Beat: Local

Church seek ending stigmatize survivors of gender-based violence in South Sudan

By Council of Churches (SSCC)

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USPA NEWS - Some survivors of conflict-related sexual violence in South Sudan are condemned and rejected by their families, and the country´s Council of Churches (SSCC) wants this stigmatization of survivors of conflict-related sexual violence to end.
“They are ostracized and relegated to the margins of society, turning them into outcasts,“ said Archbishop Reverend Justin Badi Arama of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan on the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict marked annually on 19 June. The prelate was reading a joint statement in the capital, Juba, to members of the diplomatic community and non-governmental organisations sympathetic to the rising numbers of cases of sexual and gender-based violence.

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Listing a set of recommendations, Archbishop Rev Badi Arama stressed the need to create awareness to help refrain victims from from being discriminated, while asking victims to “speak up about the violence they have suffered without being silenced by stigma usually associated with such crimes.“----------
Speaking at the event, a senior official of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) lent his voice to the Church´s condemnation, saying the country´s mothers, sisters, aunties, wives have suffered sexual violence over the years of being mired in conflict.“Only last year, in 2018, over 1,200 victims were documented as having suffered sexual violence,“ said Arnaud Royer, the UNMISS Deputy Human Rights Director, adding that there has been recent acceptance that this vice has been happening in the country.----------
“Lately, we have noticed that we are not any more in denial; we have seen some progress,“ he said, adding that UNMISS has been engaging with civil society, perpetrators and some state authorities, and that some action has been taken to report perpetrators. “We want to raise the awareness, we want to raise our voice to say that this stigmatization must end. This horrible situation must end,“ said Rev James Oyet Latansio the General Secretary, South Sudan Council of Churches during the event. “Enough is enough. This must stop,“ stressed an emotional Latansio. Saying that women are coming together to rally against sexual-violence, Agnes Wasuk the National Coordinator of Women´s Programs at the council of churches highlighted that grassroots women experience severe sexual violence.
THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY ALOS LENT THEIR VOICES ON THE DAY----------
“Addressing this set of crimes will help build peace in the country,“ said Thomas Hushek, the United States Ambassador to South Sudan, also present at the event. “Shame lies with those who perpetrate it “ this is a really clear and profound message, which we all need to help support,“ said the European Union representative in South Sudan, Frances Collins. SOURCE
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