

Statement

Virtual CSW 68 NGO Forum

As participants and activists of the Virtual CSW 68 NGO Forum, we stand firm in our commitment to addressing the pressing issue of violence against women and girls in the Global South. As co-organisers of "What Does the Missing Data Tell Us About Violence Against Women and Girls?", held on Thursday, March 14th, 2024, at 8:30 AM (New York time) we find it important to shed light on the critical gaps in our understanding of this prevalent issue.

Our collaboration, led by Masimanyane Women's Rights International and the International Network to End Violence Against Women and Girls in partnership with organizations such as International Women's Rights Action Watch, the Third World Network, the Pan African Palestine Solidarity Network, the Initiative for Strategic Litigation in Africa (ISLA), the Feminist Humanitarian Network, and Action Aid Palestine, stresses the urgency and importance of this conversation. By fostering South-South collaboration, we aim to decolonize and re-politicize the narrative surrounding data on violence against women and girls in the context of poverty.

Recent events, particularly the plight of women and girls in Gaza, have emphasized the need to confront the politics of truth. We refuse to overlook the systemic abuses faced by women in conflict zones and the implications of distorted narratives. Truth matters to us, and we are dedicated to amplifying the voices of those whose stories often remain untold.

Throughout the webinar, which focused on contested truths, global South feminist critiques of data, and the missing narratives and experiences of women and girls, we aimed to pave the way for meaningful change and action by addressing these issues head-on.

Furthermore, we call on the following:

1. All states to ensure Israel's full cooperation with the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including East Jerusalem. They should also ensure access to Israeli prisons for thorough investigations into violence against women.
2. All media workers should engage in activism to ensure that all media outlets, especially The New York Times, adhere to professional journalism standards. They should demand retractions of any untruths or fabrications in reporting violence against women during the 7th October attacks on Israel.
3. All gender activists and feminists should demand clarification from the UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Pramilla Patten, regarding her report on sexual violence related to the 7th October 2023 attacks on Israel and the methods of her investigation. Despite the report stating its inability

to attribute the sexual violence solely to the 7th October attacks, it has resulted in more harm than good. In our assessment, her report has allowed for misrepresentation and manipulation of sexual violence in the propaganda wars of conflicting parties, to the detriment of women.

4. All states to ensure the implementation of provisional measures outlined by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling on January 26, 2024.
5. All states to ensure that Israel provides immediate unhindered access for humanitarian aid delivery to Gaza and the West Bank .
6. All female government ministers worldwide should collectively advocate for an immediate ceasefire and the cessation of genocide in Gaza.
7. The UN should address the ongoing wars in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) with a focus on ensuring urgent attention is given to the conflict-related sexual violence against women in these countries, as well as in other conflict zones where civilians, especially women and children, are targeted.
8. As feminists from the South, we pledge our solidarity with women and girls in the Global South who still face the brutality of sexual violence daily.

As we convene for this crucial dialogue, let us remember our shared vision: a world where all women and girls live free from violence and enjoy equality, autonomy, freedom, and justice. Together, let us drive change and advocate for the rights and dignity of women and girls everywhere.

Signatories:

#EndViolenceAgainstWomen #GlobalSouthFeminism #DecolonizeData #CSW68

