

To His Excellency Mister President here represented by the Governor of the Province of South Kivu

Excellency,

We, members of the Survivor Movement of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, are united this Monday 23rd of April 2018 in emergency after the mass rape of women and girls that occurred during the night of the 15th of April in the village of Wameli, South Bamuguba, only shortly after the mass rape in Kabikokole in February.

For decades, the Congolese people have been perpetually bereaved by countless atrocities. Besides the systematic destruction of the political entity itself, the conflict has destroyed everything as a result of the immense consequences due to ongoing human rights violations.

The rapes and sexual violence are a part of these multiple violations. In fact, in the territories affected by conflict, women and girls are regularly victims of sexual assault while they carry out their daily activities, such as: going to the field, fetching wood or water, during travels to buy or sell products, and other essential activities for the survival of their families. Other victims are found in their own homes. This violence touches every layer of the population, directly or indirectly.

However, the Constitution of our country states in *Article 15* that “Public powers ensure the elimination of sexual violence. Without prejudice to international treaties and agreements, any sexual violence done to any person, with the intention to destabilize, to break up a family and to make a whole people disappear qualifies as a crime against humanity punished by law.”

Then, in *Article 16* “The human person is sacred. The State has the obligation to respect and to protect it. [...] No one can be subjected to cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment. [...]” It is time that these articles are no longer empty words and are finally respected everywhere in the DRC.

Who are we?

The Survivor Movement of the DRC aims to promote the effective and efficient participation of survivors in the fight against rape and sexual violence, with the objective of:

- ✓ Conducting advocacy and an awareness-raising campaign in the east of the DRC;
- ✓ Creating a network of solidarity between survivors;
- ✓ Establishing a collective memory so that the crimes that we have suffered are never forgotten;
- ✓ Capitalizing on the experiences of the survivors in the prevention and care of cases of rape and sexual violence to help new victims.

Our vision is: “A Democratic Republic of the Congo without rape and violence against women and where their rights are guaranteed and protected.” Our National Network is linked to a global network of survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, and our activities are supported by survivors in Latin America, Africa, Asia and Europe, who have suffered similar experiences as ours.

What do we demand?

In light of the thousands of women, children, and some men, survivors of rape and sexual violence registered in this country...

In light of the mass rapes that are perpetrated against innocent people throughout the DRC, the most recent being those:

- In Ituri in March 2018,
- In the village of Kabikokole on the 8th of February,
- In the village of Wameli on the 15th of April.

Several priorities are essential to help this population cope and eventually eliminate rape and sexual violence.

PRIORITY 1: FIGHT AGAINST SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND IMPUNITY

1. The Government of the Republic must take all the necessary steps to put an end to the mass and individual rapes of women throughout the DRC;
2. The Government of the Republic must support the establishment of a justice mechanism in order to end the discrimination against victims of rape and sexual violence;
3. The Government of the Republic must do everything in its power for the DRC to adopt all mechanisms of transitional justice, including reparations for the victims of rape and sexual violence;
4. The Government of the Republic must do everything possible for the status of victims or survivors to be recognized;
5. The Government of the Republic is invited to officially commemorate the 19th of June every year, as the International Day for the Elimination of Conflict Related Sexual Violence Against Women.

PRIORITY 2: SECURITIZATION OF THE CONGOLESE POPULATION

6. The Government of the Republic must urgently take all necessary measures for the population of the east of the country in particular, and of the whole

country in general, to be safe. These measures must include: the disarmament of all militias and the acceleration of the reform and vetting of the FARDC and of the Congolese National Police to ensure that they respect human rights;

7. The Government of the Republic must take all necessary measures to end the mass migration of refugees and internally displaced peoples;
8. The Government of the Republic must take all necessary measures to end the cycle of communal violence based on recent or past injustice.

PRIORITY 3: CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY AND THE RULE OF LAW

9. The Government of the Republic must do everything in its power to materialize all resolutions of the treaty bodies of the United Nations, as well as all relevant resolutions of the charter-based human rights mechanisms at the African level and at the level of the UN, including those concerning the crimes of rape and sexual violence and gender equality;
10. The Courts and Tribunals of the Democratic Republic of the Congo are invited to the open and/or the reopen just and fair trials for the benefit of all victims of rape and sexual violence.

To conclude, we demand that national as well as provincial authorities do everything in their power, and do so urgently, for emergency relief to reach the population of South Bamuguba, particularly the women victims of rape.

We proclaim loud and clear: no more rapes in South-Kivu, in the DRC, in Africa or in the world.

Long live the Survivor Network,

Long live a DRC without rape,

Thank you.