

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE FOR WOMEN IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

Press Release

Banjul: Impunity and Institutionalization of Violence Against Women in Sudan Somalia and Eritrea

April 2012

At the African Commission for Human and People's Rights, The Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA) wishes to highlight the dire human rights predicament for women across Somalia, Sudan and Eritrea. In all three countries, women face violent attacks by the state and their associated institutions: The institutions intended to act as the protector and guarantors of their rights.

The fundamental human rights of women must not be compromised for the state-building or national security interests of any country.

In Sudan women are at the forefront of this persecution as they are frequently viewed as vehicles for promoting moral bankruptcy. The use of the Public order police and associated judiciary to persecute and punish sees women imprisoned through summary trials and subject to humiliating and degrading treatment.

The Somali women IDPs face the daily fear of rape at the hands of both Transitional Federal Government and local militias. The TFG is ultimately failing in its obligations to discipline its police and soldiers. This in conjunction with the lack of will to punish perpetrators creates a culture of impunity and an environment in which sexual violence can flourish.

Finally Eritrean men and women seeking to avoid a brutal military service imposed by the Eritrean state continue to face multiple human rights abuses, inclusive of summary execution and torture in their attempt to flee. But reaching beyond their state borders the human rights situation does not relent. The policy environment surrounding refugee protection in destination countries such as Sudan must be strengthened and practically applied.

SIHA network calls on the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights:

- To protect the human rights of women in these countries who are most at risk of sexual violence and persecution.
- To hold the government of Sudan accountable to its international and regional commitments and the international principle of respecting the dignity and human rights of women.

- To urge the Somalia government to operationalise the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 must be to prevent sexual violence and implement justice against their perpetrators.
- To conduct investigations into the human rights abuses taking place both in Eritrea and for Eritreans who have crossed their borders and face grave dangers to their personal security. International action must be instigated to prevent future atrocities and to bring an end to human trafficking and illegal organ harvesting.

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For SIHAs full statement to the ACHPR and full report highlighting these abuses please click [here](#).