

# Mapping Women, Peace and Security in the UN Security Council: 2016

This policy brief outlines the findings from the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security's (NGOWG) monitoring and analysis of the United Nations (UN) Security Council's daily work over the course of 2016.<sup>1</sup> The recommendations build on our well-established policy guidance project, the Monthly Action Points (MAP) on Women, Peace and Security, as well as broader advocacy over the course of 2016.<sup>2</sup>

As countries rebuild from conflict, replicating discriminatory institutions and structures will only result in a quicker return to conflict.<sup>3</sup> Sustainable peace is not achievable without women's meaningful participation at all levels of decision-making, political processes, conflict prevention, resolution and peace processes. Studies have shown that women's participation in formal peace processes leads to a 35% increase in "the probability of a peace agreement lasting 15 years."<sup>4</sup> Similarly, a study of data over a twenty year period demonstrated that "as the percentage of women in parliament increases by five percent, a state is five times less likely to use violence when faced with an international crisis."<sup>5</sup> Gender equality has been shown to be the number one predictor of resilient and peaceful communities and, similarly, gender inequality is a predictor of conflict between and within states.<sup>6</sup> This empirical evidence only underlines what the NGOWG has long advocated - without consistent and structured women's participation in peace and security processes, the success of those efforts will be less likely to succeed.

This principle underpins the work of the NGOWG as well as the women, peace and security policy framework grounded in eight resolutions adopted by the Security Council, often referred to as the "women, peace and security agenda."<sup>7</sup> The women, peace and security (WPS) agenda recognizes that conflict has gendered impacts, that it affects women and men differently, and that women have critical roles to play in peace and security processes and institutions. It calls for the participation of women at all levels of decision-making in conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts; protection and promotion of women's rights, including ensuring justice and accountability systems are gender-sensitive, the prevention sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and provision of services for survivors; and adoption of gender perspectives in conflict prevention and resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian responses and other processes. Taken holistically, this agenda recognizes that a gender-blind understanding of conflict significantly undermines international peace and security efforts. Women, peace and security is, therefore, not only a principle but a call to action for Member States, the Security Council and the UN system.

The Security Council has previously, across multiple resolutions and presidential statements, stated that

<sup>1</sup> The NGOWG was established in 2000 to advance women's participation and empowerment in peace and security decision-making. Our members are: Amnesty International; CARE International; Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights; Femmes Africa Solidarité; Global Justice Center; Human Rights Watch; Inclusive Security; International Alert; MADRE; Nobel Women's Initiative; Refugees International; Oxfam; Saferworld; Women's Refugee Commission; and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security is a project of Tides Center.

<sup>2</sup> For more details on our monitoring and analysis, please see our website: [womenpeacesecurity.org/our-work/monitoring-analysis/](http://womenpeacesecurity.org/our-work/monitoring-analysis/)

<sup>3</sup> WILPF, *Women Organizing for Change in Syria and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Feminist (re)interpretation of the Dayton Peace Accords*, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Stone, *Quantitative Analysis of Women's Participation in Peace Processes*, 2015; UN-Women, *A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> O'Reilly, *Why Women? Inclusive Security and Peaceful Societies*, Inclusive Security, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Hudson, et. al., *Sex and World Peace*, 2012.

<sup>7</sup> S/RES/1325 (2000), S/RES/1820 (2008), S/RES/1888 (2009), S/RES/1889 (2009), S/RES/1960 (2010), S/RES/2106 (2013), S/RES/2122 (2013), S/RES/2242 (2015).

women's and girl's empowerment and gender equality are critical to conflict prevention and broader efforts to maintain international peace and security. The establishment of the Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security (IEG) in 2015, was a positive institutional step towards addressing some of the Security Council's implementation challenges; thus far, the IEG has been a conduit for strengthened gender analysis on the six countries discussed since its inception and heightened WPS implementation discussions among senior mission leadership.<sup>8</sup> Outside the Security Council, there have been steps towards integration of WPS norms, including the gender criterion in the Arms Trade Treaty ([A/RES/67/234](#)); Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 and 16 ([A/RES/70/1](#)); the 2016 sustaining peace resolutions ([S/RES/2282 \(2016\)](#), [A/RES/70/262](#)); and the outcomes of the 2015 High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations ([A/70/357](#)), the 2015 Peacebuilding Architecture Review ([A/69/968](#)), and the 2015 Global Study on Resolution 1325 (2000) ([2015](#)). However, despite the rhetoric and repeated commitments, the WPS agenda is far from being comprehensively implemented in policy and practice by Member States and the UN system. The commitments on paper do not match practice: from poorly planned, underfunded provision of services in conflict-affected situations, to impunity for acts of sexual exploitation and abuse, to continued impunity for SGBV, to lack of support for women's civil society participation in peace processes; there continues to be a disconnected, fragmented and siloed approach to WPS implementation in the Security Council and UN system.

Over the last 16 years, the eight resolutions adopted by the Security Council on WPS have formed a strong foundation for the operationalization of the WPS agenda by the UN system and Member States, resulting in, at a rhetorical level, an acknowledgment of these issues as important. However, the Security Council fails to concretely, on a consistent basis, recognize and support women's meaningful participation and empowerment as fundamental to achieving holistic peace and security.

Our analysis of the work of the Security Council over the past year reveals, there is progress in several areas: there has been an increase in attention to WPS in the Security Council's response to crises, for example; and there were some new provisions in the mandates of peacekeeping operations that call for women's participation in security processes, including disarmament; and the Security Council has improved its inclusion of recommendations on WPS in reports. Yet, despite these improvements, the challenges and ongoing gaps in implementation mean the promise of the WPS agenda is not yet realized.

We recommend that the Security Council:

- Concretely support women's meaningful participation and empowerment across all agenda items in the context of all peace and security processes, and recognize the importance of addressing protection and participation issues concurrently, including by ensuring there are provisions for gender equality and women's empowerment in all mandate renewals.
- Strengthen accountability mechanisms aimed at ensuring the implementation of the WPS agenda, including by maximizing the role and effectiveness of the IEG on Women, Peace and Security.
- Support the key role that civil society organizations (CSOs), including women-led organizations, women's human rights groups, and human rights defenders (HRDs) have in peace and security processes at local, regional and international levels, through, for example, following up on commitments made regarding consultations with CSOs and calling on peace operations to monitor and address threats to CSOs and HRDs.
- Promote an integrated approach to peace and security issues that breaks down artificial silos, implement international human rights and humanitarian law, and better reflect the reality and complexity of peace and security today, for example, by ensuring there is analysis of the risks to women and girls from counter-terrorism strategies, and ensuring humanitarian responses are gender-sensitive.

---

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Security Council Report, *Women, Peace and Security: Closing the Security Council's Implementation Gap*, 2016.

## Trends

The Security Council has committed to better addressing women, peace and security (WPS) across all agenda items, both country-specific and thematic, by ensuring information and analysis, decisions and discussions consider the gender dimensions of the situation. However, there continues to be a more acute focus on issues related to women's protection, which overshadows the importance of women participating in the design and monitoring of protection strategies. This undermines the importance of women's participation across peace and security processes.

