



## **Oral Statement by the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI)**

53rd Session of the Human Rights Council

Annual discussion on women's rights (HRC Res. 6/30 and 47/15)

30 June 2023

### **The Deteriorating Situation of Women and Girls Globally**

The IBA's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI) welcomes this opportunity to engage in the annual discussion on women's rights. The IBAHRI is highly concerned about the deteriorating situation of women and girls around the world and little effort taken to address this global phenomenon.

In countries such as Iran and Afghanistan, women and girls are subjected to severe restrictions that ultimately prevent their existence outside their homes.

Since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021, Afghan women and girls have suffered a severe rollback of their human rights, including the denial of education, restrictions on movement, and the denial of participation in public life and in the economy.

In Iran, and since the killing of Mahsa Amini on 16 September 2022, we have been witnessing severe restrictions on the rights of women and girls, and ever-aggressive methods to impose the Hijab laws, which include imposing a fine, denying employment and even preventing travel.

Iranian and Afghani women lawyers, politicians, scholars, and human rights defenders have been calling for the recognition of the situation of women and girls in those two countries as gender apartheid.

Elsewhere, we hear evidence of the use of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) as a weapon of war, including most recently in Sudan and Ethiopia.

In Sudan, women fleeing war-torn Khartoum describe horrific experiences of rape and sexual violence as perpetrated by armed men, including members of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The Combating Violence Against Women and Children Unit documented 49 assaults in the first two weeks of the war.

In Tigray, Ethiopia, despite the ceasefire of November 2022, atrocity crimes continue to be perpetrated against the Tigrayans, including the use of rape and sexual violence. Among the perpetrators are the Eritrean troops which remain in the region to this day.

These are only a few examples from recent months, and add to the use of rape and sexual violence as documented in Russia's war in Ukraine, and many other cases.

The IBAHRI, therefore, calls on:

- this Council to continue to address the root causes of discrimination and persecution of women and girls around the world;
- States to work together on a COP-style approach to the issue;
- States, and in particular the neighbouring States, to provide survivors of SGBV and CRSV with assistance, including international protection.

Thank you.

***Contact:***

***Delivering the statement***

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