

PARLIAMENT ADOPTS RESOLUTION TO ADDRESS NEEDS OF WAR-AFFECTED

Women's Advocacy Network petition unanimously adopted by Parliament



Photo 1: Members of the Women's Advocacy Network (WAN) pose with Members of Parliament in front of Parliament in Kampala after presenting a petition to the Uganda Women Parliamentarian's Association on 14 March 2014. Picture courtesy of Sylvia Opinia

KAMPALA – On 9 April 2014, the Ugandan Parliament adopted a resolution calling for the establishment of a “gender sensitive reparations fund” and the offering of reparations for war-affected women and men. The resolution also calls for the government to provide free and accessible health services for war-affected women and children as well as to ensure the integration and resettlement of children born in captivity and formerly-abducted women in their communities.

This comes as a result of a motion tabled by Aswa County, Gulu District Member of Parliament Hon. Ronald Reagan Okumu on 3 April. It also comes on the heels of intense lobbying by civil society organisations such as the Justice and Reconciliation

Project, a non-governmental organisation in Gulu, and specifically a petition presented by a collective of war-affected women known as the Women's Advocacy Network (WAN) to the Uganda Women

Parliamentarian's Association in March.

After the adoption of the resolution, the Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Rt. Hon. Jacob Oulanya appointed a three member committee consisting of Hon. Rosemary Nyakingogoro, Hon. Reagan Okumu and Hon. Godfrey Kiwanda to follow up on the government's implementation of the resolution and to update Parliament accordingly.

“This has begun the process of healing for me,” the chairperson of the Women's Advocacy Network, Evelyn Amony said after hearing the news, “We plan to work to push for the issues we have raised until they are addressed. We also hope to meet the president of Uganda to let him know what we are going through and for him to understand the urgency of our needs.”

The resolution has been deemed a “success” and a “milestone” according to a statement issued by the Justice and Reconciliation Project.

“It has been six years since the government of Uganda undertook to establish measures that would ensure justice for victims of atrocities committed during the insurgency in northern Uganda. To date very little has been done to redress the harm that victims suffered but this landmark parliamentary resolution marks the beginning of healing and the restoration of dignity for many victims,” the organisation is quoted as saying.

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About the Justice and Reconciliation Project

The Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) promotes locally sensitive and sustainable peace in Africa's Great Lakes region by focusing on the active involvement of grassroots communities in local-level transitional justice. Formerly a partnership of the Gulu District NGO Forum and the Liu Institute for Global Issues, University of British Columbia, Canada, JRP has played a key role in transitional justice in Uganda since 2005, through seeking to understand and explain the interests, needs, concerns and views of the communities affected by war between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and Government of Uganda (GOU). JRP became an independent NGO in 2010 with support from the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Kampala. For more information visit our website at <http://www.justiceandreconciliation.com>.