The NGOWG monitors the work of the Security Council on 25 country-specific situations, 10 thematic issues, and counter-terrorism, and analyzes resolutions, reports and presidential statements for the inclusion of information on WPS.<sup>9</sup> Overall, in 2016, on relevant agenda items, the Security Council referred to WPS in 74% of all resolutions, 61% of all presidential statements, and 88% of all reports.<sup>10</sup> This is a slight improvement when compared to 2015; particularly in the context of presidential statements and reports.

On relevant *country-specific situations*, the Security Council referred to WPS in 75% of resolutions; 54% of presidential statements; and 87% of reports. On *thematic issues*, the Security Council referred to WPS in 80% of resolutions, 100% of presidential statements, and 100% of reports. In its consideration of *counter-terrorism*, information and analysis on WPS was missing from the one relevant resolution adopted and was included in 50% of presidential statements and 80% of reports.

## Peace Operations

Currently, we monitor the work of the Security Council on 14 Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)-led missions and 8 Department of Political Affairs (DPA)-led field missions.<sup>12</sup> At present, 16 of 22 relevant peace operations have women, peace and security-related tasks as part of their mandates: 8 DPKO-led peacekeeping missions and 8 DPA-led political missions.<sup>13</sup> Further, 10 peace operations are explicitly mandated to address gender and/or WPS in a cross-cutting manner.<sup>14</sup> The peacekeeping operations in Cyprus, the Golan Heights and Western Sahara are considered "traditional" missions; resolutions renewing the mandates of these missions only refer to the importance of implementing the UN Secretary-General's policy on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by all personnel.<sup>15</sup>

16 peace operations are mandated to address WPS, and 10 of these operations are mandated to address gender in a cross-cutting manner.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> We exclude documents focused on international criminal tribunals; non-proliferation; the UN Secretary-General; Iraq / Kuwait missing persons and property; Iraq Oil-for-Food escrow account; chemical weapons; and civil aviation.

<sup>10</sup> We focus on assessing the frequency, content, and quality of references in resolutions, presidential statements and reports, measuring against the commitments contained in the Security Council's resolutions, as well as various guidelines for UN system implementation of the WPS Agenda.

<sup>11</sup> Inclusion of gender as a cross-cutting issue in the mandate of a mission is a recognition that gender is an issue relevant to all functional areas of a peace operation, and, as a result, gender should be mainstreamed into all substantive activities.

<sup>12</sup> The term "peace operations" encompasses both peacekeeping operations, managed by the Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), and field-based political and peacebuilding missions, managed by the Department of Political Affairs (DPA). We monitor and analyze the Security Council's work on all missions which have mandates that are renewed regularly via resolution and/or are the subject of regular reporting and discussion within the Security Council. As a result, we monitor 14 of 16 DPKO-led missions (also referred to as DPKO-led peacekeeping missions) and 8 of 14 DPA-led field missions (also referred to as DPA-led political missions); the following missions are excluded from our analysis: UNTSO, UNMOGIP, UNSCOL, UNRCCA, CNMC, UNOAU, UNSCO, OPCW-UN JIM.

<sup>13</sup> The missions with mandates to address WPS are MINUSCA, UNOCI, MONUSCO, MINUSTAH, UBMIL, MINUSMA, UNAMID, UNMISS, UNAMA, UN Mission in Colombia, UNIOGBIS, UNSOM, UNOWAS.

<sup>14</sup> South Sudan (S/RES/2241 (2015)), DRC (S/RES/2147 (2014)), Mali (S/RES/2100 (2013)), CAR (S/RES/2149 (2014)), UNMIL (S/RES/1739 (2007)), MINUSTAH (S/RES/1743 (2007)), Cote d'Ivoire (S/RES/1739 (2007)), Guinea-Bissau (S/RES/1949 (2010)),

<sup>15</sup> Traditional peacekeeping missions are those which have primarily a military function, such as monitoring ceasefires or patrolling buffer zones, and are not mandated to carry out political or civilian activities.

In 2016, there were Gender Advisers (GAs) deployed in 8 of the 14 relevant DPKO-led peacekeeping missions and 5 of the 8 relevant DPA-led political missions.<sup>16</sup> There were Women's Protection Advisers (WPAs) deployed in 5 of 14 relevant DPKO-led peacekeeping missions in the Central African Republic (CAR), Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Sudan (Darfur), and South Sudan; and one DPA-led political mission in Somalia.

### Resolutions

In resolutions adopted by the Security Council which renewed the mandate of a peace operation, the frequency of references to WPS remained largely the same, occurring with a similar frequency in operative and preambular paragraphs when compared to 2015. Overall, the content of the references continued to focus predominantly on one portion of the WPS agenda; nearly 85% of all references referred to issues related to women's rights and/or SGBV; while less than 40% of references referred to gender equality or women's participation. Language in resolutions on issues related to protection tends to be more detailed and be more explicit regarding particular actions UN peacekeepers and the broader UN system should take when compared to the language in resolutions focused on women's participation and empowerment.

In 2016, the mandates for the missions in Afghanistan, Mali, South Sudan, CAR and Liberia saw the most significant changes to WPS provisions.<sup>17</sup> Positively, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) was requested to specifically support women's participation as part of fostering inclusive peace processes (although this language was partially removed in the 2017 UNAMA mandate renewal), and the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) is now tasked with supporting female ex-combatants during disarmament processes. The UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan's (UNMISS) mandate was strengthened with a new provision calling on the mission to specifically prevent and deter SGBV. Due to the recent elections, the mandate for the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA) mandate was revised to include three provisions on the protection of women's rights, support for women's participation and support for an increase in women in the security sector. Further, the mandate for the mission in Liberia was revised in advance of its drawdown in 2018 and now has two WPS provisions, in addition to a call for gender to be considered a cross-cutting issue.

Unfortunately, the mandate for the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) continued to be gender-blind and the provision calling for human rights monitoring was moved down in terms of priority.<sup>18</sup> However, it is important to note that the reporting on WPS-related activities undertaken by UNSMIL is strong due, in part, to the commitment of senior staff and leadership within the mission to supporting women's participation, including by supporting women's CSOs. This is not the norm, however, and it remains important for WPS activities and reporting to be formally mandated within UN missions to ensure consistency with respect to the agenda.

References to WPS in preambular paragraphs or operative paragraphs outside of mandates of peace operations slightly improved over the course of the year. In 2016, the Security Council expressed its support more frequently for national-level implementation of WPS, including the development of National Action Plans (NAPs), with specific references in resolutions renewing the mandates of the missions in Guinea-Bissau, Afghanistan, Mali, and Iraq, as well as a reference to a national action plan on SGBV in the resolution renewing the mandate of the mission in Liberia.<sup>19</sup> Relatedly, there was an increase in language encouraging governments to adopt and implement national legislation focused on addressing protection and promotion of women's rights, such as the Law on Elimination of Violence against Women in Afghanistan.

<sup>16</sup> Information on deployment of Gender Advisers provided by DPKO and DPA.

