



South Sudan Human Rights Defenders Network (SSHRDN)

Press Statement

For Immediate release

South Sudan Human Rights Defenders Network Joins the world in Commemoration of the 16 Days of Activism global Campaign against Gender Based Violence.

(Juba, November 25th 2022) South Sudan Human Rights Defenders Network (SSHRDN) joins the rest of the world in commemoration of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, an annual global campaign to re-affirm support towards victims of gender-based violence but also draw attention to the need to reinforce protection of women from Gender-based violence. The commemoration runs from the 25th November and climaxes on 10th December coinciding with the commemoration of International Human Rights Day.

This year, the Global theme for the Campaign is: **“UNiTE! Activism to End Violence against Women & Girls.”**

SSHRDN seeks to provide protection, build the capacity and create operational space for human rights defenders in South Sudan as a means of promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms to safeguard our democratic principles through concerted participation of all the populace. At the heart of our work is the protection of women but importantly Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs).

Violence against women and girls remain the most pervasive human rights violation in the Republic of South Sudan. [*“Since the opening of the GBV and Juvenile court to April 2022, 668 cases have been reported with 180 concluded. The court still faces stigma-related barriers that hinder the reporting of SGBV cases”*. UNDP South Sudan website.¹] Already heightened by the negative cultural norms, its prevalence is further being increased by the continuous circle of intercommunal violence and economic instability in the country.

“Despite the negative trends and violence directed to women and girls, there is sufficient means to prevent all sorts of violence women and girls face on a daily basis. The South Sudan Human Rights Defenders Network advocates for implementation of policies that will contribute towards curbing all sorts of violence directed against women and girls” Gisma Juma, Women protection officer SSHRDN.

“Violence against Women and Girls in South Sudan has been a constant struggle but with civil societies, non-Government organizations, Institutions and Activists, more light is being shed on the atrocities that surround this topic. Many south Sudanese are speaking up towards the ending of GBV in the country. After the Civil war and covid19, the fight against GBV is still ongoing and

¹ UNDP website: <https://www.undp.org/south-sudan/stories/govt-un-donors-elevate-awareness-and-response-gender-based-violence-south-sudan>



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the SSHRD Network is joining the 16 days of activism to end Violence against Women and Girls” states James Bidal National Coordinator SSHRDN

As a network, we seek to promote the participation of human rights based civil society organizations to research, analyze and pursue strategic interventions through advocacy, campaign to promote and protect human rights defenders in South Sudan.

This year, the network will participate in the 16 days of activism against GBV and will working with it's Women Rights Cluster headline a number of activities which include but not limited to:

1. A 14 days Advocacy Campaign online highlighting key awareness and informative messages inclusive of testimonies on Women and Girl's Rights on SSHRDN's social media platforms;
2. A public forum in Commemoration of the International **Women Human Rights Defenders Day** on the **29th of November**. **The forum will be an opportunity** to commemorate this day for the first time in South Sudan by celebrating and recognizing the important work of Women HRDs, highlighting their challenges and efforts in promotion of human rights in South Sudan.
3. A *twitter space* on the 9th December 2022. The space will be hosted from **6:00pm to 7:00pm** to stimulate a discussion with partners and members highlighting the work that is being done by WHRDs publicly.
4. 2022 HRDs Awards. On the **9th of December, 2022**, to end the campaign, the Network will be recognizing HRDs that have stood out in the year 2022. This will be part of commemorating the **Human Rights Day**, highlighting their outstanding efforts, achievements and/or leadership in the promotion of human rights, equality, non-discrimination and diversity in South Sudan.

The network will remain committed in the promotion of the participation of human rights based civil society organizations in the country.

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