



African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
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Intersession Report

Presented by Honorable Commissioner Janet R. Sallah-Njie
Vice Chairperson and Special Rapporteur on the Rights of
Women in Africa



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INTRODUCTION

1. In accordance with Rules 25(3) and 64 of the Rules of Procedure (2020) of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the Commission) and in line with its **Resolution ACHPR/res.38 (XXV) 99 of 5 May 1999**, I present this Report as the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa (the SRRWA). The Report also covers my activities undertaken as a Member of the Commission during the period under review.

PART ONE: ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN AS A COMMISSIONER AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON

A. The Meetings of the Policy Organs of the African Union and other Meetings

2. As the Vice-Chairperson of the Commission, I participated in the meetings of the AU Policy-Making Organs held between January and February 2025.
 - The 49th Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives' Committee (PRC), held virtually from 14 to 31 January 2025;
 - The 46th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council (EC), held from 12 to 13 February 2025, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; and
 - The 38th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government (the Assembly), from 15 to 16 February 2025, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
3. I also participated in the Signing ceremony of the Cooperation Agreement between the Commission and the African Union Advisory Board Against Corruption on the margins of the Summit.

B. Virtual 82nd Ordinary Session (Private)

4. From **25 February – 11 March 2025**, I attended the Commission's 82nd Ordinary Session (Private), convened virtually to consider Communications, outstanding Reports, and other matters.

C. Engagement in Joint Fact-Finding Mission on Sudan

Collaboration with UN Counterparts

5. On **14 January 2025**, the ACHPR's Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) members held a virtual meeting with the United Nations Independent Fact-Finding Mission on Sudan. Discussions focused on comparative mandates and methodologies, priority areas for investigation, reporting frameworks, and opportunities for collaboration.



Participation in AU-Led Political Dialogue Review

6. From **19 to 21 February 2025**, together with other FFM members, I attended the Follow-up Review Meeting on the July–August 2023 consultative engagements for the Inter-Sudanese Political Dialogue. The meeting, organized by the AU High-Level Panel on Sudan, took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Hybrid Oral Hearings

7. As a member of the Joint FFFM on Sudan, I participated in the hybrid virtual hearings held from **17 to 28 March 2025**.

**PART TWO: PROTECTION ACTIVITIES: ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN AS
COUNTRY RAPPORTEUR AND SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON
THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN AFRICA**

I. Press Releases

A. Press Statement on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

8. On **25 November 2024**, I issued a press statement to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. On this momentous occasion, I reaffirmed my commitment and that of the Commission to the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls across the continent.

B. Press Statement on the occasion of International Women's Day

9. On **8 March 2025**, I issued a press statement to mark International Women's Day, celebrated under the theme, "*For ALL Women and Girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment.*" In my statement, I highlighted how the theme resonates deeply as we commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. I also emphasized the progress in advancing gender equality while acknowledging the long road ahead in ensuring the full realization of rights and empowerment for all women and girls.



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II. Country Monitoring

A. Ghana

Letter of Commendation for Ghana's groundbreaking diaspora citizenship program.

10. On **6 December 2024**, in our respective roles as Country Rapporteur for Ghana and Chairperson of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities and Minorities in Africa, we formally commended His Excellency President John Dramani Mahama for Ghana's groundbreaking diaspora citizenship program. Our letter specifically recognized the grant of citizenship to 784 persons of African descent, including 524 naturalized on 19 November 2024 through the "Beyond the Return" initiative; Progressive legislative reforms establishing the right of abode for diasporans, and Ghana's continental leadership in reparative justice and pan-African unity.

Congratulatory letter for the appointment of Her Excellency Jane Naana Opoku-Agyemang as Ghana's first female Vice-President

11. On **25 December 2024**, in our joint capacities as Country Rapporteur for Ghana, SRRWA, and Chairperson of the Commission, we formally commended the election of His Excellency John Mahama as President and the groundbreaking appointment of Her Excellency Jane Naana Opoku-Agyemang as Ghana's first female Vice-President. This transformative milestone not only strengthens Ghana's democratic institutions but also establishes an inspiring precedent for women's political leadership and gender equality across Africa.

