
30th June 2020

Press Statement

Somaliland: The Rape and Sexual Offence Act Should be Implemented

Somaliland Civil Society Organizations, (CSOs), have played a leading role in pushing the Rape and Sexual Offences Bill, established to tackle and criminalize rape and sexual assaults while providing justice to victims. It was a historic day when the Somaliland House of Representatives approved the Rape Bill on 29th July 2018 and President H.E Muse Biihi Abdi signed the Bill into Act, granting the Bill legitimacy on 28th August 2018. When Approved the Rape Act, the public had believed it would prevent the cruel rape and sexual assault crimes, unfortunately after two years, still the Act had not been implemented by any authority.

Until the Rape Act is fully enforced, rape and other sexual assaults will continue. The horrific case of Awo, a 13-year-old girl that was raped in Hargeisa, is one of many examples of a rape that has been subject to a culture of silence and stigma against victims. In addition to suffering the trauma of sexual assault. The Rape Act must be applied, as it had been established with the intention of effectively addressing challenges while providing protection to women and children such as Awo's case.

Therefore, we are calling the government of Somaliland to implement the Rape Act in order to stop the rape and sexual assaults against women and children, to prevent further incidents, and to make sure that women and children are safe in our country. Also, AWO'S CASE will test the government's commitment to protecting the rights of victims while consequently prosecuting rapists.

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