

THE KIGALI INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE DECLARATION (KICD) 6TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THE ROLE OF SECURITY ORGANS IN COMBATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS.

“We must UNiTE. Violence against women [and girls] must not be tolerated, in any form, in any context, in any circumstance by any political leader or by any government. There can be NO exception, NO excuse, and NO delay.”

-UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon

Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) is a serious infraction against the rights of women and girls. It is an evil act which breeds conflict and destroys peace in the home and in society. Violence impedes the ability of women and girls to reach their potentials in life and ultimately limit their life chances and optimal development. Rigidly held age-old beliefs and gender biases, have negatively impacted on the family institution and its socialization process. Violence against women has proved to be the most pervasive yet least recognized human rights violation in the world. Violence between intimate partners and especially sexual abuse are the most common forms of violence against women and young girls today.

VAWG knows no boundaries, as it affects all categories of women and girls, rich and poor, old and young, literate and illiterate. It is a negation of the principles of equity, equality and justice. Much of the violence perpetrated against women and girls are by people they know, love and trust – boyfriends, husbands, other relatives, friends, neighbours, school mates, and colleagues in work places.

In some countries, there is no specific law to repress domestic violence, and hence ultra-judicial settlement “on friendly terms” of rape cases, which even results into marriage between the rape perpetrator and the

victim. Yet, in every country, there are security agencies whose main role is to take care of human security: man, woman and children anywhere and under any circumstances. The security bodies exist to **“defend the rights and ensuring the security of the women and girls”**. They have a duty to protect women against violence in their public as well as private life. And yet it has become obvious that the various actions to be undertaken in order to eliminate violence against women and girls often neglect the invaluable role of security bodies in preventing and fighting against impunity as regards these kinds of crimes.

The international community has long recognised the importance of involving women in full and effective participation in peace efforts for the maintenance and promotion of sustainable peace and security. The UN Security Council has adopted seven Resolutions on the Women, Peace and Security agenda and stresses the importance of women’s full and meaningful participation in all aspects of peace building, and conflict recovery as well as the Women Peace and Security. UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security was the first landmark Resolution to be adopted in 2000, and there have been six related Resolutions since then namely UNSCR 1820 in 2008, UNSCR 1888 adopted in 2009, UNSCR1889 of 2009, UNSCR 1960 of 2010 and UNSCR 2106 and 2122 adopted in 2013. All these resolutions provide member states with the framework for implementing and monitoring role of the international community in working together to reduce the impact of conflict on women and girls and to promote their active participation in conflict prevention and peace building. These resolutions have reaffirmed that sustainable peace hinges on an approach that integrates political, security, development, and human rights, including gender equality concerns. Though the participation of women in formal peace processes has been inching up, a study of 31 major peace processes between 1992 and 2011 revealed that only 9% of negotiators were women and 3% of

the Military in UN Missions are women, and the majority of these are employed as support staff¹.

In response to this pervasive problem of Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) UN Secretary General Ban Ki –Moon on 25th February, 2008 launched a multi-year (2008 – 2015) global campaign aimed at preventing and eliminating VAW&G in all parts of the world as well as providing services to survivors termed **UNiTE Campaign to End Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)**. This campaign was undertaken in response to a call from feminist and women rights organizations from all parts of the world for collective and sustainable efforts to eliminate the human scourge of violence. Calling upon governments, civil society organizations, women’s organizations, Youth, the Private Sector, the media and the entire UN systems to join forces in addressing the global pandemic of violence against women and girls.

In 2010 the **Africa UNiTE** Campaign was birthed as part of the global campaign and a continent-wide partnership to end all violence against women and girls. The rationale is rooted in the commitments made by African countries through ratification of various international and regional instruments that specify obligations for the elimination of violence against women. The Africa UNiTE was launched on 30 January 2010 by the UN SG and the AU chairperson. The Campaign provided a platform for coordinated, strategic and enhanced visibility, advocacy and programming to address VAWG across all of Africa. The overall objective was *“to raise public awareness and increase political will and resources for preventing and responding to Violence against Women and girls in all parts of Africa.”*²

¹ *UN Women, Preventing conflict, transforming justice and securing the peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325, 2015*

² The annual general meetings are held on rotational basis and during the 5th AGM held in Algeria, it was decided that the 6th AGM will be held in the Republic of Uganda in March, 2017. The theme of this year is

In response to the call for Action a campaign involving the security sector was subsequently launched in Rwanda 27th October 2010 at a high level international conference under the theme " **The role of African security organs in ending violence against women and girls**". The conference was concluded with a proclamation and signing of the **Kigali Declaration (KICD)** and *subsequent* establishment of the Secretariat to follow up the implementation of the Declaration. On this day the continent witnessed the birth of the Kigali International Conference Declaration (KICD) in Kigali, Rwanda. The conference attended by more than 150 participants representing Police Chiefs, CID Directors, Senior Police and Military Officers responsible for Gender and Community Policing as well as prominent members of civil society organisations, UN, and academia drawn from 12 African countriesⁱ unanimously adopted the KICD. During this meeting the Commissioner General of Police of Rwanda said;

"We have broken new ground and proclaimed a Kigali Declaration that shall be the Blue Print of the role of Security Organs in Ending Violence against Women and Girls We were honoured by the presence of delegates representing security organs from 12 African countries. Their active participation is a clear indication of their own government's commitment to support this noble cause" (Rwanda CGP, 2010).