<sup>17</sup> Afghanistan (S/RES/2274 (2016), S/RES/2210 (2016)), Mali (S/RES/2295 (2016)), South Sudan (S/RES/2327 (2016), S/RES/2252 (2016), S/RES/2290 (2016)), Central Africa (S/RES/2301 (2016)), Liberia (S/RES/2333 (2016))

<sup>18</sup> Libya (S/RES/2323 (2016), S/RES/2291 (2016))

<sup>19</sup> Guinea-Bissau (S/2016/2675), Afghanistan (S/RES/2274 (2016)), Mali (S/RES/2295 (2016)), Iraq (S/RES/2299 (2016))

## Reports

In 2016, both the *frequency* and *quality* of reporting on WPS remained largely the same when compared to 2015. Overall, more than 90% of reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of peace operations mandates contain information and analysis on WPS-related issues: 84% of reports on DPKO-led missions and 95% of reports on DPA-led missions. Issues related to protection were the focus of WPS references in more than 60% of all peace operations reports, including 70% of reports on DPKO-led missions. Reports on DPA-led missions were more balanced and provided more details on activities supporting women’s participation.

Reporting on peace operations remained unchanged in 2016, with more than 90% of all reports addressing WPS.

The Security Council has called for WPS information, analysis and recommendations to be included in all country-specific reports, and overall, inclusion has improved over the last several years.<sup>20</sup> Further, the Security Council has specifically called for “enhanced reporting,” encompassing information on gender and WPS implementation, from the five missions in Sudan (Darfur), the DRC, Mali, South Sudan, and Liberia; the missions in South Sudan and Sudan (Darfur) are further requested to provide additional information specifically on SGBV.<sup>21</sup>

Information and analysis on WPS is sporadic in both written and verbal form and often seems to be the result of a confluence of positive factors, rather than a structured process. When gender analysis is included, it is often in the context of broader, strategic planning regarding mission priorities (see our analysis of strategic reviews on page 8). The NGOWG has long advocated for stronger WPS information and analysis in reports to the Security Council as a prerequisite for better peace and security decision-making.<sup>22</sup> Although there are several positive examples of WPS references were included in the reports on many countries, these inclusions were ad-hoc and inconsistently included in subsequent reporting throughout the course of 2016. The ad-hoc and inconsistent nature of WPS references is problematic because it suggests that WPS-related issues and activities are not being monitored, or even implemented consistently, which undermines and complicates efforts to promote accountability for meaningful WPS implementation.

References to WPS are primarily superficial or descriptive. Reports largely fail to undertake a deeper analysis of the gender dynamics of the conflict or provide information on barriers to women’s participation.

In 2016, references to WPS were often superficial and descriptive, contained in paragraphs summarizing activities of the mission and often limited to specific sections of the report discussing SGBV or gender. In 2016, 35% of reports on peace operations contained separate sections on WPS. Notably, DPA-led political missions were considerably more likely to include a separate section on WPS: 64% of all reports on DPA-led missions contained a separate section, while only 18% of all reports on DPKO-led missions contained a focused section. Further, 32% of all reports on peace operations contained a separate section on SEA; notably, a report on the mission in Somalia included a separate section on the UN Nations Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDPP), which encompassed issues related to SEA.<sup>23</sup> The inclusion of specific sections on WPS is positive, however, particularly for missions which have a cross-cutting mandate to address gender, there should also be references to WPS

There was a separate WPS section in 64% of reports on DPA-led missions and only 18% of all reports on DPKO-led missions; 47% of reports on DPKO-led missions had a separate section on SEA.

<sup>20</sup> S/RES/1325 (2000), OP 17; S/RES/1820 (2008), OP 9; S/RES/1889 (2009), OP 5; S/RES/1888 (2009), OPs 11, 23, 25; S/RES/1889 (2009), OP 5; S/RES/2122 (2013), OP 2; S/RES/2242 (2015), OP 10; S/PRST/2014/21.

<sup>21</sup> South Sudan (S/RES/2327 (2016)), Sudan (Darfur) (S/RES/2296 (2016)).

<sup>22</sup> UN-Women, *A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, 2015.

<sup>23</sup> Somalia (S/2016/430)

across all other sections. Outside of explicit sections focused on WPS, the sections in which there were WPS references were focused on the mission's activities as they related to protection of civilians, human rights, or political processes.

Unfortunately, even in reports which contained substantive references to WPS activities carried out by the mission, there was often no corresponding information in the first portion of the report detailing recent political and security developments, or in the last portion of the report which provides observations and recommendations; the last portion of the report is often where the Security Council obtains its actionable points for future mandate renewals.<sup>24</sup> In the background/context section of reports, which should be the portion of the report throughout which gender analysis is mainstreamed, there were references to WPS in 53% of reports on peace operations, a decrease compared to 2015.

In 2016, 47% of all reports on peace operations included a reference to WPS in the observations section: 45% of reports on DPKO-led mission and 50% reports of DPA-led missions.

Positively, 47% of reports on peace operations included recommendations on WPS; an improvement compared to 2015. The reports on the missions in Mali, Somalia, Libya, and Iraq provided some of the strongest recommendations on WPS.<sup>25</sup> Notably, most reports on the peacekeeping mission in Lebanon included a recommendation related to women's participation in the political process; similarly, most reports on Cyprus also included recommendations on women's participation in the peace process.

The failure to incorporate gender analysis of the structural causes of conflict in the section of the report reviewing recent development, as well as the lack of detail and analysis regarding the outcomes of mission activities working with and supporting women's participation and empowerment, results in incomplete and insufficient understanding of the gender dimensions of the conflict and broader conflict dynamics. Finally, by failing to include recommendations on WPS, gender, and women's concerns, are absent from the most important portion of the report which helps shape future Security Council action.

Unfortunately, despite being requested to provide "enhanced reporting" on WPS and specifically, in the case of Sudan (Darfur), on the implementation of the WPS agenda, the reports for the missions in Sudan (Darfur), DRC, and Mali did not provide any more information or analysis when compared to the reporting of other missions; reports on the mission in Sudan (Darfur) did, however, the strongest analysis of patterns regarding SGBV, thus meeting one of its obligations for additional reporting.

### Support for National-level Implementation of WPS

One trend that is notable, which mirrors what we have seen in mandates, is an increase in references to national-level implementation of WPS, specifically in reports on Guinea-Bissau, Afghanistan, Mali, and Iraq, all of which referred to the implementation of NAPs. For example, in reports on the mission in Afghanistan, there were several references to progress in funding and implementing Afghanistan's 1325 NAP; the resolution on UNAMA included several strong references to the NAP in 2016 (although these references were removed in 2017).

<sup>24</sup> The location of references can be one indicator of the way in which gender is mainstreamed throughout the work of a mission. The typical structure of reports of the Secretary-General is: (I) Introduction; (II) Context and recent political and/or security developments; (III) Activities related to the implementation of the mandate, often organized by functional area of the mandate; and (IV) Observations and recommendations.

<sup>25</sup> Mali (S/2016/1137), Somalia (S/2016/763), Libya (S/2016/1011), Iraq (S/2016/897, S/2016/77),

### Relationship Between Gender Expertise & Reporting on WPS

There is a clear correlative relationship between mandates, gender expertise, and information and analysis on WPS. Our analysis reveals that having a mandate to address WPS correlates with the almost universal inclusion of some sort of information on WPS in reporting. As a result, it is clear that there is an ongoing need for the Security Council to explicitly include provisions in future mandates that call for WPS to be mainstreamed, in addition to component-specific provisions on women's meaningful participation and protection including in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR); security sector reform (SSR); rule of law (ROL); and protection and monitoring of human rights. The presence of GAs and WPAs results in more detailed information on the gender dynamics of the situation as well as information on WPS activities carried out by the mission, indicating that their presence has an operational impact, as well as information gathering and analytical impact. It is important to note, that the responsibility for implementing WPS provisions in mandates does not lay solely with GAs or WPAs; their presence should facilitate the implementation of those provisions by all mission staff and support training and capacity-building.

