of peace and human security. South Africa's democracy, fought for and built by people across race, class, gender, age and other divides, is being challenged on many fronts. Insurrection, corruption, disrespect for the rule of law and widespread looting exemplify this.

- **are deeply concerned** that the social unrest which started on 9 July 2021 was fed by criminal attacks on malls, warehouses and delivery vehicles, and on the infrastructure needed to implement South Africa's vaccine programme, distribute social security grants and provide access to food and water. We have lost more than 200 lives, more than 1 000 people have been injured, and the cost to livelihoods and the economy has been enormous. Many in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng have been left hungry and jobless. Their plight is a testament to the unfinished business of the democratic project. Human insecurity is undermined by the challenges of poverty, unemployment, inequality, marginalisation and intraparty divisions, criminal syndicates, a culture of violence and divided security sector institutions. This threatens durable peace and prosperity for all in South Africa.

- **take cognisance** that women, girls and gender non-conforming people bear the disproportionate brunt of the impact of violence and toxic masculinity.

- **note** that our safety and security in this time of the COVID-19 pandemic is undermined by poverty and inequality.

- **recognise** that women are also at the forefront of peace initiatives, and of responding to humanitarian needs.

- **note, with hope,** that women peacebuilders have been mobilised to respond to the immediate crisis, and that they are developing more sustainable peacebuilding initiatives.

We, the women who live in South Africa in all our diversity, hereby agree to:

1. champion peace and security for all who live in South Africa;

2. support relief and recovery efforts during this crisis, including access to information on how to access urgent socio-economic rights such as food, water, medicine (including vaccines) and social security grants;

3. work towards developing and implementing conflict prevention mechanisms, which draw on indigenous knowledge and traditional peacebuilding mechanisms, at all levels;

4. support the convening of a national dialogue and local peace tables as part of a process of reconciliation and transitional justice in South Africa;

5. initiate a process of collective healing from this and other long-standing traumas that the citizens of this country have experienced;

6. ask local, provincial and national governments to pledge to use their power and mandate to remove corruption; ensure social justice by implementing a universal basic income grant; implementation of a wealth tax; and ensure access to the rights to food security, healthcare and social security grants for children, pensioners and people with disabilities; as well as to support small business and those in the informal economy;

7. develop and implement a post-conflict peacebuilding plan for South Africa that includes a focus on security sector reform, democratic governance, humanitarian relief and psychosocial support;

8. implement the National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security; and

9. develop inclusive peacebuilding in which women, youth, disabled and LGBTQI++ communities play a meaningful role in peace and security decision-making and response mechanisms.

COMPILED AT A VIRTUAL MEETING IN SOUTH AFRICA ON 19 JULY 2021