



THE ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP
on Women, Peace & Security



Nigeria INGO
Forum

Coordination for better delivery



SOMALIA
NGO
CONSORTIUM

Sexual Violence in Conflict: Reclaiming women’s agency through law, policy and practice

Panel Discussion
20 June 2018 | 16.30 - 18.00
Committee Room 3A, House of Lords

OVERVIEW

The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Women, Peace and Security in collaboration with the Nigeria INGO Forum (NIF) and Somalia NGO Consortium (SNC) will host a panel discussion to explore creative solutions to better protect and empower women in protracted conflicts, and address the egregious abuses perpetrated against women and girls, including alarming levels of sexual violence. Globally, women and girls are increasingly perceived and framed as victims rather than agents of change in complex conflict contexts. Drawing on international and field perspectives from Somalia and north-east Nigeria, panellists will challenge this mentality and focus on exploring best practices and concrete solutions. The panel will specifically focus on actions that the United Kingdom (UK) can undertake to continue to empower women and girls in a genuine way. The panel will mark the *International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict*, which takes place on 19 June.

THE DISCUSSION

Women and girls continue to be abused by all parties to the conflict in north-east Nigeria and Somalia. Specific targeting through killings, abductions and all forms of gender based violence, including rape, combined with the deeply entrenched patriarchal society has left women and girls, for the majority, powerless to defend their basic human rights. In north-east Nigeria, women and girls are used as person borne improvised explosive devices (PBIEDs) or ‘human bombs’ by non-state armed actors thus highlighting the indispensable material ownership mentality that men have of women. In Somalia, decades of conflict have resulted in endemic levels of gender based violence towards women and girls and a climate of total impunity for perpetrators. Panellists will provide examples and insight into best practices and hard lessons learned in the field, including during the course of developing the landmark Somali Sexual Offences Bill. They will discuss how actors, both international and national, need to better work together to ensure that women and girls are given the space and support to be their own agents of change, rather than merely paying lip service to concepts of empowerment, inclusion and community-based protection.

THE STRUCTURE

Time	Event
16.30 - 16.40	Introduction by moderator, Baroness Hodgson of Abinger CBE
16.40 - 17.30	Panel discussion
17.30 - 18.00	Q and A from the floor