Better information and analysis on WPS occurs when there is a mandate to address WPS in a cross-cutting manner and both a GA and WPA are present in the mission.

Our analysis further reveals a correlative relationship between the presence of GAs and an improvement in information on women's participation and empowerment in reports of the Secretary-General. This relationship is most visible in reports on DPA-led political missions which often have stronger mandates to support women's participation in elections and constitutional reform processes. Reporting on the DPA-led missions in Afghanistan, Central Africa, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, and West Africa and the Sahel were the strongest in terms of references to women's participation. Similarly, the reports on the DPKO-led peacekeeping missions in CAR, DRC, Haiti, Mali, and South Sudan has the most references to women's participation; these missions all have GAs as well as a cross-cutting mandate to address WPS.

The influence of WPAs can be seen in the inclusion of information on SGBV; the rate of increase in references to SGBV and other protection issues aligns with the deployment of WPAs beginning in 2012. These missions had stronger and more detailed information on SGBV activities undertaken by the missions.<sup>26</sup> There was more detail in terms of data on instances and patterns of conflict-related sexual violence in reports on the DPKO-led missions in South Sudan, CAR, DRC, and Sudan (Darfur) specifically in terms of perpetrators; this could be influenced by the larger capacity of those missions in terms of WPAs as well as heightened attention to the issue of SGBV.

### Sex- and Age-Disaggregated Data

The provision of sex and age disaggregated data is a basic expectation in all reporting.<sup>27</sup> More than 80% of all reports had sex and age disaggregated data, primarily in the context of civilians targeted for violence and civilian deaths. Data was also increasingly provided in terms of the sex of candidates, voters, political office holders, and mission and military personnel. There are several interesting examples of data reporting, specifically in the context of Syria, in the form of tables containing sex-disaggregated data.

<sup>26</sup> Information on deployment of WPAs provided by UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict / Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

<sup>27</sup> S/PRST/2014/21, para. 11.

## Strategic Reviews

The five strategic reviews of the peace operations in Côte d'Ivoire, Sudan (Darfur), CAR, South Sudan, and Liberia all positively addressed some aspect of the WPS agenda, although there was inconsistency in terms of both frequency and quality of references, generally, strategic reviews continued to be better at providing gender analysis.<sup>28</sup> The reports on the reviews of the missions in Liberia and CAR were the strongest and included a high number of WPS references. Issues related to the protection and promotion of women's rights were most frequently discussed, with the reviews of the missions in CAR, Sudan (Darfur), and South Sudan devoting particular attention to separate sections on SGBV. Yet, quality of the analysis was often superficial, merely noting incidents of SGBV, and often failing to provide information regarding underlying dynamics of the current violence. There are references to women's participation in all reviews, but only the strategic review of the peacekeeping mission in CAR provided robust analysis on a range of barriers to women's participation.

Strategic reviews were generally better at providing analysis on WPS. Gender expertise in strategic review processes is positively correlated to better WPS information in strategic reviews.

It is important to note that although strategic reviews are carried out separately from regular reporting processes, there is a correlation between the reports with the stronger inclusion of WPS issues in their outcomes and the presence of a WPS mandate. Further, the inclusion of gender expertise on the teams which carried out strategic reviews also positively correlated with better WPS information.

Notably, out of the five strategic reviews, the reviews on the peacekeeping missions in CAR and Liberia specifically noted that they consulted with women's CSOs, while the review of the mission in Côte d'Ivoire only mentioned consulting generally with CSOs.<sup>29</sup> The reviews of the missions in Sudan (Darfur) and South Sudan did not mention if they engaged with civil society. Across all the reviews, there was no indication if these meetings changed the review's recommendations. All of the reviews mentioned civil society in some capacity within the report, although only the review of the mission in CAR mentioned women's groups in the body of the report.<sup>30</sup> Throughout the reviews, most references to civil society were only on the views of CSOs generally, without any indication as to whether or not they were women's groups; further, the information included in reports regarding discussions with CSOs focused on what challenges were raised, without any details regarding proposals or solutions put forth by CSOs. Illuminating the contributions of CSOs in identifying ideas for the way forward is important in not only illustrating the diversity of actors which fed into strategic reviews, but can also serve as an example of the value that CSOs have in these processes, thus encouraging other UN actors and stakeholders to support CSOs.

## Crisis Response

The Council's "crisis response," often includes the adoption of a presidential statement, and sometimes a resolution, in order to address the emergence or recurrence of violence in a country or region which does not have a peace operation or reinforce the importance of and Council's particular support for elections, peace processes, or other multilateral efforts which fall outside the regular cycle of decision-making on a peace operation.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> CAR (S/2016/565), Cote d'Ivoire (S/2016/297), Liberia (S/2016/968), South Sudan (S/2016/951), Sudan (Darfur) (S/2016/510)

<sup>29</sup> CAR (S/2016/565, para. 4), Liberia (S/2016/968, para. 3), Cote d'Ivoire (S/2016/297, para. 20).

<sup>30</sup> CAR (S/2016/565, para. 49)

<sup>31</sup> We consider any presidential statement adopted by the Security Council on a country-specific situation to be part of the Council's "crisis response," even if that country has a peace operation. Any resolution adopted by the Security Council on a country-specific situation which is not establishing, modifying, or renewing a mandate is also considered "crisis response." Reports which are not on the implementation of a peace operation mandate are considered "crisis response," including reports by the Special Envoys in the Great Lakes region and Cyprus.



Historically, the Security Council has been weak in addressing WPS in crisis situations, however over the last year, the Council improved in its inclusion of WPS in such contexts. In 2016, the Security Council adopted resolutions or presidential statements on 14 crisis situations: six situations in which there is not a peace operation mission (Burundi, the Gambia, the Great Lakes region, Israel / Palestine, Syria, Yemen) and eight countries and regions in which there is a field-based peacekeeping or political mission (CAR, Central African region, DRC, Lebanon, Mali, South Sudan, and West Africa and the Sahel). Positively, over the last year, there was an improvement with WPS references in 58% of all relevant decisions: 7 of 12 (58%) of presidential statements and 4 of 7 (57%) of resolutions.

The Security Council's inclusion of WPS in its response to crisis situations improved in 2016: 58% of all relevant decisions, including 7 of 12 (58%) of presidential statements and 4 of 7 (57%) resolutions.

Since 2014, the Security Council's resolutions and presidential statements adopted in response to the crises in Burundi, CAR, DRC, Somalia, South Sudan, West Africa and the Sahel and Yemen have included more references to WPS. The Security Council continued its largely gender-blind approach to the situation in Israel / Palestine and Lebanon. Presidential statements adopted on Mali and Afghanistan in 2016 lacked gender considerations, despite robust discussions of UN peacekeeping and political missions in each country. In several resolutions and presidential statements, there was new language recognizing the establishment of government ministries, adoption of national laws and recently adopted NAPs.<sup>32</sup> While it is positive to acknowledge these improvements, it is essential that the Security Council hold governments accountable to not for only failing to address WPS, but also more broadly in perpetrating violence and violations of human rights. The inclusion of more references to national-level implementation was mirrored in resolutions and reporting on peace operations.

