

Drawing a **Red Line** to End CRSV- Call to Action

by SEMA, the Global Network of Victims and Survivors to End Wartime Sexual Violence

SEMA, the Global Network of Victims and Survivors to End Wartime Sexual Violence, fights for a world where sexual violence is no longer used in conflict, and where States hold other States to account, and meet their international obligations by taking concrete actions to prevent, respond to, and repair the grave harms sexual violence causes.

We, SEMA members¹, have a deep sense of anger and disappointment with the decades-long failure of the international community to put an end to the use of conflict-related sexual violence.

We, SEMA members in consultation with networks of victims and survivors in our home countries, speak out against the continued use of sexual violence in conflict, the ongoing impunity of States and individuals for such acts, and the international community's continued failure to take meaningful actions to prevent and respond when conflict-related sexual violence occurs.

We and other actors working to support our fight for justice, accountability and redress, **cannot fight this fight alone. We demand concrete action from States.**

SEMA issues this **Call to Action** not only to seek improvements in our own lives but also to prevent this violence from happening to others at risk today and in the future. We stand in solidarity with all and will continue to fight to end conflict-related sexual violence.

Preamble

Deeply concerned about the ongoing occurrence of conflict-related sexual violence and its grave and devastating consequences for victims, survivors, their children, families and communities;

Recognising, building on and fully supporting the invaluable work already done by victims and survivors in their own national contexts and internationally, including the Kinshasa Declaration; and recognise the courage of those who have come forward to speak out about their experiences;

Recognising other important international initiatives such as UN Action's Framework for the Prevention of Conflict-related Sexual Violence and the Murad Code;

Expressing profound anger that, while numerous legal obligations for conflict-related sexual violence exist, such violence continues on a wide scale; there is a serious lack of enforcement of these obligations and meaningful participation in reparation processes for victims and survivors;

Further expressing concern that justice and accountability efforts are mainly focussed on individuals without adequate attention paid to State responsibility;

Expressing deep concern that despite numerous calls for action by survivors, our voices are not often heard and the gravity of the impact of conflict-related sexual violence on the lives of individuals and communities is not sufficiently recognised, including with respect to social stigma and discrimination;

Recalling that victims and survivors must be at the centre of all responses and have the right to meaningful participation in the development of all measures to address conflict-related sexual violence.

¹ The SEMA network includes members from Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Central African Republic, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guatemala, Guinea, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Kosovo, Libya, Liberia, Mali, Nepal, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Korea, South Sudan, Syria, Uganda, Ukraine, Zimbabwe. <https://www.semanetwork.org/>

Call to Action

SEMA calls on States to work with us to create a world free of conflict-related sexual violence. SEMA calls on States to:

Prevention

1. Implement the Framework for the Prevention of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, including developing or strengthening national prevention plans with conflict-related sexual violence indicators; measures that will be taken at the international, national, and community levels; and measures to prevent the reoccurrence of sexual violence and discrimination and stigma.
2. Support the important work being done by survivors and victims in preventing stigma.

Response

3. Provide full support to survivor groups and networks to come together to speak out, to tell their truth, and to seek and advocate for solutions for themselves and their communities.
4. Provide survivor-centred holistic care and reparations, to ensure that survivors and victims are able to rebuild their lives, reintegrate into their communities, and prevent further stigma and harm.
5. Lift all barriers such as visa restrictions, and lack of financial means, which prevent survivors and survivor groups from meaningfully engaging with the international community.
6. Implement the Murad Code, including its translation into local languages and that all state actors are trained in and implement its standards when engaging with survivors and victims.
7. Support local peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts. Peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts must acknowledge the crimes and human rights violations that occurred and should not serve to silence survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

Justice and Accountability

8. Hold other States to account, including high-level leaders, for the legal obligations they have entered into; sanctions and other punitive measures should be used as a powerful warning to those engaged in such violence or who allow it to happen. Those suspected of perpetrating or allowing the use of sexual violence should not be welcomed in the international community.
9. Ensure that investigations and prosecutions are conducted in a timely manner and that they include missing persons and crimes committed against vulnerable populations, such as displaced persons and those fleeing conflict.
10. Ensure that appropriate protective measures are provided, including safe space shelters, and that data and identifying information are strictly protected.
11. Implement justice and accountability initiatives first and foremost at the national level.

Reparations

12. Justice processes always need to include reparations.
13. Implement the Kinshasa Declaration on the Rights to Reparation and Co-creation through Meaningful Participation in Reparation Processes; including a right to reparations for **all** children born to victims and survivors and the right of victims and survivors to co-creation in all parts of the reparation process.