

Bring back our girls! We Need our Girls Back.

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Nigeria strongly condemns the abduction of Nigerian girls from Government school Chibok Borno State on the 14th of April 2014. This has been very trying times for the relatives, mothers of the abducted Chibok girls and indeed for all of us as women and concerned citizens of Nigeria and the world. It brings to the forefront the issues once more of the vulnerability exploitation of women and girls in times of conflict. This very ugly incidence is a clear picture of the gender dynamics of conflict, militarism and lack of inclusive policies.

We are not satisfied with the role the government has played till date. It raises the questions- Why didn't the Federal Government go in pursuit, immediately it was learnt that these girls were abducted? Why were they busy playing number games? Why has it taken three weeks and lots of rally to force them into some sort of action? It doesn't matter if it was one girl or two, every human life deserves to be protected regardless of its gender or status in the society, more so the most vulnerable. This calls to mind UNSCR 1325, the right of women and girls to be recognized and protected., It is the responsibility and accountability of the state to ensure that this is a reality as well as to fulfill the great and urgent need to ensure women's participation in peace processes and to sit at the decision tables.

It is very evident that we need to look beyond the incident and have a holistic perspective of the conflict situation in Nigeria and in the North Eastern part of Nigeria in particular. We need to ask very critical questions, Who and What is fueling the conflicts in these zones? What are the interests in the conflict in Nigeria? What role do arms trade and arms producing countries have in all of these issues? As well as international multinationals present in the country? We need to be very mindful of the market in wars and conflicts and the greedy needs to which sustain these markets and economy.

WILPF Nigeria is very wary of the western big brothers that have all decided to rush in and save the day, we need to take a walk down memory lane and look at countries where such military or security assistance have taken place or are currently in place. What have been the resultant effects especially on the situation of women in those countries? It is very clear that in a highly militarized society, women's rights suffer.

We are tired of these games, we have had enough of muscle plays. It is high time the government stop playing games with words, women's bodies, lives and that of all humans in Nigeria. We need to see the right things done and we need to be part of the processes.

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