In 2016, there were 12 reports on Syria and six reports on the crisis situations in Cyprus, Guinea-Bissau, the Great Lakes region, and Israel / Palestine. Aside from Syria, reports focused on activities undertaken to promote women's participation, including by special envoys.<sup>33</sup> Reports on Guinea-Bissau, Cyprus, and the Great Lakes region all provided varying levels of detail on support for women's groups and women's political participation; the latter included a dedicated section on women and CSOs. Notably, the issue of gender equality and the extractive industry was highlighted by the Special Envoy in the context of the Great Lakes region; an overlooked but important issue that will hopefully receive additional attention in the future.<sup>34</sup> However, similar to reports on peace operations, most reports did not include WPS in the section containing recommendations; with the exception of the reports on Cyprus.<sup>35</sup> Consistent with previous years, the report in Israel / Palestine continued to be gender-blind.<sup>36</sup>

In 2016, 83% of reports on crisis situations (12 of which were focused on Syria) referred to WPS.

The monthly reports on the humanitarian and political situation in Syria considerably improved over the course of 2016, with the inclusion of sex and age disaggregated data. Details of the impact of violence on the civilian population were also included, yet information on gender-specific threats only addressed particular challenges facing pregnant and lactating women, as well as women who have recently given birth. There were only two references to women's participation, both regarding activities of the Special Envoy, a missed opportunity to make women's diverse and unique forms of participation visible.

<sup>32</sup> S/RES/1888 (2009), PP, OP 4, 8; S/RES/2122 (2013), OP 5; S/RES/2242 (2015), OP 2.

<sup>33</sup> The Security Council receives separate reports on the DPA-led mission in Guinea-Bissau and the crisis in Guinea-Bissau; the reporting on the crisis situation has tended to lack WPS references, despite strong gender inclusion in reports on the DPA-led mission.

<sup>34</sup> Great Lakes (S/2016/232, S/2016/840)

<sup>35</sup> Cyprus (S/2016/599, S/2016/15)

<sup>36</sup> Israel / Palestine (S/2016/732)

## Sanctions

In its adoption or renewal of targeted sanctions, the Security Council has expressed its intent to include designation criteria that encompass violations of international law, including SGBV.<sup>37</sup> Currently, 8 of 16 (50%) sanctions regimes include violations of international human rights and humanitarian law as designation criteria, with four regimes explicitly including acts involving sexual violence or violations of international law targeting women as designation criteria: CAR, DRC, Somalia, and South Sudan.<sup>38</sup> Currently, there are 14 individuals and four entities across three sanctions regimes listed for perpetrating acts of SGBV or targeting women for violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.

There was an improvement in reporting from associated expert groups, specifically in the information provided in annexes on SGBV. Three sanctions committees met with the SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict, as mandated by the Security Council.

Although there were not changes in the mandates of any sanctions regimes, there was an improvement in reporting from associated expert groups. In 2016, 64% of the reports from associated expert groups provided details regarding human rights violations targeting women, SGBV or the role of women in armed groups. There is a clear correlation between sanctions regimes which include SGBV and/or targeting women as listing criteria and the inclusion of gender analysis in reports.

The WPS information in reports primarily focused on detailing patterns, as well as specific instances, of SGBV. Over the last year, there was an increase in the inclusion of information in annexes with detailed accounts of SGBV, which is positive and indicative of an increase in attention to gender analysis by the associated expert groups. Reports often include extensive conflict analysis, however, this analysis is gender-blind and often overlooks the role of women and girls in armed groups, thus resulting in an incomplete picture of the dynamics of the situation. The sanctions committees responsible for overseeing the South Sudan and CAR regimes are requested to engage with SRSG for Sexual Violence in Conflict (SViC). Positively, in 2016, all three committees met with the SRSG for SViC.

## Thematic Issues

The Security Council has committed to considering WPS as a cross-cutting issue when discussing and taking action on thematic agenda items.<sup>39</sup> In 2016, the Security Council discussed nine relevant thematic agenda items and included WPS references in 88% of all thematic resolutions and presidential statements.<sup>40</sup> In 2016, all reports of the Secretary-General on thematic issues addressed WPS, and, similarly to 2015, there was coherence between reporting and decision-making on thematic issues, including in the context of peacekeeping and trafficking in persons.

## Counter-Terrorism & Countering Violent Extremism

The Security Council discusses issues related to counter-terrorism under both a general, thematic agenda item, in addition to in the context of specific sanctions committees established to oversee sanctions aimed at specific extremist groups. The Security Council has historically been weak in addressing WPS in the

<sup>37</sup> S/RES/1820 (2008), OP 5; S/RES/1888, OP 10; S/RES/1960 (2010), OP 3, 7; S/RES/2106 (2013), OP 5, 13; S/RES/2242 (2015), OP 6.

<sup>38</sup> CAR (S/RES/2262 (2016)); DRC, S/RES/2293 (2016); Somalia (S/RES/2317 (2016)), South Sudan (S/RES/2290 (2016)). There is an implicit inclusion of SGBV in the Sudan (Darfur) sanctions regime, however, we do not include this in our count for methodological consistency.

<sup>39</sup> S/PRST/2010/22; S/PRST/2012/23; S/PRST/2014/21; S/RES/2122 (2013), OP 3, 5(c); S/RES/2242 (2015), PP.

<sup>40</sup> Regional cooperation (S/PRST/2016/8, S/RES/2320 (2016)); Women, peace and security (S/PRST/2016/9); Peacebuilding (S/PRST/2016/12); Peacebuilding (S/RES/2282 (2016)); Peacekeeping (S/RES/2272 (2016)); Human trafficking (S/RES/2331 (2016)).

context of the thematic issue of terrorism, and in 2016 the Council continued to be uneven. Resolutions and reports on thematic aspects of counter-terrorism issues universally fail to address women or gender, with the exception of one presidential statement on Boko Haram, which references SGBV.<sup>41</sup> This lack of focus on and analysis of the gender dimensions of terrorism-related issues – including women’s agency and participation in specific groups, the impact of terrorism and counter-terrorism strategies on women, and the gendered drivers of radicalization – is a failure to reflect the Security Council’s previous commitments to better address WPS in its work on counter-terrorism, resulting in an incomplete understanding of the issue at hand. It is notable that the focus on SGBV perpetrated by extremist groups in Security Council discussions on the thematic issue of WPS has not transferred to discussions on the thematic issue of counter-terrorism.

In 2016, the Security Council expanded its work on terrorism and violent extremism by requesting the Secretary-General to provide reports on the threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da’esh). All three reports provide some information on WPS-related issues; however, these references focus on women’s human rights violations committed by ISIL/Da’esh and primarily detail patterns, as well as specific instances, of SGBV. Reports published later in 2016 included more references to WPS, due primarily to the inclusion of designated sections on conflict-related sexual violence.<sup>42</sup> Positively, three of these reports provide recommendations to Member States and UN entities on WPS-related issues.<sup>43</sup>

Unfortunately, across resolutions, presidential statements, and reporting, the Security Council continued to omit references to and analysis of both the role of women in terrorist organizations as well as the impact of counter-terrorism strategies on women and girls, contrary to the Security Council’s commitments to address these issues more fully in [Resolution 2242 \(2015\)](#). Two reports generally mention women’s participation in terrorism and radicalization in the context of potential future recruitment, without detail or elaboration. Lack of reference to the gender dimensions of the impact of counter-terrorism strategies is a big gap; women and girls, as well as women’s groups, are increasingly being affected by restrictive legislative requirements, financial regulations, and a range of other human rights violations, including surveillance and restrictions of movement.

