



OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON
SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT

Press Release

**United Nations Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict,
Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura, calls on the Intergovernmental Authority on
Development (IGAD), to urge the Government of South Sudan to take action to
address sexual violence crimes**

New York, 3 August 2016: As the Heads of State and Government of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) meet in Addis Ababa on 5 August 2016, for an extra-ordinary summit on the situation in South Sudan, the United Nations Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura, calls for an investigation into the alleged sexual violence crimes recently committed in South Sudan.

“I commend the leadership role of IGAD in seeking a political solution to the crisis in South Sudan, and its condemnation of the egregious sexual violence crimes being committed. I urge the Heads of State and Government, during their deliberations, to acknowledge the gravity of sexual violence; to request the South Sudanese authorities to take immediate measures to prevent their troops and associated militias from committing these crimes; and to take action against those responsible”, Special Representative Bangura said.

Sexual violence crimes have been a brutal feature of the conflict in South Sudan, which began in December 2013. These crimes are not only widespread, but are being committed with total impunity, in a pattern that suggests they are part of a military strategy, commanded and condoned against the civilian population, especially women and girls. While past trends have illustrated the grievous nature of sexual violence crimes, recent reports indicate that in the context of the fighting that erupted in Juba on 7 July 2016, at least two hundred victims including women and girls were raped or gang-raped, allegedly by members of the military and associated militias.

“IGAD should ensure that the military and political leadership of South Sudan move beyond rhetoric and implement the commitments they have made in their 2013 communiqués on preventing and responding to sexual violence crimes”, she added.

“IGAD must use its leverage over the parties to this conflict to ensure that they immediately cease, prevent and decisively respond to serious crimes, including sexual violence. IGAD must clearly stress the need for accountability, in line with the Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan of August 2015”, Special Representative Bangura emphasized.

The Special Representative further calls on parties to the conflict in South Sudan to issue immediate command orders to their respective troops to refrain from committing such crimes. “I call on the Government of South Sudan to launch an investigation into these allegations and to prosecute those found responsible”, Special Representative Bangura added.

“Amidst the politics, we must not forget the survivors. The international community stands in solidarity with them and will spare no effort to ensure that they receive adequate care, assistance and livelihood support while ensuring that the perpetrators, irrespective of their ranks, are held accountable”, Special Representative Bangura reiterated.

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