

New partnership between the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Inter-Parliamentary Union to end sexual violence in conflict

Press Release: For Immediate Release

New York/Geneva, 18 June 2021: On the eve of the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict on 19 June, Under-Secretary-General Pramila Patten, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG-SVC) of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (OSRSG-SVC), and Martin Chungong, Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), signed a new Framework of Cooperation Agreement (The Framework)¹.

The Framework aims to promote and facilitate the engagement of parliamentarians in addressing conflict-related sexual violence. Areas of cooperation shall include, *inter alia*: raising awareness of member national parliaments on the importance of empowering survivors of conflict-related sexual violence and other grave crimes through comprehensive legislation in line with international norms and standards; providing technical assistance to member national parliaments in drafting new domestic legislation and/or reviewing substantive legal provisions and rules of procedure with the aim of overcoming all obstacles in ensuring accountability for conflict-related sexual violence; cooperating in the promotion of the sexual violence in conflict mandate as part of the Women, Peace and Security agenda through the conduct of joint research and advocacy; and using various UN and IPU fora to increase awareness of national parliaments in the prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence.

To commemorate this 7th International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, the OSRSG-SVC launched a Model Legislative Provisions and Guidance on the Investigation and Prosecution on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (Model Legislative Provisions and Guidance)², a new tool to assist states seeking to enact new laws on conflict-related sexual violence or amend existing ones.

The OSRSG-SVC named Mr. Martin Chungong as a ‘Global Champion for the Fight Against Sexual Violence in Conflict’ in recognition of his important work in the promotion of gender equality, human rights, promotion of dialogue and conflict resolution as well as his unwavering commitment to support the mandate of the OSRSG-SVC through the Framework of Cooperation.

¹ <https://bit.ly/2S9G9DL>

² <https://bit.ly/3gIJDxR>



“Secretary General Chungong has demonstrated a deep commitment to the issue of prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence as well as an ability to lead, influence and affect change. I welcome him as a new Global Champion for the Fight Against Sexual Violence in Conflict”, Under-Secretary-General Patten stated.

Conflict-related sexual violence, perpetrated against women and girls significantly, but also against men and boys, continues to be used as a cruel tactic of war, torture and political repression. It is a serious crime that can have lasting, harmful effects on victims and their family, friends, and communities. Yet, in many countries, national legislation fails to provide a comprehensive legal framework that recognises all forms of sexual violence as crimes and protect all individuals who may fall victim. Such weaknesses in the laws and procedures of many countries allow perpetrators to escape punishment and deny victims the right to remedy.

“Partnerships are essential to my mandate. I value this cooperation with the IPU as national parliaments can play a critical role in shaping prevention and response efforts to conflict-related sexual violence through legislation, oversight processes, budget allocation and advocacy. The use of the Model Legislative Provisions and Guidance by parliamentarians in national jurisdiction will be a meaningful step toward fulfilment of the priorities set out in the Framework of Cooperation” added Under-Secretary-General Pramila Patten.

Mr. Chungong said “I am honoured to be a Global Champion for the Fight Against Sexual Violence in Conflict. The IPU has long focused on protecting women against violence in politics so this new alliance with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict is a natural extension of this work. It will intensify our efforts to generate broad political will from parliamentarians around the world to strengthen legal frameworks to end this scourge.”

The new President of the IPU Forum of Women Parliamentarians, Ms. Lesia Vasylenko added “We know that armed conflict has a different and disproportionate impact on women and girls. We call for parliaments to put in place the measures needed to protect them from sexual violence and to provide reparations for violations of their human rights. History shows that the empowerment of women and gender equality are critical steps in conflict resolution and post-conflict recovery.”

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