



**Statement by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on**

**Sexual Violence in Conflict Margot Wallström**

***ANGOLA-DRC COOPERATION KEY TO ADDRESS SEXUAL VIOLENCE ALONG THE  
BORDER***

***(16 March 2011)***

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Following reports of allegations of women being raped in the context of mass expulsions from Angola to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and following a recent meeting with women victims of sexual violence in the DRC, I decided to visit also the Angolan side of the Angola-DRC border. During my visit, I met with the Vice President, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Deputy Minister of Interior for Internal Order, and the Deputy Minister for the Family of the Government of Angola, as well as the Governor and the Vice Governor of Lunda Norte.

During my visit to Angola, I had a number of meetings in Luanda in which the issue of sexual violence was discussed, and also went to Lunda Norte to see one of the border crossings and a refugee settlement to assess the situation for myself.

We know that when it comes to sexual violence, there are always a large number of unreported cases. Regardless of what the situation is in terms of the actual number of rapes and other forms of sexual violence on the Angola-DRC border, it is clear that already one rape is one too many. Arriving to a dialogue with the Angolan Government from different starting points, we decided that prevention of sexual violence and fighting impunity for this type of crimes shall be the focus of our joint efforts. The Government of Angola made a number of specific commitments, outlined in a joint communiqué between the Government of Angola and the United Nations (UN). Key to address sexual violence along the Angola-DRC border is constructive dialogue and cooperation with the Congolese authorities, inter alia through the previously established Mixed Commission. The practical measures also include a reiteration through the respective chains of command existing Army and Police Command Orders prohibiting sexual abuse, and reinforcing the commitment for zero tolerance of such violations in Army and Police Codes of Conduct. The Government also pledged to facilitate the participation of the UN and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to areas of concern, and granting UN protection actors regular access to detention/holding centres or similar locations, as well as facilitating the participation of

the UN and the IOM as an observer in the organized expulsions being carried out by Angolan authorities.

I call on both Angola and the DRC to investigate all allegations of sexual violence and to stay vigilant to prevent incidents in the future. It is imperative that the perpetrators are brought to justice. I urge both Governments to do their utmost to stop sexual violence and to protect their populations, particularly women and children.

We continue to monitor this and other incidents of alleged sexual violence in conflict, wherever they occur.

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