B. São Tomé and Príncipe

Letter of Commendation on the Appointment of the First Female Prime Minister of São Tomé and Príncipe

12. On **22 January 2025**, I addressed a letter of Commendation to H.E. Mr. Carlos Vila Nova, President of the Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe. The letter congratulated the Government on the historic appointment of H.E. Ilza Amado Vaz as the first female Prime Minister of São Tomé and Príncipe. In the letter, I highlighted that her appointment represents a significant step forward in the quest for gender equality and the recognition of women's leadership capabilities in Africa.



C. Democratic Republic of Congo

Urgent Appeal Regarding Reports of Mass Rape and Torture against Women in the Democratic Republic of Congo

13. On **14 February 2025**, I addressed an urgent appeal to His Excellency Mr. Félix Tshisekedi, President of the Democratic Republic of Congo, in my capacity as the SRRWA, alongside the Country Rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In the letter, we expressed grave concern regarding disturbing reports of mass rape and torture committed against hundreds of women following a violent attack on a prison in the eastern part of the country.

D. Namibia

Congratulatory Letter for the Election of the First Female President in the Republic of Namibia

14. On **5 December 2024**, as Country Rapporteur for Namibia and SRRWA, I congratulated Her Excellency Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah on her historic election as Namibia's first female president. The Electoral Commission had confirmed her decisive victory the previous day—securing 57% of the vote, far ahead of her closest rival's 26%. This milestone not only reinforces Namibia's democratic progress but also marks a breakthrough for gender equality, inspiring women across Africa and beyond.

Congratulatory Letter on the Inauguration of the First Female President of Namibia

15. On **25 March 2025**, I addressed a letter of congratulations to H.E. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah on her historic inauguration as the first female President of the Republic of Namibia. In the letter, I also commended the appointment of H.E. Lucia Witbooi as the first female Vice President and the establishment of a gender-balanced cabinet comprising 50% female members. On the same day, I issued a statement celebrating this historic inauguration and congratulating the government of Namibia on this remarkable milestone.

E. Nigeria

Urgent Appeal Regarding the Suspension of Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan from the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

16. On **25 March 2025**, I addressed a joint urgent appeal to His Excellency Bola Ahmed Tinubu, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in my capacity as the SRRWA, alongside the Commissioner Rapporteur for the human rights situation in Nigeria. In the



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letter, we expressed deep concern regarding reports of the suspension of Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan from the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

PART THREE: PROMOTION ACTIVITIES: ACTIVITIES AS SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN AFRICA

A. Workshop on the withdrawal of reservations on the Maputo Protocol

17. From **20 to 21 November 2024**, I was represented at the above-mentioned workshop, organized by Equality Now and held in Nairobi, Kenya, where I virtually delivered opening remarks. In my statement, I highlighted the critical need for States to uphold their commitments under the Protocol and take concrete steps to eliminate legal and policy barriers that prevent the effective implementation of its provisions.

B. Reparations for human rights violations affecting different categories of women

18. On **4 February 2025**, I had the privilege of attending and delivering a statement at the event focused on Reparations for Human Rights Violations Affecting Different Categories of Women, organized by the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights in Arusha, Tanzania.

C. 41st GIMAC Pre-Summit CSOs Consultative Meeting

19. On **8 February 2025**, I was honored to speak at the GIMAC event focused on *Taking Collective Action to Advance the Reparations Agenda and Women & Girls' Rights*, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. In my presentation, I underscored that across the continent, women and girls have endured disproportionate historical and ongoing injustices, highlighting the need to approach reparations through a gendered lens.

D. Africa Disrupt CSW69

20. From **25 to 27 February 2025**, I was represented at the Africa Disrupt CSW69 event organized by FEMNET in collaboration with Sustain267 and NGO Africa in Gaborone, Botswana, where an opening statement was delivered on my behalf. In my statement, I highlighted that the choice of Botswana as the host for this year's convening is particularly symbolic, as it is the latest state to ratify the Maputo Protocol.

