

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE GREAT LAKES REGION (ICGLR) – REGIONAL TRAINING FACILITY (RTF)



### STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY WITH SURVIVORS AND THOSE-AT-RISK OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE REPUBLIC OF SUDAN

Since 15<sup>th</sup> April 2023, the Republic of Sudan has had intense fighting between the Sudan Army Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary, Rapid Support Forces (RSF). This fighting that started in Khartoum has triggered intercommunal conflict in Darfur and Blue Nile, while violent engagement between the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM)-North and SAF occurred in Blue Nile and South Kordofan. Several attempts to reach a ceasefire between RSF and SAF have failed and fighting continues in Khartoum, Darfur, Kordofan, Blue Nile and other parts of Sudan.

To date, it is reported that over 1,000 have died, and more than 3,500 civilians have been injured in the fighting. The ongoing hostilities disproportionately affect women, girls and other vulnerable groups. Sexual violence, including Gender-Based Violence (GBV), particularly targeting Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and in the conflict-affected states, is a major concern, with an estimated 2.7 million women and girls at risk of GBV before the conflict. 2.6 million Persons are displaced – around 50% of refugees are women and girls overall. (*Sudan. 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO): IM Global GBV Country | Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility (gbvaor.net)*)

The Republic of Sudan is a Member State of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR); an inter-governmental body composing of 12 Member States, namely: Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic (CAR), Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Republic of South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Zambia.

The ICGLR was established under the **Pact on Security Stability and Development for the Great Lakes Region, 2006 (The Pact)** which has as one of its objectives **to create conditions for security, stability and sustainable development between the Member States**. The Pact has 10 Protocols including; the **Protocol on Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children (SGBV Protocol)**. Under the SGBV Protocol, Member States agreed **to combat sexual violence against women and children through preventing, criminalizing and punishing acts of sexual violence, both in times of peace and in times of war, in accordance with national laws and international criminal law**.

In particular, Article 6(9) of the SGBV Protocol provides for Regional Responses to Sexual Violence and sets up the **ICGLR Regional Training Facility (ICGLR-RTF)** which is a special regional

facility for training and sensitizing judicial officers, police units, social workers, medical officers and other categories of persons who handle cases of sexual violence in the Great Lakes Region.

It is against this backdrop, that the ICGLR – RTF invokes its mandate to prevent and respond to Sexual Violence that is currently occurring in the Republic of Sudan.

We, as **ICGLR-RTF and Partner; The Populace Foundation International (TPFI)**, stand in solidarity with the survivors and those-at-risk of sexual violence in the Republic of Sudan and do hereby declare as follows:

1. Call for urgent **cessation of hostilities** in the Republic of Sudan, restoration of peace, security, and stability **in a process that is inclusive, and, in accordance with the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 which affirms that peace and security efforts are more sustainable when women are equal partners in the prevention of violent conflict, the delivery of relief and recovery efforts and in the forging of lasting peace;**
2. **Condemn incidences of Sexual Violence** being committed in the Republic of Sudan and remind the warring factions and all those in positions of authority and responsibility to be mindful of the need to prevent and respond to cases of Sexual Violence, in accordance with **The Kampala Declaration on Sexual and Gender Based Violence, 2011** and other existing ICGLR instruments that the Republic of Sudan is party to;

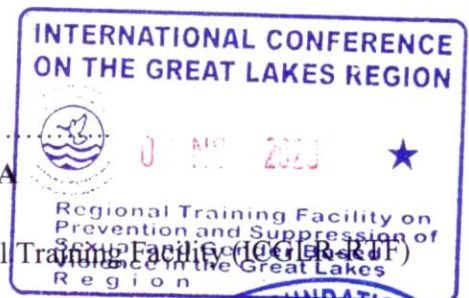
Urge the **Government of the Republic of Sudan** to, *in accordance with Article 11 of the ICGLR Pact on Security, Stability and Development for the Great Lakes Region, 2006*, **combat sexual violence through preventing, criminalizing and punishing acts of sexual violence, both in times of peace, and in times of war, in accordance with national laws and international criminal law;**

3. Call upon the **Government of the Republic of Sudan** and humanitarian agencies to urgently **prevent and respond to sexual violence, in holistic manner**, by providing medical, legal, psychosocial and economic empowerment-related services to survivors and those-at-risk of Sexual Violence.

Signed by:

**Hon. Dr. Janvière NDIRAHISHA**  
**Regional Director,**

International Conference on the Great Lakes Region – Regional Training Facility (ICGLR-RTF)



In partnership with:

**Richard Obedi**  
**Executive Director,**

The Populace Foundation International (TPFI)

