

**CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE GREAT LAKES REGION (ICGLR)
7th December 2011**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From 11th to 16th December 2011, Heads of States of the Great Lakes Region will meet in Kampala at the Speke Resort Munyonyo to devise means of preventing gender based violence (SGBV), ending impunity and providing support to survivors of SGBV. This will happen during the planned ICGLR Ordinary Summit and the Special Session on SGBV.

In December 2006, leaders from Angola, Burundi, DRC, Central African Republic, Congo Brazzaville, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia met in Nairobi and expressed deep concern regarding violence against women. During a meeting in Kampala the following week, they reaffirmed their commitments by formulating regional policy guidelines meant to safeguard bodily integrity and ensure protection of women.

Over the years, the region has witnessed several wars and conflicts. Women and girls have always been the greatest sufferers with many experiencing various forms of violence like physical torture, rape, abuse, forced mutilations and human trafficking. Such instances have seriously inhibited the ability of women to contribute to, and benefit from development, and to enjoy their rights and fundamental freedoms, in private or public life, and in peacetime or during situations of armed conflict.

The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region therefore is a good opportunity for our leaders to provide a lasting solution to the problem of SGBV. Consequently, as Civil Society in the region, we strongly urge the Heads of State of the ICGLR to be at the frontline of the fight against Sexual Gender Based Violence, and to:

- Declare Zero Tolerance Now on SGBV crimes and impunity
- Allocate specific and adequate funding for SGBV prevention programmes within a Gender Responsive Budgeting Framework
- Institutionalise, early warning and response to SGBV, in collaboration with the security community policing in the prevention service sector
- Establish an independent Regional Impunity Monitoring Unit by the next Summit of the Heads of State, to thereafter report on progress annually to the ICGLR Ordinary Summit of Heads of State
- Adopt a comprehensive SGBV performance framework (in the form of an Index or Barometer) with clear standards and targets, with opportunity for civil society to present shadow or parallel reports.
- Establish national Reparation Funds for survivors of SGBV by the next ICGLR Ordinary Summit of Heads of State.

For more information, please contact;

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