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PRESS RELEASE

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Launch of 'WPS Agenda in Great Lakes Region' Project

July 5th, 2024, Lusaka, Zambia: Today, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH launched the 'Incorporating Local Perspectives into the Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the Great Lakes Region (iWPS)' project. This initiative underscores their commitment to fostering inclusive peace processes within the Great Lakes Region.

The project launch was officiated by ICGLR Executive Secretary, Ambassador João Samuel Caholo; Honourable Jack Mwiimbu, Zambia Ministry of Home affairs and internal security and the Program Director for the "Incorporating Local Perspectives in the implementation of WPS Agenda (iWPS) / GIZ, Ms Soetkin Meertens. Their presence signifies a united front in addressing the region's challenges.

Aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 5 which speaks to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, the iWPS project is dedicated to integrating local perspectives and strengthening accountability for the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda at regional level in the Great Lakes Region.

The iWPS project represents our renewed commitment to implementing the Women, Peace and Security agenda and represents a significant step towards ensuring that the voices and experiences of local women's organizations are at the forefront of efforts to promote peace and gender equality in the region, underscores the ICGLR Executive Secretary, Ambassador João Samuel Caholo.

Through a holistic approach geared towards empowering local grassroots voices, the project will focus on three main areas: enhancing the organizational capacity of grassroots organizations; strengthening civil society networks and their access to regional decision-making spaces; and strengthening accountability through the use of data-based local knowledge in the implementation of the WPS agenda.

It is our conviction that this project will ultimately help to bridge the gap between grassroots organisations and national networks in the ICGLR Member States and enhance coordination and monitoring of Regional Action Plans, thus enhancing effective implementation of the WPS Agenda in the region, emphasized Honourable Jacob Jack Mwiimbu, Minister of Home Affairs and Internal Security Of the Republic of Zambia.

Nicole Nyangolo, Executive Secretary of COCAFEM/GL stressed the importance of civil society organisations in implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda: *As COCAFEM/GL, we contributed to the Kampala Declaration on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence. The consultations conducted by COCAFEM/GL and other regional CSOs allowed the Regional Women's Forum to address our concerns about the situation of SGBV to the Heads of State and Government.*



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Funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the iWPS project will be implemented by the ICGLR with the support of GIZ and a network of local, national, regional and international Civil Society Organisations. It will be implemented until December 2026 – having started in January 2024.

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For more information, please contact:

ICGLR: Mildred A. Kinyaga Otunga Communications & Conferences Officer mildred.otunga@icglr.org +257 66329780	GIZ: Julia Maria Fesser Portfolio Manager julia.fesser@giz.de + 49 17611110002
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