



# WPS BULLETIN

## Message from the Editor



Dear Readers,

The November wave of events shows that many African institutions including regional bodies, national governments and civil society are not simply celebrating WPS anniversaries, but they are retooling, rethinking, and strategising to confront contemporary challenges such as unconstitutional take of power, youth bulge, climate crisis, and digital violence. There is an increased recognition of emerging challenges such as the intersections between gender, climate change, youth, and technological changes such as online space, and digital violence. Some of the new continental-level frameworks and consultations explicitly seek to incorporate these dimensions in WPS programming.



However, implementation remains uneven. Structural barriers such as sociocultural norms, underfunding, and weak institutional capacity continue to undermine WPS goals in many countries. For the WPS to make a real difference in people's lives, especially women and girls in conflict-or fragile-contexts, these

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new frameworks need to be backed by sustained funding, local ownership, accountability, and structural change.

The situation in Tanzania after the elections was a stark reminder of how fragile democratic institutions could lead to instability, and how this instability puts women and girls at greater risk. The violence undermined public trust in governance institutions and disproportionately affected women, who face compounded threats when politics and gender inequality collide. Women's limited representation in political processes remains a major barrier to effective and inclusive governance.

In Sudan, the worsening famine and reports of atrocities in certain regions underscored the devastating toll of long-running conflicts on civilian populations, especially women. Even as ceasefire proposals emerged, women were still excluded from the negotiations - a pattern that projects how their rights and protection need get sidelined during critical decision-making. The nature of the peace process is teaching us that external interventions are not truly efficient, signally a re-think of who should lead such processes.

Similar patterns played out across the Great Lakes and Sahel regions, with renewed insecurity, mass displacement, and disruptions to governance further exposing the acute vulnerabilities faced by women, particularly in rural and conflict-affected areas. Their access to essential services, justice, and protection continues to be limited, while their valuable contributions to peacebuilding remain underappreciated and ignored.

Yet, there were also signs of progress this month. Regional institutions strengthened their commitments to gender-responsive peace and security frameworks. Countries like Libya made advances in addressing digital violence. Large-scale civic mobilization, such as in South Africa, showed the power of collective action in demanding accountability from the State.

As we reflect on these developments, one thing is clear: achieving sustainable peace in Africa requires meaningfully including, protecting, and empowering women at every stage of political and security processes. The events of November have reinforced the urgent need to fully implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda - a critical foundation for stability, justice, and lasting peace across the continent.

**In Sisterhood and Solidarity,  
Helen Kezie-Nwoha**



# Acronyms

ACHPR	African Commission on Human and People's Rights
ACDEG	African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance
AU	African Union
AU-CEVAWG	The African Union Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
JNIM	Jama'at Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HNEC	High National Elections Commission
ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lake Region
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
M23	March 23 Movement
RAP	Regional Action Plan
RSF	Rapid Support Forces
SAF	Sudanese Armed Forces
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WGWYPS-WAS	Working Group on Women, Youth, Peace and Security in West Africa and the Sahel
WPS	Women, Peace and Security
YPS	Youth, Peace and Security



## Tanzania's Suluhu Declared Landslide Winner in Election Marred by Violence

Tanzania's Electoral Commission declared on the 1st of November 2025 that President Samia Suluhu Hassan had won the Presidential elections, with nearly 98% of the votes, an election that set off violent protests across the country. The declaration triggered widespread protests across the country. Demonstrations had already begun during the voting process, with demonstrators tearing down banners and setting fire to government buildings. Security forces responded with tear gas and gunshots to disperse the crowds.

The scale of unrest reflects deep divisions within the country. Opposition groups allege that hundreds were killed in the crackdown, while the United Nations (UN) has confirmed at least 10 deaths in 3 cities. Hundreds more were injured, and prominent opposition figures detained on treason charges. In response, the government imposed curfews, restricted access to the internet, and maintained a heavy security presence.

For vulnerable women, girls, and marginalized groups, this crisis compounds an already dire situation. Peace is threatened not just by state violence, but the collapse of civic space and silencing of dissent. This inhibits women's ability to organize, document abuses, and demand accountability. Without transparency, reparations, and gender-sensitive protections, risks of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), disappearances, and targeted persecution remain high.

This moment demands the Women, Peace and Security agenda moves beyond tokenism. Sustainable peace requires accountability, inclusion, and a guarantee that no woman or community is left unprotected. As the crisis unfolds, the international community must stand with the Tanzanian people, especially the women and girls bearing the brunt of the crisis.

