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CARDIN CONDEMNS ACTS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

Washington, DC – **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD), Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (also known as the U.S. Helsinki Commission) and a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee**, condemned the continued acts of sexual violence against women in war zones as inhumane and intolerable. Following Wednesday’s Senate Foreign Relations hearing on confronting rape and other violence against women in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cardin said:

“To live in a war zone is to be victim enough. Those responsible for these atrocities against women must be held accountable for their criminal acts. This March the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir for crimes against humanity including rape and murder. This warrant, and Bashir’s ensuing expulsion of non-governmental organizations trying to protect against sexual and gender based violence, is a clear sign of Sudan’s non-cooperation on this most critical humanitarian issue. For a government to stand idly by while its uniformed military officers rape women, including those in refugee camps, is beyond inhumane -- it is intolerable.”

Cardin, a member of the African Affairs Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, is also the Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (the U.S. Helsinki Commission). As Chairman of the Commission he has worked to draw more international attention to the need to prevent violence against women and has supported commitments by Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe participating States to “take all necessary steps” to prevent gender-based violence against women and children during and after armed conflicts and emergencies, and prosecute those who commit such crimes.

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