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and

Comité des Femmes Djiboutiennes
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PRESS BRIEFING

**The 25th of Avril, one month after the strike France,
The fight goes on
10 Djiboutian women are starting
a hunger strike in Belgium
against the rapes by the djiboutian army & the impunity**

They want to speak out against the rapes of Afar women by Djiboutian soldiers. Those abuses continue in total impunity since september 1993 in the North and South West of the country.

The purpose of the hunger strike is to protest against the massive abuses and break the wall of silence around the rapes. These crimes are occurring just a few miles away from the military bases of France, the USA, Japan and China.

In Djibouti as well as in other areas in Africa or in the rest of the world, rape is used as a war weapon to destroy the communities' identities. The impunity that has become a system in Djibouti makes it impossible for these women to rebuild themselves.

Since the beginning of the civil war in 1991, hundreds of Afar women have been raped by the government's army in Djibouti. The survivors have remaining physical impairments due to the abuses. They are forever scarred in their bodies, their dignities, their consciences.

Malgré la répression et la honte qu'elles éprouvent, certaines victimes ont eu le courage de porter plainte. Aucune plainte n'a pu aboutir jusqu'à ce jour.

Despite the repression and the shame they go through, some of the survivors had the courage to press charges. No complaint led to justice so far.

The current head of state, Ismael Omar Guelleh, who just got « reelected » for the 4th time is also behind the massive massacres in Djibouti (Arhiba, Yoboki, Barislé, Bulduko). He carries a special responsibility in the rapes and the impunity for the rapists.

The hunger strike is taking place in a context very tensed after the election, with an horrifying repression and many fights between the army and the FRUD: two persons have died under torture perpetrated by police officers in February 2016. The arrests, torture, murder without trial, and raping of women are ongoing.

The Comité des Femmes Djiboutiennes contre les Viols et l'impunité is asking the international community to condemn the rapes of the Djiboutian women and the impunity of these crimes.

We demand:

- *The official recognition of rapes as war crimes*
- *The opening of an international inquiry about the abuses against women perpetrated in the Republic of Djibouti*
- *Trials of the soldiers guilty of the rapes*
- *The respect of international and regional conventions ratified by Djibouti, including the CEDAW*

Bruxelles, The 24th of April 2016

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