<https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/tanzania-s-suluhu-declared-landslide-winner-in-election-marred-by-violence-5251118>



## **Famine Conditions Confirmed in Sudan's Al Fasher and Kadugli but Hunger and Malnutrition Ease Where Conflict Subsides**

Famine has now been confirmed in Sudan's Al Fasher and Kadugli, with mortality, acute malnutrition and food-consumption thresholds surpassing Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 5 levels. Humanitarian agencies point to conflict, mass displacement and blocked access as the primary drivers, noting that although conditions have eased in areas where fighting has subsided, millions remain at extreme risk. Children are highlighted as particularly vulnerable, with malnutrition rates in some locations reaching staggering levels.

This situation exposes how gender, conflict and political power converge to produce famine not as a natural disaster, but as a gendered crisis of violence and deprivation. Women and girls are disproportionately affected: they eat last, travel farthest for water and fuel, face heightened risks of sexual violence, and carry the burden of caregiving in households already on the brink of collapse. Yet their agency, coping strategies and community-based leadership remain largely invisible in the humanitarian narrative.

There is a need to name starvation as an intentional weapon of war, demand accountability from armed actors obstructing aid, and call for women's inclusion in humanitarian decision-making and peace processes.

<https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/famine-conditions-confirmed-sudans-al-fasher-and-kadugli-hunger-and-malnutrition>

## Rapid Support Forces killed 300 Women in First 2-days after Entering El-Fasher: Sudanese Minister

RSF reportedly killed around 300 women within the first two days of entering El-Fasher, subjecting many to sexual assault, torture and murder. Women, including female journalists were raped, children subjected to sexual violence, entire families threatened, and escape routes turned into death roads. These reports come alongside broader accounts of extrajudicial killings, summary executions of civilians, and deliberate targeting of hospitals and other civilian infrastructure.

This massacre where women and girls were explicitly targeted, brutalized, and dehumanized, often in front of their children, signals a strategy where gender-based violence (GBV), conflict related sexual violence and mass killing are weaponized together to terrorize, control, and perhaps purge certain communities. The systematic act of ethnic cleansing underscores that this is organized violence driven by layered militaristic, ethnic, patriarchal aims.

The atrocities described demand more than humanitarian responses. They call for accountability, structural change, and women's leadership. A WPS-informed approach would emphasize documenting gender-based crimes for transitional justice; ensuring survivors' access to psychological, medical and legal support; demilitarization of zones, especially where ethnic or gendered violence is likely; and the inclusion of women from affected communities in peace negotiations, justice processes, humanitarian planning, and reconstruction.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/rapid-support-forces-killed-300-women-in-first-2-days-after-entering-el-fasher-sudanese-minister/3732911>

## Congo, M23 Sign Framework for Peace in Qatar, but More Steps Needed

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) government and the M23 armed group have signed a new peace framework in Doha, aiming to lay the groundwork for a broader agreement after years of devastating conflict in eastern Congo. The deal establishes eight areas for future negotiation including security arrangements, disarmament, humanitarian access, restoration of state authority, justice, reconciliation, and economic recovery, but it does not immediately halt violence or resolve the situation on the ground. Instead, it marks an early, fragile step toward a more comprehensive settlement, one heavily dependent on future talks and on whether all parties honour their commitments.

The significance of this framework lies less in diplomatic ceremony and more in its implementation for civilians who have endured the conflict's harshest realities. Women and girls in eastern Congo have long borne the brunt of displacement, insecurity, and rampant conflict related sexual violence. Any peace process that sidelines them risks reproducing the same exclusion that fueled the conflict i.e., male-dominated political and military elites negotiating over territory while the voices of those most harmed remain excluded.

There is need for justice that addresses not only battlefield crimes but structural violence including unequal access to land and resources, impunity for sexual violence, the exploitation of mineral wealth by armed groups and foreign actors, and the erasure of women's economic and social contributions. If the Doha framework becomes another technocratic exercise, it will entrench old inequalities; if it instead centres women's safety, leadership, and economic rights, it could disrupt the cycles of violence that have trapped the region for decades. Real peace will require more than agreements between armed men, it will require transforming power structures, building accountability, and elevating the women and communities who sustain life amid conflict.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/congo-m23-sign-framework-agreement-peace-deal-qatar-2025-11-15/>

## Hunger Crisis Deepens in South Sudan Amid Conflict, Floods, Monitor Says

South Sudan is now facing a deepening hunger crisis, as a confluence of armed conflict, flooding, displacement and restricted humanitarian access pushes millions of people toward starvation. According to the latest assessment by Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), over 7.5 million people, more than half the population, are expected to experience crisis-level food insecurity during the 2026 lean season. In certain counties, people already face catastrophic hunger (IPC Phase 5), while more than 2 million children under five, and over a million pregnant or breastfeeding women, are projected to become acutely malnourished by mid-2026.

