

Women, Peace and Security

October 2020

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Gender equality, the protection of women's human rights and women's meaningful participation are essential for conflict prevention, sustainable development and inclusive peace. Civil society participation in the work of the UN Security Council, in accordance with Resolution 2242 (2015), is critical to ensuring that the perspectives of conflict-affected communities inform all its decision-making. In addition to the recommendations laid out in our recently published [open letter to all UN Member States](#), [annual policy brief](#) and [2020 Civil Society Roadmap](#), we urge all Member States, including Security Council members, to:

For October, in which the Russian Federation has the presidency of the UN Security Council, the MAP provides recommendations on the situations in **Haiti** and **Sudan**, as well as the open debate on **Women, peace and security**.

- **Defend the centrality of gender equality and the full scope of human rights of all women and girls in all international peace and security processes, including in any outcomes of the Security Council.** This includes full implementation of all ten Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security (WPS), calling for gender equality and human rights to be at the center of negotiations in the context of all peace processes, and calling on relevant UN system entities to report on any human rights violations and abuses, including violations of all women's human rights in line with the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women \(CEDAW\)](#).
- **Actively support women's full, equal and meaningful participation and refrain from supporting new peace processes that exclude women.** Include explicit language calling for the full, equal and meaningful participation of diverse women in all thematic, country- and region-specific outcome documents, mandates of peace operations and in any public statements. Call for the removal of all barriers to participation, including logistical, technical, legal, accessibility-related and financial barriers; proactively ensure accessibility of peacemaking spaces and communications; and address threats to and violence against women participating in peace and security processes. Emphasize at all relevant opportunities that participation in informal processes or advisory roles can complement, but is never a substitute for, structured, direct participation in formal processes.
- **Refrain from enabling arms transfers when there is a substantial risk that they may be used to "commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence (GBV) or serious acts of violence against women and children," in line with the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).** Members States must also intensify efforts towards reducing the flow of small arms and light weapons (SALW) by implementing all relevant treaties and protocols, including the ATT, the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition ([A/RES/55/255](#)), and the [Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALW in All Its Aspects](#) (UN PoA).
- **Center peace and security decision-making on long-term approaches to sustaining peace, including gender-sensitive analysis of the root causes of conflict,** in line with [Resolution 2282 \(2016\)](#).
- **Support dedicated and independent spaces for women civil society representatives, peacebuilders and human rights defenders (HRDs)** in the context of all avenues for civil society participation or contributions to the work of UN bodies, including within the UN Security, in line with international standards, principles and recommendations made by relevant UN experts, such as the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders. Political, financial and diplomatic assistance should be provided in order to ensure diverse briefers from civil society can engage with UN bodies.
- **Prevent reprisals against civil society representatives, including peacebuilders and HRDs, for cooperating with UN bodies,** including through public recognition of the legitimate role of HRDs, including women's civil society, and condemnation of all attacks against them, including in the context of counter-terrorism efforts or for cooperating with UN bodies. When reprisals occur, the agency, concerns and safety of the HRD, and the

context in which they work, must be at the center of any response, which should be gender-sensitive and crafted in consultation with the defender at risk.

Haiti

In its renewal of the mandate for the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), the Security Council should maintain the existing WPS provision ([S/RES/2476 \(2019\)](#), OP3), and include new language calling on BINUH to:

- Prioritize engagement with women’s civil society in all peace, security, political and development processes.
- Monitor the implementation of the UN’s New Approach to Cholera ([A/71/620](#)) and ensure that the ‘material assistance package’ is gender-sensitive, fully-funded and ensures women’s full participation in its implementation while encompassing a renewed sense of urgency in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and tropical storm Laura, as victims, and in particular women and children, endure another economic shock ([OHCHR](#)).
- Monitor and publicly report on violations of human rights, including women’s rights, in the context of state violence perpetrated against protestors ([Amnesty Intl.](#)) as well as alleged state involvement in attacks against civilians allegedly perpetrated by gangs ([BINUH](#), [Miami Herald](#)).
- Monitor compliance with the [Status of Forces Agreement](#), Haitian law and the UN’s policies on the [facilitation of child support claims](#) arising out of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by UN peacekeepers and personnel, and on the [provision of material assistance](#) to victims/survivors and their children.
- Mainstream gender analysis in future reporting, particularly on efforts to ensure women’s safe, full, equal and meaningful participation in parliamentary elections ([S/2020/123](#)), and on the response of security forces to violence perpetrated by gangs.

Briefings by senior UN officials and statements delivered by Council members should focus on BINUH’s implementation of the full scope of its WPS mandate and include details on ways that the mission is addressing GBV and SEA by UN peacekeepers and personnel. Survivors of GBV, including women, girls and gender-non-confirming people, continue to face barriers to justice, exacerbated by political instability and the national lockdown, resulting from weak legal protections and limited institutional support structures and services ([Pass Blue](#), [OutRight Action Intl.](#), [Miami Herald](#)). Importantly, the penal code reforms, which include better legal protection against GBV by criminalizing marital rape and sexual harassment, represent long overdue improvements in addressing GBV. However, the process through which the reforms were implemented was opaque and has been referred to as unconstitutional; thus, it remains a challenge to ensure that GBV prevention and protection is integrated into a procedurally clear and accepted law before and after the reforms come into effect in two years.

Sudan

Women have played a critical role in the revolution leading to political change inclusive of Sudan’s commitment to adopt a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, and the repeal of discriminatory public order laws in Sudan. The transitional Government has made little progress on addressing accountability, specifically in regards to prosecuting state actors involved in the abuse, torture and killings of protesters and WHRDs ([HRW](#), [Amnesty Intl.](#)). Additionally, over two million people are currently displaced in Sudan due to armed conflict and floods. Further, attacks against internally displaced persons, particularly the targeting of women and girls for sexual violence, remains systematic ([S/2020/487](#), [S/2020/202](#)). In its discussion of any reports on the situation in Sudan, briefings by senior officials and Council members should discuss the ways in which women’s participation in the peace process, transitional justice and the overall political transition have been supported and strengthened. Specific details regarding the extent to which the mission has consulted with women’s groups in the process of the ongoing potential drawdown of the United Nations–African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) should be provided, including ways in which recommendations were taken forward and integrated into planning processes. Withdrawal will only exacerbate widespread protection challenges in the Darfur region and put civilians at further risk of violence ([Amnesty Intl.](#)).