E. Ilitha Labantu 35th Anniversary Celebratory Conference

21. On **26 February 2025**, I delivered a keynote address at the Ilitha Labantu 35th Anniversary Celebratory Conference, organized by Ilitha Labantu in Cape Town, South



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Africa. The event marked an important milestone in the fight for gender equality and women's empowerment, celebrating decades of resilience and advocacy.

F. Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69)

Celebratory Panel on the Adoption of the AU Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls

22. On **10 March 2025**, I was represented at a celebratory panel organized by UN Women to commemorate the adoption of the African Union Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (AU CEVAWG) on 16 February 2025, during the 38th AU Assembly of Heads of State.

EDVAW Platform Meeting with the ECOSOC President

23. On **11 March 2025**, in my capacity as Co-Chair of the EDVAW Platform, I was represented at a strategic meeting with H.E. Bob Rae, President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for 2025 and Permanent Representative of Canada to the UN, following his election on 25 July 2024.

African Union Ministerial Consultation Meeting with the Africa Group

24. On **11 March 2025**, I was represented at the 69th Session of the CSW69, held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, and opening remarks were delivered on my behalf. The session, organized by the Women, Gender, and Youth Directorate (WGYD) of the African Union Commission, marked the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, focusing on reviewing and appraising its implementation and outcomes.

EDVAW/ACT Network/EU Strategic Dialogue

25. On **12 March 2025**, I was represented at a strategic dialogue convened by UN Women, bringing together regional and international stakeholders, including civil society organizations, the EDVAW Platform, the Advocacy, Coalition Building, and Transformative Feminist Action (ACT) to End Violence Against Women Network, and the European Union.

Awareness Raising Briefing for Civil Society Organizations on the Mandates of the EDVAW

26. On **13 March 2025**, I chaired the EDVAW Platform Briefing Meeting held on the margins of CSW69, during which I delivered the opening statement and briefed civil society organizations on the mandate of the SRRWA. The meeting served as a valuable platform for NGOs to gain a deeper understanding of the respective mandates of the Platform's members.



The 23rd EDVAW Platform Meeting

27. On **13 March 2025**, I participated in the 23rd EDVAW Platform Meeting, where members presented their impactful mandates, demonstrating their commitment to ending violence and discrimination against women. The session featured a comprehensive tour de table that enabled participants to highlight achievements, outline 2025 strategic priorities, and explore innovative collaboration methods to advance their shared mission. The meeting fostered robust exchanges on best practices, challenges, and synergies, culminating in the adoption of an Activity Calendar to guide coordinated advocacy, capacity-building, and policy interventions throughout 2025.
28. I would like to conclude this part of the report with the information that I am the current Co-Chair of the EDVAW Platform for 2025 alongside Ms. Reem Alsalem, UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Girls, which marks a transformative opportunity for the Platform's global reach and impact. This unique partnership synergizes continental expertise with international advocacy channels, enabling the Platform to amplify African priorities within UN mechanisms, mobilize cross-border resources, and elevate evidence-based solutions through the Special Rapporteurs' global and regional mandates. By uniting regional leadership with multilateral leverage, this co-chairmanship will accelerate progress toward eradicating gender-based violence while ensuring that African perspectives shape the worldwide agenda.

G. Podcast with Amnesty International

29. On **26 March 2025**, I participated as a panelist in a podcast hosted by Amnesty International, where I explored key issues concerning women's rights in East and Southern Africa. The discussion reflected on both progress and setbacks, highlighting gains made since the Beijing Conference and the role of the Maputo Protocol in advancing gender equality on the continent.

PART FOUR: BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE SITUATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN AFRICA

30. During the intersession period, I noted the following developments and concerns on the situation of women on the continent:

30th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

31. Celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action highlights notable progress in African women's rights alongside ongoing challenges.