This is not only a humanitarian emergency but a profound peace and security failure with distinctly gendered consequences. Women, who are the backbone of local food systems and community survival networks, are rarely meaningfully included in decision-making about relief distribution, local peace agreements, or climate-resilience planning, despite the 35% quota for women's participation in the 2018 Revitalised Peace Agreement. This exclusion undermines both immediate effectiveness and long-term stability because women's knowledge of land, agriculture, caregiving systems, and community dynamics is useful for designing interventions that actually work.

Moreover, conflict-driven displacement, climate-induced flooding, and chronic state fragility were predictable and preventable drivers of the food crisis. Yet women peacebuilders, early-warning networks, and community mediators, who often detect local tensions long before armed clashes erupt, have been sidelined by militarized approaches to security.

Any response to this crisis must recognise and act on its gendered dimensions, embedding protection, participation, and structural justice at its core. Preventing famine requires preventing conflict, and preventing conflict requires listening to women. Without centering women's protection, leadership, and rights, neither the hunger crisis nor the cycles of conflict driving it will be resolved.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/11/4/hunger-crisis-deepens-in-south-sudan-amid-conflict-floods-monitor-says>





## Mali on the Brink of Collapse as Jihadists Threaten to Overrun the Country

Mali is facing a dangerous escalation of violence as jihadist group Jama'at Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin (JNIM) tightens its grip on the country. JNIM has effectively laid siege to the country's economy by cutting off fuel supplies, attacking fuel convoys, and isolating the capital Bamako, a strategy described as economic warfare meant to erode the legitimacy of the military junta and precipitate state collapse.

Schools and universities have been closed, power and transport disruptions are widespread, fuel shortages have sparked blackouts, skyrocketing transport and commodity prices, and general paralysis of public services across Mali. JNIM's operations are no longer confined to remote regions as the blockade and insurgent advances now threaten central and southern corridors, pushing closer to Bamako. In Farabougou, women must now cover their heads, and secular music has been banned. Additionally, as JNIM began to shift its focus toward Bamako, it instituted sharia law on transportation companies entering and leaving the city, segregating men and women onto different vehicles and demanding that women cover their heads.

As the blockade deepens, violence against women escalates on multiple fronts. Jihadist groups impose harsh patriarchal controls such as restrictions on movement, forced marriage, sexual violence, the policing of dressing, and punishment for women working or speaking publicly. Meanwhile, displacement exposes women and girls to trafficking, sexual exploitation and survival-based sex, especially in unregulated transit zones where state presence has evaporated. Fuel scarcity means women walk longer distances for water and food, traversing dangerous territory. The breakdown of health services undermines maternal care, contraception access and emergency assistance for GBV survivors. WPS standards demand that protection be central, yet the current response is almost entirely militarised and gender-blind.

Analysts warn that if the capital falls, or if state authority collapses under sustained pressure, the consequences would not be local only. A domino effect might destabilize neighbouring countries, especially given the fragile political climates across the Sahel.



## Libya Highlights Rising Digital Violence Against Women

The High National Elections Commission (HNEC), in cooperation with the Office of the Public Prosecutor and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), launched a consultative session on Monday, 17 November 2025, focusing on the role of rule-of-law institutions in ensuring a safe electoral environment for women. The event brought together public prosecutors and civil society organisations working on women's rights issues at the HNEC Media Centre.

At the heart of this initiative is the recognition that the threats women face are no longer confined to public spaces, but have expanded into the digital and institutional realms. HNEC's data reveals an alarming 89 percent increase in online violence against women compared to the 2024 election cycle, with social media platforms becoming breeding grounds for coordinated smear campaigns, hate speech, and intimidation during the nomination and campaign phases.

For the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda, this effort by HNEC is a significant milestone. It acknowledges that ensuring a safe electoral environment is not just about fairness, but about security and dignity. If women are silenced by online abuse, their voices cannot contribute to governance, peacebuilding, or decision-making - a critical loss for the entire nation.

The consultative meeting reviewed possible reforms, including strengthening investigative and prosecutorial mechanisms to ensure accountability, as well as launching public-awareness campaigns to challenge the social stigma around women's political participation. These are crucial first steps, but the path forward must go further to address mindset change.

Without robust protection and enforcement mechanisms, coordinated across the justice system, electoral management bodies and civil society, many women - especially those in marginalized, rural, or minority communities - may remain excluded or vulnerable. The solutions must include reparations for survivors of digital violence, legal reforms to criminalize harassment, and proactive measures such as online monitoring, safe-reporting channels, and comprehensive support services to safeguard women's rights and enable their full

participation in political life.