### Engagement with Civil Society, Including Human Rights Defenders

Civil society, women’s organizations, women’s rights activists and the WPS agenda are inextricably linked, both in origins and implementation in the work of the Council. In thematic resolutions and presidential statements on WPS adopted over the last 16 years, the Security Council has reinforced, acknowledged and highlighted the role of civil society more than 40 times, calling for Member States and the UN to work with civil society in conflict prevention efforts, peacebuilding, provision of humanitarian assistance and peace processes.<sup>44</sup> CSOs have been recognized as key interlocutors in conflict situations, contributors to early warning and conflict prevention efforts, and, at times, more effective than international actors in settling local disputes and providing humanitarian and development assistance.

There has been an overall increase in references to the role of civil society in resolutions adopted by the Security Council since 2000. Although not always referenced in the context of WPS, some of the earliest references to CSOs in Security Council resolutions were in country-specific resolutions on Liberia and Sierra Leone in 2002, in which the Council recognized and encouraged the ongoing contribution of the Mano River Union Women’s Peace Network to regional peace.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Terrorism (S/PRST/2016/7, para. 2)

<sup>42</sup> ISIL/Da’esh (S/2016/501, S/2016/830)

<sup>43</sup> ISIL/Da’esh (S/2016/92, S/2016/501, S/2016/627)

<sup>44</sup> S/RES/1325 (2000), OP 15; S/RES/1820 (2008), OP 11, 13; S/RES/1888 (2009), PP, OP 4, OP 9, OP 26; S/RES/1889 (2009), OPs 6, 9, 10, 11, 18; S/RES/1960 (2010), OP 8; S/RES/2106 (2013), OP 11, 12, 19, 21; S/RES/2122 (2013), PP, OP 6, 7(b), 11; S/RES/2242 (2015), PP, OP 1, 2, 3, 5(b), 5(c), 16; S/PRST/2010/22; S/PRST/2012/23; S/PRST/2011/20; S/PRST/2007/40.

<sup>45</sup> Liberia (S/RES/1408 (2002), S/RES/1478 (2003)), Sierra Leone (S/RES/1400 (2002))

Currently, ten peace operations have specific tasks mandating collaboration with, or support of, CSOs, women’s groups and/or HRDs.<sup>46</sup> The mandate for the mission in South Sudan is the most comprehensive, calling on the mission to engage with CSOs, including women’s groups and HRDs, on different activities.<sup>47</sup> The missions in Mali, CAR, Somalia, Afghanistan, South Sudan, and the regional office for West Africa and the Sahel are explicitly requested to collaborate with women’s organizations and women civil society leaders and/or CSOs in order to achieve WPS-related tasks in the context of protection of civilians; human rights monitoring; good offices; implementation of peace agreements; and DDR activities.<sup>48</sup> Outside of peace operation mandates, references to civil society, including women’s groups, generally fell into several categories: recognition of the importance of civil society in peace and political processes; condemnation of harassment and intimidation of CSOs and HRDs; and calls for support and inclusion of civil society in various processes.

Currently, 10 peace operations are mandated to engage with CSOs in carrying out specific tasks and responsibilities; six of these missions are explicitly requested to engage with women’s groups.

In 2016, 33% of all resolutions, 33% of all presidential statements, and more than 78% of all reports on country-specific, thematic and counter-terrorism issues referenced civil society generally. Women’s CSOs were referenced in 22% of all resolutions, 17% of all presidential statements and more than 30% of all reports. References to CSOs were completely absent in resolutions and reports focused on the mission in the Golan Heights; all other relevant country-specific situations had, at a minimum, a general reference to CSOs in either an outcome document and/or associated report of the Secretary-General.

CSOs were generally referenced in 33% of resolutions, 33% of presidential statements, and more than 78% of all reports. However, women’s groups were only referenced in 22% of resolutions, 17% of presidential statements and more than 30% of all reports.

### Peacekeeping, Political & Peacebuilding Mission Engagement with CSOs

In 2016, 85% reports on peace operations referred to CSOs generally; there were references to CSOs in the observations/recommendations portion in 33% of reports on peace operations. Based on the information contained in reports on peace operations as well as information from civil society partners, regular engagement and consultation at the country-level continues to be ad-hoc and inaccessible for many local CSOs. This is despite the fact that community engagement, including engagement with CSOs, is something called for as an important tool for general effectiveness of operations of any mission, in addition to something that has been called for in the context of resolutions adopted on WPS and other thematic agenda items.<sup>49</sup>

All reports on the missions in Colombia and Guinea-Bissau, and most of the reports on Somalia, CAR, Afghanistan, Haiti, Mali and the Great Lakes region included references to missions activities with women’s groups.

Information on general civil society engagement varied in detail and context, however, overall, reporting across most countries indicated that civil society engagement had an essential role to play in ensuring sustainable peace processes, including as interlocutors that could settle local disputes, sources of information warning of potential violence, and as a means to ensure transparency and accountability in the implementation of peace agreements. Reporting indicates that missions further supported and

<sup>46</sup> Afghanistan (UNAMA), CAR (MINUSCA), Cyprus (UNFICYP), Mali (MINUSMA), Somalia (UNSOM), South Sudan (UNMISS), Sudan (Darfur) (UNAMID), West Africa / Sahel (UNOWAS), DRC (MONUSCO), and the UN Mission in Colombia.

<sup>47</sup> South Sudan (S/RES/2252 (2015)), PPs, OPs 2, 8 (a) (i), (v), (b) (ii), 14, 30, & 31

<sup>48</sup> Mali (S/RES/2295 (2016)), CAR (S/RES/2301 (2016)), Somalia (S/RES/2275 (2016)), Afghanistan (S/RES/2344 (2017)), South Sudan (S/RES/2252 (2015)), West Africa and the Sahel (S/RES/759 (2013)).

<sup>49</sup> S/RES/1889 (2009), OP 1.

facilitated the participation and engagement of civil society in a range of formal and parallel processes, for example the National Consultative Forum in Somalia, efforts to resolve the political crisis in Guinea-Bissau, Cyprus dialogue forum, the Afghan People’s Dialogue on Peace, and the Bangui Forum on National Reconciliation in Mali.<sup>50</sup> Relatedly, there was information in reports regarding mission support for civil society engagement in consultations on and development of a range of policy frameworks at the national level: national gender policy in Somalia, national anti-corruption strategy in Afghanistan, criminal procedure code in Haiti, and a national plan of action for the prevention of violent extremism in Lebanon.<sup>51</sup>

Notably, reporting provided several concrete examples of instances in which CSOs publically held the government accountable or illuminated issues that are otherwise overlooked. For example, CSOs illuminated challenges related to holding elections in northern Mali, due to a lack of administration and security, triggering meetings between the Government and opposition parties.<sup>52</sup>

Further, reporting also highlighted instances in which local CSOs were able to be more effective than an international partner, or even the UN. For example, a report on the mission in Liberia noted that intervention by an NGO helped de-escalate a potentially violent land dispute.<sup>53</sup> Additionally, a report on Iraq noted that local humanitarian organizations were able to reach communities previously cut off in areas the UN was unable to enter.<sup>54</sup> Unfortunately, reporting on the missions in Sudan (Abyei) and Golan Heights did not mention any specific consultations with civil society.