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Key achievements include significant increases in political participation, exemplified by Rwanda's global lead with over 60% female parliamentarians,¹ and advancements in women's political representation in South Africa, Namibia, and Senegal through quota systems.² The emergence of female Heads of State in recent years in Liberia, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and recently in Namibia marks a transformative shift in political leadership.³ Educational gender gaps are narrowing, with near parity achieved in Kenya, Ghana, and Botswana.⁴ Many nations have enacted progressive laws against gender-based violence and child marriage, and countries including Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia, Gambia, and Mali have raised the legal marriage age to 18.⁵ Furthermore, impactful women-led movements drive change at the community level, advocating for rights and accountability.

32. I, however, note that despite the enactment of progressive legal frameworks aligned with the Beijing Platform for Action, gender-based violence (GBV), encompassing domestic violence, sexual assault, female genital mutilation (FGM), and child marriage, remains alarmingly prevalent across Africa. This is tragically exacerbated by humanitarian crises and conflicts, as evidenced in countries like Sudan, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. While political representation has improved, women are still underrepresented in leadership positions, as observed in African countries like Nigeria, Benin, and Senegal.⁶ Persistent cultural and institutional barriers, including discriminatory family laws and the complex interplay of legal systems, disadvantage women. A key challenge is the gap between progressive laws and their weak implementation due to resource limitations, institutional weaknesses, and patriarchal norms. The rise of conservative and anti-rights movements poses a threat to the progress made in gender equality, seeking to make inroads on the legal and policy gains.

The AU-CEVAWG

33. I commend the African Union for the adoption of the AU-CEVAWG, a landmark legal instrument representing a significant step forward in the continent's commitment to eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls. The AU-CEVAWG establishes a comprehensive and legally binding framework for preventing, eliminating, and effectively responding to all forms of violence against women and girls in Africa, creating legal obligations for member states. It aims to address the root causes of this violence, including patriarchal norms and harmful practices. It also mandates strengthening national legal and institutional mechanisms for prevention, survivor protection, and accountability across sectors like law enforcement and social services.

¹ https://data.ipu.org/women-ranking/?date_year=2025&date_month=03

² <https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/2024-07/womens-political-participation-africa-barometer-2024.pdf>

³ <https://achpr.au.int/en/news/press-releases/2025-03-08/international-womens-day-statement>

⁴ <https://achpr.au.int/en/news/press-releases/2025-03-08/international-womens-day-statement>

⁵ <https://achpr.au.int/en/news/press-releases/2025-03-08/international-womens-day-statement>

⁶ https://data.ipu.org/women-ranking/?date_year=2025&date_month=03



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34. Grounded in the foundational principles of the Maputo Protocol, the AU-CEVAWG provides a robust framework to combat gender-based violence in all its forms—including physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence, harmful practices such as FGM and child marriage, and violence in conflict, educational, workplace, and digital spaces. Its adoption marks a pivotal step toward collective action against gender-based violence across Africa. As the SRRWA, I welcome the critical monitoring role entrusted to the Commission under this mandate. Drawing from the advocacy successes and lessons learned in advancing the ratification and implementation of the Maputo Protocol, I urge AU Member States to prioritize two urgent actions: immediate ratification of the Convention, followed by its full domestication into national laws and policies. Only through these concrete measures can we ensure that the Convention's transformative potential is realized, safeguarding the rights and dignity of women and girls across the continent.

AU's Agenda 2063

35. Marking a decade since the 2015 adoption of the AU's Agenda 2063, which envisions an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa driven by its citizens, it is vital to assess its impact on women's rights. Agenda 2063 explicitly prioritizes gender equality and women's empowerment, with Aspiration 6 specifically focusing on people-driven development leveraging the potential of women and youth and outlining clear goals for full gender equality, ending discrimination and violence, equal economic rights, increased access to resources, political parity, and quality services. This ten-year milestone offers a crucial opportunity to evaluate the progress towards these ambitious goals and their implications for women's rights in Africa.

36. However, the true meaning of these ten years for the status of women will be determined by the tangible progress made on the ground. This requires strong political will and the adoption of progressive laws and policies, effective implementation, adequate resource allocation, and a concerted effort to address deeply rooted socio-cultural barriers. As we approach the next decade of Agenda 2063, a renewed focus on accountability, implementation, and addressing emerging challenges will be crucial to ensure that the aspirations for gender equality and women's empowerment become a reality for all women and girls in Africa.