This initiative by HNEC is a testament to the growing recognition that threats to women's security and dignity cannot be ignored. It is a call to action for all stakeholders to work together, to dismantle the barriers that have kept women from political power, and to build a future where every woman can contribute to shaping the destiny of her country without fear or intimidation.

<https://libyareview.com/61003/libya-highlights-rising-digital-violence-against>

## African Leaders Push for Recognition of Colonial Crimes and Reparations

African leaders gathered in Algiers to press for colonial-era crimes to be formally recognised, criminalised, and addressed through reparations. The push comes after a resolution passed earlier this year by the African Union (AU), signaling an intent to hold former colonisers accountable for harm and human rights violations committed. Leaders pointed to the devastating legacy of colonial rule, from economic exploitation and resource plunder to cultural erasure, theft of property and heritage, and structural marginalisation that persists even today. A legal framework is being proposed so that restitution is rendered as justice not as gift or favour. The conference aimed not only at financial or material reparations, but also at restoring dignity, reclaiming stolen property including looted artefacts, recognising historical injustice, and confronting the structural inequalities rooted in colonial legacy.

This movement is significant but incomplete unless it directly addresses the gendered nature of colonial violence and its impact. Colonialism reconfigured social structures, imposed patriarchal norms, extracted both resources and labour in ways that disproportionately targeted women, and used sexual violence and family disruption as tools of domination. Its legacies of economic marginalisation, gendered poverty, unequal land rights, weakened health systems and persistent cultural erasure, still disproportionately affect women and girls.

All stakeholders must ensure that reparations include gender-specific justice, especially restitution for gendered harms, land and resource rights for women, investment in social systems that reduce the unpaid labour burden, and community-driven processes that restore cultural memory and autonomy. We also call for women's leadership in shaping any reparations agenda, to ensure that reparatory justice is intersectional rather than replicating old hierarchies and continuing the circle of inequalities.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/nov/30/african-leaders-push-for-recognition-of-colonial-crimes-and-reparations>

## Guinea-Bissau Military Takes 'Total Control' Amid Election Chaos

Following presidential and legislative elections in November 2025 in which both the incumbent Umaro Sissoco Embaló and challenger Fernando Dias each claimed victory, the armed forces declared a takeover. A self-styled "High Military Command for the Restoration of Order" announced suspension of the electoral process, closure of borders, a media blackout and a curfew, effectively nullifying any pending results and arresting key political figures. The fact that the military seized total control in the wake of a contested election illuminates more than political drama. It starkly reveals how fragile governance, recurrent coups, and elite power struggles continue to undermine democratic norms in Africa.

Repeated coups, especially in a small, impoverished, and politically unstable state like Guinea-Bissau, perpetuate cycles of insecurity, which hit hardest on people already marginalised, namely women, children, the poor and the elderly. Militarisation exacerbates GBV, reduces access to essential services such as healthcare, maternal care, social support, and limits civic space for women's participation. A sudden shutdown of institutions and media means less oversight, fewer protections, and greater risk that abuses go

unreported or unpunished.

Leaving power in the hands of military elites undermines foundational norms and commitments to constitutional order. The African Union (AU) Constitutive Act, particularly Articles 4(p) and 30, unequivocally reject unconstitutional changes of government and mandate the suspension of any regime that comes to power through such means. The Lome Declaration (2000) and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) further reinforce this prohibition, affirming that coups, military takeovers, and any disruption of constitutional rule are illegitimate and antithetical to democratic governance. Guided by these instruments the AU must condemn in the strongest terms the actions undermining the will of the people of Guinea-Bissau, call for an immediate restoration of constitutional order, and urge all stakeholders to uphold democratic norms in line with regional and continental obligations.

In a system where political leadership is repeatedly seized by force, the idea of inclusive governance where women's voices inform decisions about security, justice, and reconstruction becomes even more distant. The justification offered by the military to restore order and clamp down on electoral manipulation often serves as a cover to re-entrench control rather than address the root causes of poverty, inequality, and corruption.

The major concern is that any long-term stability or reconstruction that emerges under military rule risks neglecting gender justice unless explicitly designed with a gender lens. Without such design, policies tend to reinforce existing inequalities, deprioritize social welfare, and exclude women from decision-making.

