

# Press Release

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CENTRE FOR INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE,  
PEACE AND JUSTICE - (CIGPJ)



## South Sudan - Survivors of sexual violence demand answers two years after war crimes filing

**Juba (LAW)** - Today, over 50 survivors of conflict-related sexual violence met in Juba to demand answers, two years after they filed the first ever war crimes case in the world's youngest country's history. As we mark the second anniversary of South Sudan's National Remembrance Day, survivors were joined by religious leaders, government officials and civil society members to renew their call for accountability, nearly a decade after they were subjected to unspeakable violence.

*"We have suffered from the rapes, and we are still suffering from stigma from the community because of what we endured. It has been too long. We need justice"* said Elisabeth\*, a 23 years old woman who was sexually abused by The South Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), back in February 2017. Pauline\*, 23 years old, stressed that she was *"happy when the case was opened by the South Sudanese legal authorities, but the result of the investigation and accountability for those who shattered our lives are long overdue."*

To commemorate survivors' courage and ensure their claim for justice and acknowledgement is not forgotten, today's event was organized by Legal Action Worldwide (LAW) together with the Centre for Inclusive Governance Peace and Justice (CIGPJ) and the South Sudan Survivors Network (SUNS). In October 2024, LAW and CIGPJ filed the first war crimes criminal complaint in South Sudan on behalf of three women who suffered horrific sexual violence during the 2017 conflict. The complainants were subjected to rape, gang rape and beatings. Two of them were children as young as 14 years at the time. After almost 10 years, these survivors continue to hope that justice will prevail.

In March 2026, The Department of Public Prosecution made a landmark decision to accept the case and investigate these crimes, paving the way for the thousands of women and girls who suffered and are still suffering from sexual violence across the country. It is estimated that over 70% of the women have been subjected to some forms of gender based-violence in South Sudan, making in one of the most unsafe place for women and girls globally.

*"We applaud the actions of the Ministry of Justice and the Directorate of Public Prosecutions for their decision to open an investigation, offering an opportunity for justice for all sexual violence survivors"* said Antonia Mulvey, Executive Director, LAW. *"But victims have been waiting, suffering, for too long. Their pain and trauma must be acknowledged, and South Sudan must now hold perpetrators accountable by moving forward with the prosecution of those who committed these crimes. The women we represent are entitled to justice. They are entitled to build their future with dignity."*


In 2012, South Sudan, ratified the Geneva Conventions, which allows the South Sudan High courts to investigate and prosecute war crimes, including crimes committed by the military. This legislation has not been implemented until today.

*\*Pseudonyms used for protection*

### About Legal Action Worldwide (LAW)

LAW is an independent frontline organisation that provides legal assistance to survivors of human rights violations and advocates for accountability in some of the world's most challenging contexts.

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