A. Positive developments

Ghana

37. I would like to congratulate the Republic of Ghana on the historic appointment of Her Excellency Jane Naana Opoku-Agyemang as its first female Vice-President. This appointment transcends mere representation, setting a powerful precedent for women's leadership across Africa. It serves as a tangible demonstration of progress towards greater women's political leadership and the broader advancement of gender equality



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across Africa, potentially encouraging other nations to follow suit and recognize the vital contributions women can make at the highest levels of governance. It underscores the importance of inclusivity and challenges traditional political barriers, potentially inspiring other nations to prioritize gender equality in governance.

Namibia

38. I sincerely congratulate the Republic of Namibia on the historic election of Her Excellency Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah as its first female president. Her decisive victory reflects the Namibian people's profound trust in her leadership and underscores the strength of Namibia's democratic institutions. This transformative milestone transcends a mere political win, marking a pivotal advancement in gender equality within Namibia and the African continent. President Nandi-Ndaitwah's success powerfully affirms Namibia's dedication to inclusivity and gender parity, inspiring women and girls across Africa and beyond to pursue their political aspirations.

39. Namibia's bold strides toward gender parity deserve resounding acclaim, beginning with the appointment of Her Excellency Lucia Witbooi as the nation's first female Vice President. This commitment to inclusive governance is further exemplified by the milestone achievement of a 50% gender-balanced cabinet, placing Namibia among only three African nations to reach such parity—a deliberate and transformative step ensuring women's influence shapes policy at the highest level. The momentum continued with the election of Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila as the first woman Speaker of the National Assembly. Together, these achievements cement Namibia's status as a continental trailblazer, proving that true progress lies not in rhetoric but in the deliberate empowerment of women at every level of decision-making.

São Tomé and Príncipe

40. I applaud the Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe for appointing Her Excellency Ilza Amado Vaz as the first female Prime Minister in the nation's history. This landmark decision unequivocally demonstrates the government's commitment to inclusivity and recognition of women's crucial contributions to governance and national progress. This appointment marks a pivotal step in breaking down long-standing barriers to women's leadership, fostering a more equitable and representative political environment in Africa. Prime Minister Vaz's appointment is a significant and tangible advancement for gender equality across the continent, powerfully affirming women's leadership capabilities and their vital role in shaping Africa's future.

Sierra Leone

41. Sierra Leone's adoption of the FY2025 Gender Budget Statement, a pilot tool for Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) towards addressing gender inequalities and promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, is commendable. Adopting the tool signifies the government's commitment to integrating gender perspectives into its financial planning and decision-making processes, as mandated by the Gender Equality



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and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Act of 2023.⁷ The statement identifies gender gaps and inequalities within Sierra Leonean society across various sectors, including education, health, economic opportunities, and political participation. Implementing this tool is critical in supporting transparent monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and accounting for the impact of fiscal policy and budget measures on reducing gender inequalities. It is also crucial to ensure that the government's financial commitments translate into tangible and measurable improvements in the lives of women and girls in Sierra Leone.

Noted challenges

Ratification, Implementation, and Domestication of the Maputo Protocol

42. Despite the progress made by 45 African states in ratifying the Maputo Protocol, significant challenges persist in its full realization, including political resistance, inadequate legal frameworks, limited awareness, and entrenched socio-cultural norms that hinder gender equality. Implementation gaps remain due to weak enforcement mechanisms, insufficient funding, and a lack of alignment with national laws, while bureaucratic delays and low prioritization by governments often slow domestication. We commend the ratifying states for their commitment to women's rights. We urgently call upon the remaining African Union members to ratify the Protocol without further delay, ensuring that all African women and girls benefit from its transformative protection.