[https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/nov/26/guinea-bissau-officers-take-total-control-close-borders-amid-election-chaos?CMP=share\\_btn\\_url](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/nov/26/guinea-bissau-officers-take-total-control-close-borders-amid-election-chaos?CMP=share_btn_url)

## Ethiopian Volcano Erupts After 12,000 Years: What We Know

The Hayli Gubbi volcano, in Ethiopia's Afar region, erupted on 23 November 2025, its first known eruption in nearly 12,000 years. The eruption sent ash and volcanic gases high into the atmosphere, as much as 14 km, with plumes visible from space and drifting across the Red Sea toward Yemen and Oman, eventually reaching parts of South Asia including India and Pakistan. On the ground, many villages, including herder communities, have been blanketed in ash. While local authorities report no immediate casualties or livestock deaths, there is grave concern about the livelihoods of pastoralist families as ash has contaminated grazing lands and fodder, threatening the animals on which these communities depend.

This eruption is a stark reminder that communities living in ecologically fragile, geologically active, or climate-sensitive regions, often marginalised already by poverty, under-investment, and weak infrastructure, bear disproportionate risks. In many Afar communities, especially pastoral and semi-rural ones, women look after smaller livestock, fetch water and fodder, care for children, and manage household resources. When ash covers grazing fields and water sources, women disproportionately shoulder the burden as they must travel farther to find clean water or fodder, perhaps undertake additional labour to salvage food, or bear the weight of nutritional scarcity in children and elders.

Therefore, long-term resilience in the form of disaster preparedness, livelihood support, climate-adaptive infrastructure, and social services must center women's experiences and leadership to prevent exacerbation of structural inequalities.

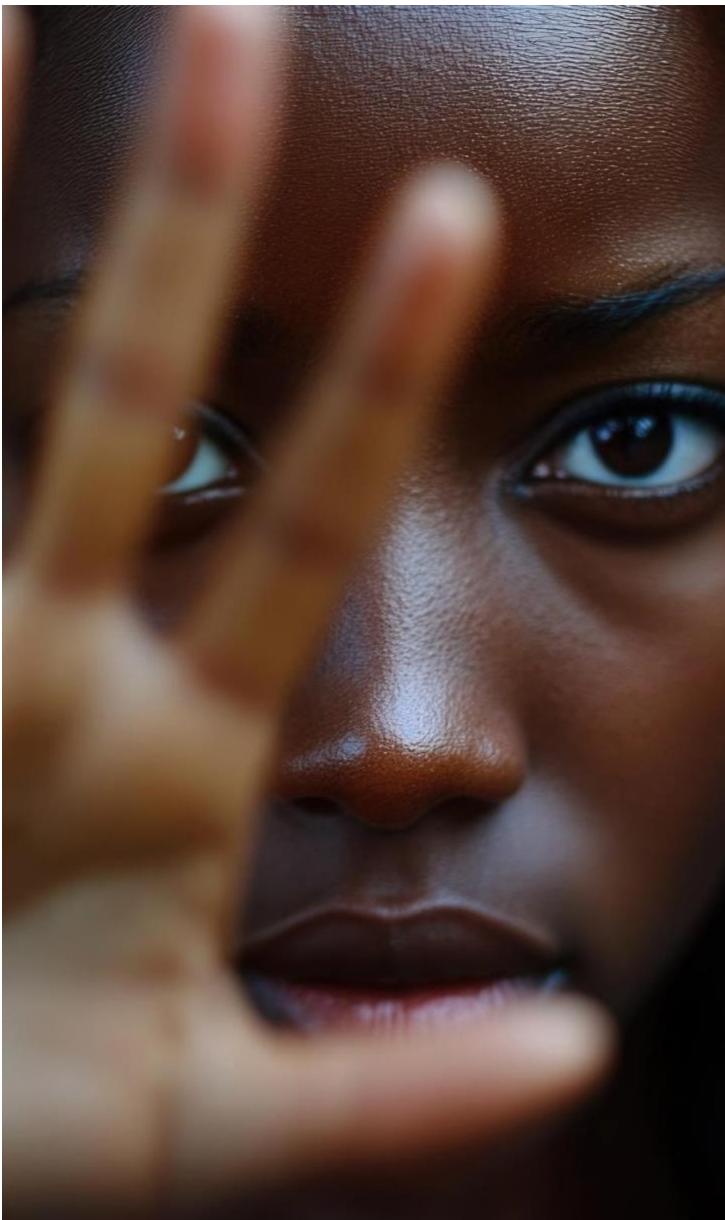
<https://aje.io/qzjos6Use.pdf>



## South Africa Calls Gender Based Violence a National Disaster After Protests

The women of South Africa have bravely come together, their voices echoing through the streets, demanding an end to the unthinkable violence that has plagued their communities. Spurred by an online campaign by feminist movements and survivor-led groups like Women for Change, they have taken to the streets of Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, and rural towns, their placards carrying powerful messages like "My body is not a crime scene" and "Stop killing us."

