

**Ambassadorial Level Meeting of the Peacebuilding Commission on Women,
Peacebuilding, and Development in the Great Lakes Region**

AMENDED VERSION OF THE PROPOSED SPEECH FOR JULIENNE LUSENGE

Kinshasa, November 4, 2020

Mr. President

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. First of all, allow me to introduce myself, I am Mrs. Julienne Lusenge, Executive Director of the Fund for Congolese Women.

2. I have been appointed, on behalf of the participants, to present to you the conclusions of the round tables on:

- *"The prevention of all forms of violence against women and their protection,"*
- *"Effective measures to ensure the genuine participation of women in political life and their contribution to the consolidation of peace in the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic."*

3. These consultative round tables were held during the months of July and August and were facilitated by the Office of the Special Envoy.

4. Allow me to express our appreciation to the Special Envoy of the SG as well as to all the regional stakeholders and the whole of the United Nations who have contributed to these round tables and shared their perspectives.

5. The following recommendations were retained from the two round tables.

(a) Regarding the round table on: Prevention of all forms of violence against women and their protection

The consultative roundtable addressed three thematic areas including:

- *Effective protection strategies and recovery programs for SGBV survivors*
- *Integrating the fight against SGBV and other crimes into peace and security mechanisms and allocating the necessary resources for the prevention and economic recovery of survivors*
- *Providing support for the creation, adoption, and enforcement of legal frameworks that prohibit domestic violence and sexual gender-based violence*

6. Fifteen recommendations were made on this issue. However, we would like to emphasize the following points:

- (i) Member states and partners must strengthen financial and technical support for reforms of the judicial system and ensure that women's rights are preserved by integrating, in particular, issues of violence and gender-based violence into national planning mechanisms.
- (ii) Zero tolerance for impunity and the establishment of mechanisms to help survivors, including legal support and social reintegration that allow them to regain their dignity.
- (iii) The importance of the action programs proposed by civil society to curtail the activities of armed groups in eastern DRC, including security cooperation and non-military measures.
- (iv) The importance of the central role of women and youth as agents of change in the process of designing and implementing recovery programs and strategies for protection against SGBV.
- (v) Strengthen the leadership and meaningful participation of women and girls in all decision-making processes to deal with the COVID-19 epidemic.
- (vi) Combine economic empowerment, care provision, participation of survivors in policy formulation and access to SGBV services.

In this regard, it is necessary to:

- Facilitate online training of lawyers and support staff of the Legal Unit on the treatment of SGBV and put in place early warning systems to provide legal services to survivors.
- Provide support to the centers of excellence of the ICGLR to document violence against women, to improve the collection of data disaggregated by sex which will allow the identification of clearer monitoring of the prevalence and characteristics of violence.
- Regional and international actors should increase their support to civil society for community (mass) sensitization against SGBV, capacity building, and strategic communication.
- Establish multi-purpose centers within communities to serve as support and information centers on SGBV, especially for survivors.
- Integrate a comprehensive approach to gender equality and sexuality into national curricula in the region.

Participants emphasized the importance of research in the design, inclusion, and implementation of recovery programs and strategies to protect against SGBV.

- Therapid, quantitative, and qualitative assessments of the socio-economic aspects of sexual and gender-based violence.
- Resource regional media networks to continue to raise awareness and educate the community on preventing and combating SGBV.

(b) Regarding effective measures to guarantee the full and effective participation of women in governance and their contribution to peacebuilding

7. The lively debates made it possible to reflect on the different perspectives in addressing the full, meaningful, and effective participation of women within the framework of

an inclusive approach that emphasizes the importance of parity and the passage of the initial minimum quota from 30 % to 50%. To this end, it is important to strengthen the political and institutional frameworks that will make it possible to achieve this objective and its implementation, as well as the partnership with regional organizations in order to learn from their experiences.

It was also recognized that the Great Lakes region lacks a sufficient number of women as negotiators and mediators for peacebuilding.

Among the recommendations made by the participants in this round table, we would like to highlight the following:

- (i) Strengthen the capacities of women mediators and negotiators from grassroots to all levels to enable them to participate equitably in all peacebuilding processes.
- (ii) Member States should strengthen local mechanisms that control quotas of women for managerial positions.
- (iii) Member states and partners must increase support for the implementation of action plans to implement resolution 1325, and strengthen structures such as groups of women parliamentarians and increase the role of women in political parties and on human rights commissions.

8. In conclusion, none of these recommendations can be implemented without the necessary human and financial resources from partners and from the Commission to undertake activities aimed at ending impunity for SGBV, ensuring the participation of women in peace processes, and guaranteeing women's contribution to political governance.

9. We count on the commitment of the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace to advocate for the financing of programs developed in the Great Lakes region, in particular those led by women's organizations, which will contribute to the implementation of these recommendations. We also count on international partners to continue to support the countries of the region in their efforts to prevent all forms of violence against women, ensure their protection, and strengthen the participation of women in political life and peacebuilding.

Thank you.