Democratic Republic of Congo

43. I was deeply concerned by disturbing reports of mass rape and torture committed against hundreds of women following a violent attack on a prison in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo.⁸ The reports we received painted a picture of unspeakable atrocities, highlighting the extreme vulnerability of women in a region already ravaged by conflict and instability. The scale of the reported sexual violence, involving hundreds of victims, suggested a systematic and deliberate targeting of women, likely intended to inflict terror and degradation. These acts constitute grave violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, and there is a need for a swift, thorough, and impartial investigation into these crimes, demanding that those responsible be held accountable to the fullest extent of the law.

Nigeria

44. Reports concerning the suspension of Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan from the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria disheartened me. The reported suspension

⁷ <https://mof.gov.sl/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/FY2025-Gender-Budget-Statement.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/feb/05/democratic-republic-congo-goma-women-raped-burned-death-prison-m23-rebels-rwanda>



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raised serious questions about due process, fairness, and the protection of fundamental rights, particularly the right to freedom of expression and political participation.⁹ Given Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan's position as an elected representative, her suspension carries significant weight and could be perceived as a potential infringement on the democratic rights of her constituents. Furthermore, I note the potential chilling effect this action could have on women's participation in Nigerian politics. In a context where women are often underrepresented in leadership positions, the suspension of a female senator could send a discouraging message to other women aspiring to political office, potentially hindering progress toward gender equality in Nigeria's political landscape.

South Sudan

45. The situation for women and girls in South Sudan remains critically concerning amidst the ongoing crisis. Women and girls are disproportionately affected by pervasive violence, with psychological, physical, and sexual violence being most common, and conflict-related sexual violence a significant threat exacerbated by impunity. We have also received reports of food insecurity and projections indicating 7.69 million during the lean season (April-July 2025), disproportionately impacting women and children, including 1.11 million pregnant or breastfeeding women facing acute malnutrition.¹⁰ Over 70% of children are out of school, with girls being the majority. Maternal mortality remains highly linked to limited healthcare access, and teenage pregnancy is alarmingly high at 34.5%.¹¹ Access to essential sexual and reproductive health services is also severely limited.

Sudan

46. I also condemn the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) bombing of Tora Market in North Darfur on March 24, 2025, killing over 350 civilians, including women and girls, is an unconscionable atrocity.¹² This attack devastated critical supply chains, exacerbating famine and disproportionately harming women and children, who now face heightened risks of gender-based violence (GBV), displacement, and economic ruin. Equally, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) must be held accountable for their documented abuses, including sexual violence, ethnic targeting, and attacks on civilians. Both parties perpetuate Sudan's humanitarian catastrophe, with women and girls bearing the brunt.

47. The global backlash against women's rights, marked by rising authoritarianism, systemic impunity, and the weaponization of technology, has intensified the

⁹ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/7/nigerian-senate-suspends-female-senator-who-made-sexual-harassment-claim>

¹⁰ https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_South_Sudan_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Malnutrition_Sep2024_July2025_Report.pdf

¹¹ <https://www.afro.who.int/countries/south-sudan/news/saving-lives-and-safeguarding-mothers-during-childbirth-south-sudan-midwives-poignant-recollection>

¹² <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/03/1161571>



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vulnerabilities of women and girls in conflict zones like Sudan. The crises in Sudan exemplify how gendered the collapse of the rule of law and humanitarian access compounds atrocities. Meanwhile, technology-facilitated violence, from targeted online harassment to the use of surveillance tools to enable abuse, further entrenches the oppression of women, both in war and in peacetime.

PART FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the 30th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

48. I urge Member States to allocate adequate financial and human resources to effectively implement and enforce existing progressive laws and policies related to women's rights, including those addressing women's political participation and leadership, GBV, child marriage, and ensuring equal opportunities. I also urge Member States to enhance the capacity of national institutions to effectively implement and enforce women's rights legislation and provide quality services to women and girls. Furthermore, I urge Member States to develop and implement concrete strategies to bridge the gap between progressive legal frameworks and their weak implementation by addressing resource limitations, institutional weaknesses, and patriarchal norms at all levels. By prioritizing these recommendations, AU Member States can build upon the progress achieved and address the significant challenges that remain, ultimately leading to the complete realization of the rights of all women and girls across the African continent.