Behind these words lie the raw emotion and anguish of mothers, sisters, and daughters who have witnessed the senseless loss of life, the fear that grips them daily, and the outrage at a system that has failed to protect them. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, reported cases of femicide, intimate-partner homicide, and sexual assault have surged, with rural women facing some of the highest risks because of unequal access to police protection, shelters, and justice services. In the face of this crisis, they have stood up, refusing to be silent, their collective power shaking the foundations of a nation that can no longer ignore their cries.



The protest, dubbed the G20 Women's Shutdown, has been bolstered by an online petition signed by over one million people, as well as many celebrities changing their social media profile pictures to purple - a color often linked to GBV awareness. This mass action has drawn the attention of the government, who have now classified violence against women as a national disaster, a crucial first step that will unlock much-needed resources and legal reforms.

The only way the government of South African can show political will to addressing this crisis is through survivor-centered justice, a comprehensive protection system that reaches even the most remote communities, and uncompromising accountability for those who have failed to safeguard their lives. The path ahead is long and arduous, but the women are resolute. They have tasted the power of unity, and they will not rest until they can walk the streets without fear, until they can raise their daughters without the specter of violence looming over them. This is their fight, their struggle for a future where they are not merely survivors, but thrivers – free to live, love, and pursue their dreams without the constant threat of harm.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cn979g302l9o>

## Sudan Paramilitary Group Agrees to a Ceasefire Proposal After Massacre in an Army Stronghold it Overran

The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) announced its acceptance of a ceasefire proposal put forward by a mediator group including the United States, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the UAE (the “Quad”), pledging a humanitarian truce allegedly intended to allow relief access, protect civilians, and ease the catastrophic humanitarian crisis that unfolded after their takeover of El-Fasher. However, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), has not committed to the truce, insisting that RSF must first disarm and withdraw from civilian centres before any ceasefire, a commitment that the RSF may not fulfill. General Al-Burhan called the ceasefire proposal the worst yet, accusing the Quad, especially the United Arab Emirates (UAE), of bias, and arguing that the plan would dissolve the regular armed forces while entrenching the RSF’s control over seized territory.

Meanwhile, humanitarian and rights-monitoring organisations describe the RSF’s seizure of El-Fasher as accompanied by mass killings, summary executions, sexual violence and potential cover-ups by burning/burying bodies, raising serious questions about the group’s willingness or capacity to protect civilians. Prior reports from El-Fasher describe widespread sexual violence, rape, torture, and gender-based targeting of women and girls during and after the takeover. A ceasefire should open safe corridors for humanitarian aid, but unless there are robust protections, safe shelters, medical care, trauma services, GBV-response, women, survivors, displaced persons and children remain deeply vulnerable.

Moreover, all categories of women, survivors, and affected communities must be included in any ceasefire monitoring, relief distribution, and planning for reconstruction or displacement support. But the current negotiations are between militarised actors and international mediators and women’s voices and civil-society actors are already sidelined. Without their engagement, ceasefire or truce risks reproducing power imbalances, silencing survivors, and building peace on the backs of already marginalised groups.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/world/africa/sudan-rapid-support-forces-agree-us-ceasefire-proposal-el-fasher-rcna242335>



## ICGLR Ministers Commit to Strengthening Women's Role in Peace and Security

In the Great Lakes region, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) ministers adopted a new Regional Action Plan on WPS for 2026–2030, signalling renewed regional commitment to the implementation of the WPS agenda. The member states reported some achievements as many now have National Action Plans aligned with UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), the reports indicate that there is expanded representation of women in governance structures, and strengthened legal frameworks against GBV.

With the new regional action plan, the ICGLR aims to coordinate implementation, monitoring and evaluation across countries, addressing both policy and structural gaps that had hindered full realisation of WPS commitments. Although, historically, member states adopted national WPS action plans, translation into real change has been patchy with weak funding, poor monitoring, limited enforcement, and sociocultural resistance remaining barriers. The new regional plan may strengthen coordination, but only if backed with resources, political will, and robust monitoring and evaluation.

Institutionalizing women's participation through the RAP and reactivating the Regional Women's Forum, enhances potential for women's leadership to shape security policies, conflict resolution, resource governance, especially in the context of mineral wealth in the Great Lakes Region, and community recovery processes. However, without clear guarantees for meaningful participation and not just token representation, there is a danger that women will remain marginalised in decision-making. The RAP must go beyond quotas to ensure women influence decision-making and peace processes.

