The African Union (AU) on Sunday expressed support for the Egypt-proposed initiative which seeks to mobilize integrated climate responses that advance sustainable peace and development through the continental body's security strategy commonly known as "Silencing the Guns initiative"

The new climate initiative has been developed by the Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding (CCCPA) with the support of UNDP.

Its major purpose, according to a statement issued on the sidelines of Climate talks in Sharm El Sheikh will focus on contributing to the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, as well as the Africa's Silencing the Guns initiative, and the African Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032).

At the launching of the initiative Sameh Shoukry COP27 President reminded that Africa contributes the least to the climate crisis but is disproportionately affected in terms of how it unfolds and hurts communities.

The devastating impact of climate change combined with conflict, according to him has far-reaching implications across the continent. "The initiative will help deliver action on this critical issue as it addresses the potential risks posed by climate change for sustainable peace and development," he said

Speaking in the same vein, Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Economy of the African Union Commission pointed out that no one can fault any of the four listed priorities with gender, youth and vulnerable communities – those bearing the brunt of climate change as cross cutting issues.

"The African Union is ready to partner with Egypt in the implementation of the noble program in the next five years," he said.

The AU's campaign on "Silencing the Guns in Africa " aims to achieve a conflict-free Africa, prevent genocide, make peace a reality for all and rid the continent of wars, violent conflicts, human rights violations, and humanitarian disasters.

Major areas of concern, according to a strategic document seen in Sharm El Sheikh include the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin, Central African region, Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, the Horn of Africa, Sudan, South Sudan and Libya.

But all illegally acquired light weapons used in crime, urban violence and cattle rustling need to be silenced too, according to the African Union (AU).

Both climate experts and decision makers agree that one of the key partners in silencing the guns is women because of the significant role they play.

Latest report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) indicates that Africa is one of the continents facing the most severe impacts of climate change, with nine out of the 10 most vulnerable countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Experts warn if no appropriate measures are adopted, Climate change impacts could exacerbate security risks and conflicts in fragile regions and hotspots where poverty, violence, injustice and social insecurity are prevalent in some parts across the continent.

These include variability in temperature and precipitation; weather extremes and natural disasters, such as floods and droughts; resource problems through water scarcity.

Other listed impacts are land degradation, and food insecurity; forced migration and farmer–herder conflict; and infrastructure for transport, water, and energy supply.

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