### Engagement with Women’s Groups

The Security Council has called on UN entities and senior representatives of the Secretary-General, including heads of peacekeeping and political missions and mediators, to consult with civil society, including women’s organizations, as well as women and girls affected by conflict in peace and development processes.<sup>55</sup> In 2016, 33% of reports on peace operations explicitly referred to women’s CSOs or women’s groups: 18% of reports on DPKO-led missions and 59% of reports on DPA-led political missions. References to women’s groups typically occurred in the context of detail regarding activities carried out by missions. Only two reports referred to women’s groups in the observations/recommendations portion of the report.<sup>56</sup>

All reports on the political mission in Colombia and the peacebuilding mission in Guinea-Bissau contained references to CSOs, including specifically women’s groups; these reports not only referenced women’s groups throughout the entire report but also had a separate section on efforts to support women’s participation and empowerment, including through engagement with CSOs. The DPA-led political and peacebuilding missions in Afghanistan, the Central Africa region, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Colombia, West Africa and the Sahel, and the offices of the special envoys in Cyprus and the Great Lakes region held consultations with CSOs, including with women’s groups. Importantly, the information regarding these consultations was not consistently included in reports; some of the details regarding CSO consultations was provided directly to the NGOWG by DPA. The DPKO-led missions in CAR, DRC, Haiti, and Mali referred to various activities which engaged with CSOs. The outlier was reporting on the mission in South Sudan: despite having a strong mandate to collaborate with women’s groups, reporting on UNMISS did not provide details of this engagement across all reports. References were limited to only a few reports, although it is important to note that these references did indicate interesting and creative attempts to support local women’s groups,

Missions with a mandate to engage with women’s groups reported on engagement more frequently and in more detail than other missions.

<sup>50</sup>Guinea-Bissau (S/2016/141, para. 61), Somalia (S/2016/27, paras. 58), Cyprus (S/2016/11, para. 31), Afghanistan (S/2016/218), CAR (S/2016/305, para. 13).

<sup>51</sup> Somalia (S/2016/27, para. 57), Afghanistan (S/2016/1049, para. 43), Haiti (S/2016/225, para. 30).

<sup>52</sup> Mali (S/2016/819, para. 11)

<sup>53</sup> Liberia (S/2016/169, paras. 9, 17, 69)

<sup>54</sup> Liberia (S/2016/706, para. 18)

<sup>55</sup> S/RES/2122 (2013), OP 2(c), 7(a); S/RES/1820 (2008), OP 10, 11; S/PRST/2011/20; S/PRST/2012/23; S/PRST/2014/21.

<sup>56</sup> Somalia (S/2016/763), South Sudan (S/2016/341)

particularly in protection of civilians (POC) sites.

It is important to emphasize that activities simply involving women's organizations as participants, but fail to engage participants in conversations or follow-up on recommendations and information shared, should not be considered robust and meaningful engagement with women's groups. It is difficult to discern the quality of the engagement with women's groups from reports, however, the goal should be not only to reach and engage with as many women's groups as possible but also to ensure the engagement is meaningful for both the mission staff and the women themselves. Unfortunately, although reports mentioned engagement with civil society by the mission in Sudan (Darfur), there was not any detail regarding engagement with women's groups, specifically.

In 2016, all peace operations, with the exception of the missions in Central Africa, Libya, and Mali held open days which allowed for CSO engagement with mission staff and senior leadership. However, despite the fact that open days were held across the majority of missions, only the reports on the missions in Kosovo, Somalia, and Afghanistan referred to the events, which were focused on the role of women in peace processes and peacebuilding.<sup>57</sup> Open days provide an opportunity for the mission staff to develop a better understanding of the local dynamics of the situation, as well as hear about challenges directly from women and men affected by the conflict. The information provided by participants during open days, alongside other information shared during regular meetings, should be explicitly included in reports. Open days provide only one opportunity for CSO engagement; there should also be regular, ongoing meetings between women's groups and the leadership and staff of missions.

One of the most glaring examples of the omission of civil society, including women's groups, is in reports regarding international donor conferences, international engagement groups and other ongoing initiatives involving international stakeholders. Reports on the missions in Afghanistan, South Sudan, CAR, Guinea-Bissau, Libya, Lebanon, and the Great Lakes region all failed to include information on specific engagement by civil society or women's groups in the international conferences and meetings referenced.<sup>58</sup>

Reporting on international donor conferences and other international processes overwhelmingly failed to mention any instance of participation or engagement by women's groups.

Missions that have the mandate to engage with women's groups and CSOs reported on such engagement more frequently and with more detail than missions that do not have a specific mandate for engagement, indicating a correlation between the inclusion of specific mandate provisions and mission activities. Although these references are positive, there is rarely follow-up information on the ways in which information from CSO consultation is utilized or reflected in the work of the mission.

### CSOs and the Security Council's Response to Crises

Resolutions and presidential statements adopted on crisis situations were weak in their inclusion of references to civil society. Of the 12 relevant country-specific presidential statements, only three decisions on crisis situations referenced civil society (DRC, Great Lakes region, and Yemen), two of which further referenced women's groups.<sup>59</sup> This is a slight improvement when compared to the two decisions adopted in 2015 which referred to CSOs. It is particularly concerning that the Security Council continues to neglect the inclusion of CSOs and women's groups when it publicly addresses crises, given the roles these groups play in diffusing tensions and the impact of emerging crises on these groups.

<sup>57</sup> Somalia (S/2016/430, para. 57; S/2016/27, para. 59), Kosovo (S/2016/407, para. 46), Afghanistan (S/2016/1049, para. 36).

<sup>58</sup> Afghanistan (S/2016/218, para. 22; S/2016/1049, para. 3), Central Africa (S/2016/996, para. 11), Libya (S/2016/182, para. 14), CAR (S/2016/824, para. 11; S/2016/305, para. 4), Great Lakes (S/2016/840, para. 20), Guinea-Bissau (S/2016/141, para. 11; S/2016/675, para. 19).

<sup>59</sup> DRC (S/PRST/2016/18), Great Lakes (S/PRST/2016/2), Yemen (S/PRST/2016/5).

