



Promoting Peace, Security,
Stability and Development in the
Great Lakes Region

Office of the Secretary General

Tel: (+243) 980 000 634
E-mail: secretariat@fpcirgl.org
Website: www.fpcirgl.org

Avenue Batetela, Immeuble Crown
Tower, 10^{ème} niveau,
local 1004-7, Commune de la
Gombe, Kinshasa -RD Congo

OFFICIAL STATEMENT ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2026

“Rights. Justice. Action. For All Women and Girls”

The Forum of Parliaments of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FP-ICGLR) joins Member Parliaments, regional institutions, and the international community in commemorating **International Women's Day 2026**, under the global theme **“Rights. Justice. Action. For All Women and Girls.”**

As the international community advances further into the 21st century, progress toward the full realization of women's rights remains uneven. In 2026, women globally continue to enjoy, on average, 64 per cent of the legal rights available to men, with persistent gaps across critical areas of life, including employment, access to and control over financial resources, personal safety, family relations, property ownership, mobility, entrepreneurship, and social protection in later life.

Within the Great Lakes Region, as in many parts of the world, these legal and structural disparities are often compounded by social norms, institutional limitations, and barriers to effective access to justice. While important progress has been achieved through legislative reforms and policy commitments, the pace of change remains insufficient. Current projections suggest that, without accelerated and coordinated efforts, closing legal protection gaps between women and men would take several generations, underscoring the need for renewed political will and sustained action.

The FP-ICGLR reiterates that justice systems that are accessible, responsive, and inclusive are essential for transforming legal rights into lived realities for women and girls. Equality before the law is not only a fundamental principle, but also a cornerstone of peace, stability, democratic governance, and sustainable development in the Great Lakes Region.

International Women's Day 2026 coincides with renewed regional momentum around the Women, Peace and Security agenda, including preparations for the forthcoming **Women's Parliamentary Conference (WPC)**, scheduled to take place from **2 to 5 November 2026 in the United Republic of Tanzania**, convened under the auspices of the FP-ICGLR. In this context, the Forum underscores the central role of parliaments in advancing gender-responsive legislation, strengthening oversight,



ensuring accountability, and fostering justice systems that respond to the lived experiences of women and girls.

Guided by the theme of IWD 2026, the FP-ICGLR calls upon Member Parliaments and partners to intensify efforts to review and harmonise national legal frameworks, strengthen institutional capacity, address harmful practices and social norms, and promote the meaningful participation and leadership of women in decision-making processes, particularly in peacebuilding and conflict prevention. These efforts are essential to ensuring that regional and international commitments translate into tangible improvements in the daily lives of women and girls.

No matter how complex the challenges or constrained the political and institutional contexts may be, the FP-ICGLR remains committed to constructive dialogue, cooperation, and collective action. Through the Women’s Parliamentary Conference and other statutory platforms, the Forum will continue to promote shared learning, legislative cooperation, and regional solidarity in support of equal rights and access to justice.

On this International Women’s Day, the FP-ICGLR reaffirms its determination to work alongside Member Parliaments, governments, civil society, and development partners to advance rights, justice, and action for all women and girls, as an integral component of peace, security, and sustainable development in the Great Lakes Region.

The General Secretariat.

