



MEDIA ADVISORY:

Press Conference to Launch the African Union Campaign to Restore the Dignity of Women and for Accountability in South Sudan (#4WomenofSouthSudan)

Representatives of the media in Addis Ababa are invited to cover the launch of the AU Campaign to Restore the Dignity of Women and for Accountability in South Sudan.

What: The African Union (AU) Commission Chairperson's Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), H.E. Mme Bineta Diop, will be launching the AU Campaign to, "Restore the Dignity of Women and for Accountability in South Sudan". She will be making a call for Africans and friends of Africa to unite in solidarity to say, "NO", to war and to abuses on women and the vulnerable in times of conflicts.

The AU dedicated 2016 as, "Year of Human Rights with particular focus on women's rights". The AU through its Office of the Special Envoy WPS will therefore be calling for authorities in South Sudan to:

1. Stop violence against women and girls in South Sudan
2. Ensure accountability for the women of South Sudan
3. Punish perpetrators for crimes against humanity
4. Restore the dignity of women in South Sudan
5. Provide Reparations for survivors in South Sudan
6. Ensure Peace and Justice in South Sudan

The campaign will run through the month of October until December 10, the International Day of Human Rights.

When: 10:00 am GMT, 13 October 2016;

Where: African Union Commission, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Briefing Room 1

Who: The Campaign calls for the **voices of the women and vulnerable of South Sudan** in particular, and from other conflict affected areas in Africa in general, **to be heard** and echoed much more clearly; for **justice**, sustainable peace and development to prevail.

It also calls for African Solidarity and thus the participation of ALL Africans from; women and youth groups, civil society organisations, the media, religious groups, the private sector, governments and influential politicians to stand for Dignity and Justice #4WomenofSouthSudan. Friends of Africa from international organisations, civil society, governments and individuals should also heed the call for a South

Sudan at peace with itself.

Why: The African Union declared 2016, “Year of Human Rights with particular focus on women’s rights”. Paradoxically, the recent situations in South Sudan, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), threaten to eclipse the progress that the continent has made towards protecting women and creating enabling environments for the rule of law and development to thrive. In South Sudan in particular, incidents of violence were recorded as the AU held its 27th Ordinary Summit in Kigali, Rwanda.

In response to this, on 8th July, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, condemned the fighting in Juba, and on 30th July 2016, amidst reports of mass rape of women, including by men in uniform, she expressed dismay following “continued occurrence of violence in many parts of South Sudan... [and] persistent use of sexual violence against women and girls as a weapon of war.” Referring to the “very serious incidents involving about 120 documented cases of sexual violence since the start of the current crisis on 7 July 2016”, she denounced impunity and called for “leaders to ensure that the perpetrators of these heinous crimes are held fully accountable for their actions in an expeditious manner.” She has also decried the, “incidences of sexual violence meted out against women and girls as a weapon of war, most recently from South Sudan, Central African Republic, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo.” And reiterated, “the African Union’s zero tolerance of sexual and gender-based violence and exploitation.”

The AUC Chairperson’s Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security, H.E. Mme Bineta Diop, also strongly deplored these atrocities, and echoed the voices of African women for perpetrators to be held accountable, and for increased humanitarian efforts for survivors.

Against this background and in anticipation of the month of UNSC Resolution 1325, October, the AUC Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security will organize a media campaign to **restore the dignity of the women of South Sudan** and to **hold perpetrators accountable for crimes against humanity**,

Objectives:

- i. To end violence against women and girls in South Sudan;
- ii. To continue sensitizing authorities in South Sudan against impunity and bring perpetrators to justice; and,
- iii. To call for reparations for victims.

Expected Outcome:

- i. Increased pressure on South Sudanese authorities to end the atrocities in South Sudan;

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