The Campaign has since mobilized a wide range of actors: governments, civil society, women's organizations, young people, the private sector, community and Faith Based Organizations, the media and the entire UN system to join forces in supporting governments to address the pandemic of VAWG. The KICD conforms with the UN Resolution 1325 and other Regional and International instruments that bring to the fore efforts to curb VAWG.

"The role of joint security organs in empowering the family to combat violence against women and girls". The Conference was held on the 6th and 7th March 2017 at Serena International conference Centre, Kampala.

The security sector initiative has been hailed as the Best Practice of the UN Secretary General's Campaign on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), which in Africa we called Africa UNiTE Campaign. Through this campaign, the security sector within and across have UNiTEd their intelligence, resources, energy and commitment to end violence against women and girls in Africa. Other groups including the youth, and traditional leaders also formed similar Networks - but they have not been as successful as the KICD. While the SG's Campaign officially ended in 2015, the security forces in Africa continue to implement the vision.

From 6th to 7th March 2017 the government of Uganda hosted the 6th AGM of the KICD under the theme **“The role of joint security organs in empowering the family to combat violence against women and girls”** under the leadership of Uganda Police Force together with Uganda Prisons and Uganda People's Defence Forces. Topics discussed ranged from Women Empowerment and Sustainable Development, Equal opportunities and effective participation of women in leadership positions in security organs, Security and crime reporting, The role of the media in combating Violence against women and girls, Empowering women through gender responsive policies, Challenges and opportunities, Coordinating and collaborating to combat violence against women and girls, The community policing approach in Uganda and Justice dispensation in human trafficking: Challenges and way forward

Tackling VAWG is a step towards achieving the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In a recent study by UN Women and Economic Commission for Africa (2013/4), on the *“Socio-Economic Costs of VAWG in Africa”*, it was found out that Gender Based Violence (GBV) is the most prevalent type of violence in Africa ranging from 66 percent in Central Africa,

42 percent in West Africa, 39 percent in East Africa and 30 percent in Southern Africa. The study further revealed that the costs incurred by African countries in responding to GBV ranged from 1.2 percent to 2.0 percent of their gross domestic product (GDP).

During the conference, Letty Chiwara³ emphasized the role of data in combatting VAWG.

‘While data is necessary to allow us to track progress especially in the context of the SDGs which have specific targets on ending violence against women and girls, we should not forget that this is not only about numbers. It is about lives. Lives of our mothers, grandmothers, daughters, nieces, wives and all women and girls in our communities. Let us all find creative ways in which that perpetrators are not only reported by the victims. Let’s make it a community responsibility to report such crimes and come up with protection strategies to avoid further victimization of the reporter’.

With regard to Trafficking in Persons, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO), human trafficking is the fastest-growing activities of trans-national criminal organizations generating an estimated \$150 billion in profits per annum as of 2014. In 2012, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimated that 21 million victims are trapped in modern-day slavery and of these, 14.2 million (68%) were exploited for labour, 4.5 million (22%) were sexually exploited, and 2.2 million (10%) were exploited in state-imposed forced labour. Sex trafficked victims face threats of violence from many sources, including brokers, brothel owners, madams, traffickers, and corrupt local law enforcement officials. Victims of trafficking (most of whom are women), also experience physical violence from law enforcement during raids and are also exposed to different psychological stress. The meeting agreed that ‘Human trafficking is very COMPLICATED and requires the adoption of COMPLEX measures to tackle it HEAD ON!’”. According to the office of the

³ Letty Chiwara, UN Women Representative to Ethiopia, AUC and ECA

Coordinator of the National Taskforce on Trafficking in Persons in Uganda, a total of 283 cases were recorded in 2016 while 256 were intercepted as victims.

Ending Violence against Women and Girls calls for actions not only by security organs, but by a multitude of actors and use of multi-sectoral approaches. The meeting agreed on the adoption and use of comprehensive multi-sectoral approaches to End VAWG. These may include among others, provision of legal services, psycho-social support, economic empowerment, treatment and prophylaxis for sexually transmitted diseases including HIV and AIDs, and forensic examination for prosecution cases.

The media role in combating VAWG was highlighted and it was agreed as part of the resolutions that member states would work with the media as partners to end VAWG. That the media would be trained on how to report constructively about the vice of VAWG. Popular statements like *“the media is the enemy of the people”* are really disturbing. That Africa must not go that route. The media is a key player in securing the peace, security and development of our people. That therefore there was need to embrace the media and the media in turn needs to be pro-active in positively reporting on issues that affect women and girls. The meeting was informed that the UN Women working closely with the AU Special Envoy on Women Peace and Security held training on **“Gender responsive reporting in conflict, post conflict and fragile settings”**. As a result of the training, a *“Handbook on Reporting on Gender, Peace and Security”* was produced. It was resolved that the KICD Centre of Excellence which was established in Rwanda as well as member countries will take it up and make it one of the training modules.

The meeting concluded with 12 resolutions which covered areas like (a) Establishment of national centres for prevention of violence against women, children and family, (b) Establishment of one-stop centres, (c) National Data Centre, (d) Capacity building, (e) Development of

strategies adopting a twin approach of mitigation of vulnerability and empowerment of women and girls in society, (f) Incorporation of GBV in training curricula and (g) Implementation of the structure of KICD secretariat.

ⁱ Botswana, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda and Zambia