On the ratification of the AU-CEVAWG

49. I urge all the Member States of the African Union to recognize the profound urgency of ratifying the AU-CEVAWG without delay. This act transcends a mere procedural step; it serves as a powerful and unequivocal declaration of a nation's unwavering political commitment to the fundamental human rights, safety, and dignity of its women and girls. In a continent where gender-based violence persists at alarming rates, immediate ratification sends a clear message that such violations will not be tolerated and that the state is determined to take concrete action to address them. Furthermore, ratification is the crucial key that unlocks the Convention's legally binding framework at the national level. Delay in ratification prolongs the vulnerability of women and girls and postpones the implementation of this vital legal shield. Therefore, swift and decisive action towards ratification is not just a matter of policy but a moral and legal imperative of Member States to safeguard the well-being and future of Africa's women and girls.



On Ratification, Implementation, and Domestication of the Maputo Protocol

50. To the remaining Member States yet to ratify the Maputo Protocol: We urge you to prioritize women's rights and swiftly ratify this critical instrument to ensure all African women and girls are guaranteed equality, dignity, and protection. Delay undermines continental progress. To the 45 states that have ratified: Ratification alone is not enough—we call on you to fully implement and domesticate the Protocol by aligning national laws, strengthening enforcement mechanisms, and investing in gender-sensitive policies. Without concrete action, the Protocol's promise remains unfulfilled. The time for accountability is now.

To the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo

51. I urgently call on the Congolese government to immediately launch a thorough and independent investigation into the mass rape and torture, holding all perpetrators accountable, including commanders. I also urge the Congolese government to strengthen security in detention facilities to protect inmates, especially women. I also strongly urge the Congolese government to provide immediate comprehensive care and reparations for survivors and develop long-term strategies to prevent future violence by addressing root causes, reinforcing the rule of law, and promoting human rights.

To the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

52. I recommend that the Federal Republic of Nigeria government urgently reviews Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan's suspension process with attention to due process and its impact. I also call for an immediate examination of Senate rules for clarity and fair disciplinary procedures. Furthermore, I call upon the Nigerian government to actively promote women's leadership at all levels, ensuring a safe and empowering environment, and to publicly condemn all discrimination and rights violations against women in politics and society.

To the Government of the Republic of South Sudan

53. I urge the government of South Sudan to strengthen and enforce laws against SGBV, prioritizing investigation and prosecution. I urge the government to implement food security programs targeting vulnerable women and children. Furthermore, I recommend that the government take steps to boost girls' school enrolment and retention by addressing barriers such as early marriage, teenage pregnancy, cultural norms, and lack of safe and accessible school environments. I also urge the government of South Sudan to ensure universal access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning and post-violence care.



To the Government of the Republic of the Sudan

54. I call upon the government of the Republic of the Sudan to publicly condemn the Tora Market bombing, pledging accountability. I recommend that the government implement concrete measures to safeguard women and girls from violence, including GBV, in conflict areas. I also urge the government to offer psychosocial care to survivors, especially women and girls. Furthermore, I urge the government to implement programs to aid the economic recovery of women affected by the conflict and implement verifiable measures to protect civilians in conflict zones, particularly in markets and during essential activities.

CONCLUSION

55. In concluding this report, I acknowledge the Member States actively undertaking measures to advance gender equality and women's rights in all spheres. I applaud those swiftly acting to address violations of women's rights. Such proactive work is essential in promoting the fulfillment of obligations and responsibilities toward ensuring the well-being of women and girls across Africa.

56. I want to express my sincere gratitude to all stakeholders and partners who consistently support the work of the SRRWA mechanism. Our ongoing collaboration is essential to empowering women and girls in Africa. This empowerment is not just about individual advancement but also about transforming societies to be more inclusive, where women and girls can fully exercise their rights, reach their full potential, and contribute to the continent's development. I urge you to continue supporting this vital mandate as we work together to create a just and equitable Africa for all women and girls, an Africa where gender equality is a lived reality.