<https://icglr.org/icglr-ministers-commit-to-strengthening-womens-role-in-peace-and-security/>



## Leaders Speak Out for Gender Justice in Peacebuilding in Somalia

During Somalia's first Annual Justice Sector Conference, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative called for gender justice to be central to justice reform ensuring women, children, displaced people and marginalized groups have equal access to protection, legal aid and justice.

The Somali government has recently affirmed women's crucial role in peace and state-building. In a meeting with women leaders across civil society, security forces, and public institutions, the Prime Minister underscored that sustainable peace requires visible decision-making roles for women.

Public polling suggests a shift where large majorities express support for women's political participation and legal quotas, indicating social attitudes may be increasingly favorable to WPS principles.

<https://peacenews.com/leaders-speak-out-for-gender-justice-in-peacebuilding-in-somalia/>



## Press Statement on the Occasion of the “International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women”

On 25 November 2025, ahead of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the Special Rapporteur on Women’s Rights on behalf of the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR) reaffirmed the Commission’s commitment to end all forms of violence against women and girls across Africa, highlighting a key concern: the growing threat of digital violence, cyber-harassment, non-consensual image sharing, online abuse, gendered disinformation, as a rising form of gender-based violence.

The Special Rapporteur pointed to existing normative frameworks including its own resolutions on protecting women from digital violence, the African Union Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (AU-CEVAWG) and urged State Parties to sign, ratify, and domesticate the Convention to build legal and institutional safeguards.

The inclusion of digital violence elevates the discourse that women’s safety must now include online spaces, social media, digital communication, arenas which are increasingly central for activism, information, organizing, identity, network building. For young women across Africa, digital violence intersects with misogyny, racism, economic inequality, and sometimes state repression. Recognizing digital violence as a human-rights issue is a necessary evolution, ensuring that legal protections and state responsibilities adapt to technology, not leave women vulnerable in new domains.

States must ratify AU-CEVAWG, and other relevant instruments, domesticate them, pass laws protecting women in digital spaces, providing clear definitions of digital violence, and mandate enforcement. To achieve this, it is important to ensure disaggregated data on physical, sexual, digital violence with regular monitoring of patterns, oversight mechanisms and independent human-rights bodies with enhanced capacities to act.

<https://achpr.au.int/index.php/en/news/press-releases/2025-11-25/international-day-elimination-violence-against-women>

## Ivory Coast Experiences Increased Refugee Influx from Mali Conflict

Ivory Coast is deploying additional security forces to its northern border following a surge in refugee arrivals linked to escalating attacks by armed groups in neighboring Mali, raising concerns about the southward spread of regional instability. The Ivorian National Security Council directed military leadership to reinforce border security during an emergency meeting. The government statement attributed the “unusual refugee flows” to “attacks on civilians by Armed Terrorist Groups in several localities in southern Mali.”

The news of the growing influx of refugees along the Ivory Coast’s borders is deeply concerning, especially for the women and girls who are among the most vulnerable in times of displacement. Authorities have reported an increase in patrols, surveillance, and asylum-processing mechanisms, but the challenges facing these displaced populations go far beyond the logistical aspects of registration and border control.

Many of these refugees are fleeing the violence perpetrated by militant groups like Jama’at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) in southern Mali, an al-Qaeda-linked organization whose expanding reach has forced

civilians to seek refuge across borders. For the women and girls caught in this crisis, the loss of livelihoods, social networks, documentation, and shelter only compounds their vulnerability to sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation, and denial of essential services.

It is clear that the Ivory Coast's border reinforcement is just the first step in a much more comprehensive response. Prevention must focus on ensuring safe transit corridors, gender-sensitive registration processes, and immediate access to shelter, healthcare, and legal protection for these refugee women. Meaningful participation requires involving displaced women in the planning and delivery of protection and humanitarian aid, recognizing their unique experiences and perspectives.

Recovery and reintegration efforts will be critical, as they must provide economic opportunities, psychosocial support, and the inclusion of women in reception and community-integration programs. Without these measures, the influx of refugees' risks transforming into a protracted humanitarian crisis, one in which women and girls continue to bear the brunt of the suffering.

The current developments call for urgent, WPS-anchored humanitarian planning that prioritizes the rights, dignity, and protection of displaced women and their families. Failure to do so would not only betray the commitments to the WPS agenda but also condemn an entire generation of women and girls to continued marginalization, trauma, and exclusion. The time for action is now, as we strive to build a future where no woman or girl is left behind, even in the midst of such profound upheaval.

