

**Regional Training Facility on
Prevention and Suppression of
Sexual and Gender Based
Violence in the Great Lakes
Region.**



**Centre Régional De Formation
Sur La Prévention et Suppression
Des Violence Sexuelles Basées
Sur Le Genre Dans La Région
Des Grands Lacs**

Press Release

Symposium on “**Access to Justice and Fighting Impunity of Sexual Violence in the Great Lakes Region**” Lake Victoria Serena Golf Resort, Entebbe Uganda, 7-9th July 2016

Sexual violence remains a widespread crime in the region and it is not yet effectively punished despite the ICGLR member states determination to eradicate it. Some countries are making commendable progress while others still have many challenges in fighting the crime of sexual violence. From 7-9th July 2016, experts and professionals on combating sexual violence from the region and beyond will meet in Uganda to share experiences and strategies to prevent and fight impunity of sexual violence crimes in the Great Lakes region. The meeting will be in the form of symposium under the theme “Access to Justice and Fighting Impunity of Sexual Violence in the Great Lakes Region” The symposium will take place at **Lake Victoria Serena Golf Resort, Entebbe Uganda.**

The symposium is organized by the ICGLR –Regional Training Facility (RTF). The RTF, based in Uganda, is an institution of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) based in Bujumbura, Burundi. The RTF specific mandate is to sensitize and train judicial officers, police units, social workers, medical officers and other categories of persons who handle sexual violence cases. Under the ICGLR Pact, member states of ICGLR committed to combat sexual violence against women and children through preventing, criminalising and punishing acts of sexual violence, both in times of peace and in times of war. To that end, the 12 member states of ICGLR established the RTF under a specific protocol on prevention and suppression of Sexual violence against women and children, to train and sensitise stakeholders on the most effective ways of handling sexual violence cases.

The symposium will be attended by experts from the UN, the African Union Commission (AUC), ECOWAS, SADC, IGAD, and the ICGLR 12 member states. The ICGLR 12 Member States are: Angola, Burundi, Central Africa Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Republic of Congo (Congo Brazzaville), South Sudan, Sudan, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. Other participants outside the Great Lakes Region will come from Chad, Mali, Madagascar, Ivory Coast, South Africa, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Libya, Sierra Leone and Somalia.

According to Mr Nathan M Byamukama, the Ag. Director of the RTF, the symposium will focus on the progress made and challenges related to fighting impunity in Sexual Violence related cases. The symposium will also discuss judgments (case law) relating to Sexual Violence (SV) in Member States of the ICGLR and beyond and the impact the judgments have had on the survivors of sexual violence. In all this according to Mr Byamukama, “we will Identify good practices to adapt among

Member States and also suggest practical ways, through research and training at RTF, of addressing misconceptions and challenges related to fighting Sexual Violence”. Mr Byamukama further stated that “As a new institution specializing in training and sensitizing against Sexual Violence, such gatherings enable us (the RTF) to start profiling relevant and potential experts to handle different ingredients of sexual violence when training at RTF fully starts”.

The symposium will be addressed among others by the new ICGLR Executive Secretary- **Amb Zachary Muburi-Muita**; AU Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region- **Amb. Ibrahima Fall**; Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region; **Amb. Said Djinnit**; **Mr Innocent Zahinda**, Director UN Team of Experts/Sexual Violence in Conflict (representing Under Secretary General , Zainab Bangura); the Director, Public Prosecutions Uganda- **Mike J. Chibita**, and the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development , **Hon Janet Mukwaya**.

The symposium is organized by ICGLR-RTF and supported by the African Union Commission’s department of peace and security as well as the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary General of the Great Lakes Region.

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