



## HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL 54th REGULAR SESSION

### HUMAN RIGHST COUNCIL

#### Statement by Legal Action Worldwide (LAW) on Technical Assistance and Capacity Building for South Sudan

09 October 2023

#### **Mr. Chairperson, distinguished representatives, colleagues**

Let me start by sharing the words of a South Sudanese survivor of gang rape during the conflict.

*“What I want is that this does not continue to the next generation. Imagine you destroy someone’s life. The women are innocent, they do not take part in the war, you must not revenge against them.”*

Since Legal Action Worldwide started working in South Sudan 9 years ago, we have witnessed the ongoing efforts of the state to recover from the conflict and build its institutions, and we welcome these efforts. They are unfortunately far from satisfying the current and future needs of survivors of the conflict, including CRSV survivors.

A holistic answer to their requests is more necessary than ever between psycho-social, medical and legal needs. Strong institutions and a legal framework taking into account all these specific needs must be in place, to guarantee adequately trained service providers are responsive to survivors.

Access to justice, with protection against reprisals, must not be overseen. Strengthening the capacity of investigators, prosecutors and judges, in order to succesfully open and adjudicate cases of sexual violence as a war crime is a pressing priority for South Sudan. The technical support to civil society organisations and local lawyers to represent cases without fear of reprisals is also of paramount importance.

For healing to come, there is a long way to go and this way includes a strong and confident institutional apparatus for South Sudan. The support towards this objective is more imperative than ever.

Thank you.