<https://www.africanews.com/2025/11/14/ivory-coast-experiences-increased-refugee-influx-from-mali-conflict/>

## **Gunmen Kill Vice Principal, Abduct Female Students in Attack on Nigerian School**

In a devastating incident on the 17th of November 2025, armed gunmen attacked a government girls' boarding school in Kebbi State, Nigeria. The assailants, wielding rifles and employing coordinated tactics, stormed the Government Girls Comprehensive Secondary School in Maga town at around 4 am local time, engaging in a gunfight with police before scaling the perimeter fence and abducting 25 female students.

Tragically, the school's vice principal was killed in the attack. Security forces have launched a large-scale search, combing nearby forests and roads commonly used by local bandit gangs.

This latest raid draws attention to the brutal pattern of attacks on schools in Nigeria's northwest, where poorly protected boarding schools in remote areas have become easy targets for armed groups. The targeting of young women and girls, students seeking education, marks a chilling violation of their fundamental rights.

The abduction underscores the urgent need for proactive measures to safeguard girls' access to education, including improved security infrastructure, community-based early-warning systems, and the meaningful inclusion of women and local organizations in security planning. Survivors require not just rescue, but sustained psychosocial support, healthcare, and pathways to reintegrate into their education or find new vocational opportunities.

This attack reveals that peace and security in Africa cannot be separated from education, gender equality, and the protection of girls' rights. Structural changes are necessary to address the root causes, restore safe access to education, and embed gender-sensitive protection mechanisms, even in the most remote areas.



Families, the school community, and authorities are working tirelessly to ensure the safe return of the abducted students. The determination of these young women to pursue their dreams of education will be their guiding light as they demand justice, protection, and a future free from fear.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/gunmen-abduct-female-students-raid-nigerian-boarding-school-sources-say-2025-11-17>

## Conclusion

The events that unfolded across Africa this past November have underscored the persistent, heart-wrenching urgency of placing women at the very centre of the continent's fragile peace and security landscape. From one corner of this region to the next, the cruel realities of violent conflict, political instability, and devastating humanitarian crises have continued to disproportionately devastate the lives of women and girls.

Whether it's the horrors of electoral violence that force mothers and daughters to flee their homes, the anguish of mass displacement that leaves families torn apart, the ravages of famine that rob children of their childhoods, the terror of targeted attacks that steal precious lives, or the rising scourge of digital abuse that violates the privacy and dignity of women - these gendered vulnerabilities are tragically amplified when the very systems and institutions meant to protect them falter and fail.

And yet, even amidst this bleak and demoralizing backdrop, the profound resilience and courageous leadership of women across Africa remain a profound source of hope. From the grassroots civic mobilization efforts and community-based peacebuilding initiatives to the high-level regional advocacy campaigns and transformative policy engagements, women have continued to demonstrate that sustainable peace is simply impossible without their meaningful, equal participation.

The recent surge of renewed regional commitments, landmark justice-sector reforms, and large-scale public mobilizations illustrate that tangible progress is indeed possible when women's voices are finally recognized, amplified, and wholeheartedly supported by those in power.

To ensure that the critical and long-overdue WPS agenda translates into tangible, life-changing impact on the ground, the following actions are recommended:

1. Strengthen protection mechanisms: Governments and humanitarian actors must make the safety and security of women and girls in conflict zones, displacement camps, and digital spaces an absolute priority. This includes establishing robust, survivor-centric reporting





channels, ensuring access to comprehensive healthcare and psychosocial support, and guaranteeing pathways to justice.

2. Enhance accountability: States and international actors must conduct thorough investigations and prosecute all violations, including the scourge of sexual and gender-based violence, ensuring that perpetrators face the full weight of the law and that survivors receive the reparations and rehabilitation they deserve.

3. Ensure meaningful participation: Women must be actively and equally included in every aspect of peace negotiations, governance, and post-conflict reconstruction processes, with special attention paid to engaging the perspectives and leadership of rural, displaced, and marginalized communities.

4. Invest in prevention and resilience: Early-warning systems, disaster preparedness, and climate- and conflict-sensitive programming must urgently integrate women's knowledge, lived experiences, and visionary leadership to prevent crises before further devastation.

5. Address structural inequalities: Policies must confront and dismantle the deep-rooted gendered economic, social, and political disparities that continue to exacerbate vulnerabilities, including unequal access to land, resources, education, and digital spaces.

The events of this past November have made it clear that peace and security in Africa will remain fragile until women's fundamental rights, safety, and leadership are treated as central, indivisible pillars of governance and stability across the continent. The path ahead demands great courage, collaboration, and commitment from all stakeholders, but women across this resilient region continue to lead the way - transforming their resilience into tangible action and their collective vision into transformative, lasting change.

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