## Shrinking Civil Society Space & Threats to Human Rights Defenders

Nine resolutions adopted on Afghanistan, DRC, Burundi, South Sudan, and Sudan (Darfur) referenced threats to CSOs and HRDs; two resolutions on DRC and South Sudan included particular reference to threats to women and women's groups.<sup>60</sup> The DPKO-led mission in Sudan (Darfur) is the only mission that is explicitly

Threats to CSOs and HRDs were referenced in nine country-specific resolutions; only two resolutions referenced particular threats to women's CSOs.

asked to monitor restrictions on civil society as part of its mandate.<sup>61</sup> The DPKO-led missions in DRC and South Sudan are explicitly mandated to monitor threats against HRDs in the context of POC activities.<sup>62</sup> References to CSOs and HRDs reinforced the importance of ensuring freedom of expression, opinion, movement, and assembly were exercised. Further, resolutions often noted that HRDs in particular, but also CSOs were increasingly targeted for a range of human rights violations, including torture, arbitrary arrest, and detention, harassment and intimidation, often in the context of political crises, as examples of ways in which freedom of opinion, expression, and association are being infringed upon and violated. Most resolutions only referred to threats to CSOs and/or HRDs in preambular paragraphs; thus missing an opportunity not only to underline the importance of ensuring inclusive and pluralistic civil society participation in peace and reconciliation processes but also rendering it even less likely to be addressed comprehensively and consistently.

Presidential statements did not reference particular concerns regarding threats to CSOs and/or HRDs, but on several occasions, they did underline the importance of ensuring CSOs are able to fully participate in the political processes, specifically in DRC.<sup>63</sup>

Reports of the Secretary-General on Central Africa, DRC, Guinea-Bissau, Libya, South Sudan, Syria, West Africa and Western Sahara highlighted shrinking civil society space and threats against civil society activists and HRDs.<sup>64</sup> Information and analysis on threats to individuals or groups was often framed in the context of concerns regarding broader restrictions on freedom of expression, opinion, assembly, and movement. Reports on the mission in Sudan (Darfur) did include information on threats to CSOs, noting arrests of activists, shutdowns of media outlets critical of government decisions, restrictions on CSOs operating health-care centers in providing services for survivors of SGBV.<sup>65</sup> However, there was not substantially more information included in reports on the mission in Darfur, when compared to reporting on other missions, indicating room for improvement in terms of the inclusion of information regarding threats to CSOs in future reports. Notably, two reports on the mission in the DRC included strong recommendations related to threats facing CSOs and HRDs.<sup>66</sup>

## Security Council Engagement with Civil Society<sup>67</sup>

In its own discussions and activities on country-specific issues, the Security Council has expressed its intent to meet with international and local CSOs, including women's groups both at headquarters and when on field missions and further invited CSOs, including women's organizations to brief the Security Council on country-specific issues.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Afghanistan (S/RES/2274 (2016)), DRC (S/RES/2277 (2016), S/RES/2293 (2016)), Burundi (S/RES/2279 (2016), S/RES/2303 (2016)), South Sudan (S/RES/2290 (2016), S/RES/2304 (2016), S/RES/2327 (2016)), Sudan (Darfur) (S/RES/2296 (2016)).

<sup>61</sup> Sudan (Darfur) (S/RES/2296 (2016), OP 23)

<sup>62</sup> DRC (S/RES/2277 (2016), OP 35(i)(a)), South Sudan (S/RES/2327 (2016), OP 7(a)(ii)).

<sup>63</sup> DRC (S/PRST/2016/2)

<sup>64</sup> DRC (S/2016/1130), South Sudan (S/2016/138), Western Sahara (S/2016/355), Syria (S/2016/460), DRC (S/2016/833), Central Africa (S/2016/996), West Africa / Sahel (S/2016/1072), Guinea-Bissau (S/2016/141), Libya (S/2016/452), Libya (S/2016/1011), Syria (S/2016/156, S/2016/272, S/2016/546, S/2016/631, S/2016/714, S/2016/796, S/2016/873, S/2016/962), DRC (S/2016/233), Central Africa (S/2016/482), South Sudan (S/2016/950, S/2016/951).

<sup>65</sup> Sudan (Darfur) (S/2016/1109, para. 23; S/2016/587, para. 52)

<sup>66</sup> DRC (S/2016/833, S/2016/233)

<sup>67</sup> S/RES/2122 (2013), OP 6

<sup>68</sup> S/RES/1325 (2000), OP 15; S/RES/2122 (2013), OP 6; S/PRST/2012/23; S/RES/2242 (2015), OP 5(c).

In 2016, the Security Council went on five field missions in January (Burundi, Ethiopia), March (Mali, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal), May (Somalia, Kenya, Egypt), September (South Sudan, Ethiopia) and November (DRC, Angola). The terms of reference for three missions (March, September, November) reference civil society, two (March, September) with specific references to women's groups as an important group the mission wants to engage with.<sup>69</sup> Follow-up reporting, which was in both written and verbal format, on four of the missions included information on or reference to meeting with CSOs, with particular reference to women's groups in the context of three missions.<sup>70</sup> Notably, the reporting on the March 2016 mission to Mali, Guinea-Bissau, and Senegal, the only written follow-up report, was the strongest in its discussion of information conveyed by women's groups, as well as key WPS issues highlighted over the course of the trip.<sup>71</sup>

## Conclusion & Recommendations

The degree to which WPS-related issues are incorporated and considered differs greatly depending on which conflict or crisis is being discussed, suggesting the international, regional and local politics surrounding a particular situation directly influence whether gender is taken as a core component by which to assess a situation. Thus, the politicization of the WPS agenda in the context of Security Council decision-making is a major factor contributing to a failure to integrate gender across all situations, when in fact every situation has gender dimensions which need to be identified and unpacked.

Addressing the gender dimensions of peace and security issues require considering the way in which women, men, girls, boys and those not identifying with the gender binary are both involved in and impacted by the situation – at every stage, in every process. The Security Council's adoption of a siloed and ad-hoc approach is, in part, due to a lack of conceptual clarity on issues related to gender, as well as a resistance to investing in resources on an ongoing basis to address WPS across the entire mission, outside of the Gender Unit.

Women's protection issues are inseparable from women's meaningful participation and rights. Taking a two-track approach that addresses immediate protection needs while also investing in long-term conflict prevention based on gender justice is critical to moving beyond short-term crisis response to sustainable and inclusive peace. Overcoming obstacles to women's participation, protection and rights is critical to reducing vulnerability and insecurity for both women and communities and ensuring that women are driving decisions regarding protection and security issues. As such, the failure to address the WPS agenda in a holistic manner that is evident across the country-specific and thematic work of the Council is not only a failure of accountability but a missed opportunity for conflict and violence prevention and peace.

**All Security Council members should:**

**Concretely support women's meaningful participation and empowerment across all agenda items in the context of all peace and security processes, and recognize the importance of addressing protection and participation issues concurrently, by:**

- Ensuring gender is a cross-cutting issue in the mandate of all peace operations.
- Including provisions which call on the mission to support women's meaningful participation broadly, as well as in specific functional areas, such as electoral support, DDR, and SSR, in the mandates for all peace operations.
- Calling on the deployment and funding of both GAs and WPAs in resolutions adopted on country-specific agenda items in order to ensure gender is integrated in an intersectional and cross-cutting manner, as well as ensure protection efforts are gender-sensitive.<sup>72</sup> It is essential that this expertise

<sup>69</sup> November (S/2016/948), March (S/2016/215), September (S/2016/757).

<sup>70</sup> January (S/PV.7615), March (S/2016/511), May (S/PV.7696), November (S/PV.7819).

<sup>71</sup> Mali, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal (S/2016/511)

<sup>72</sup> S/RES/2242 (2015), PP 15



is situated with access to the leadership of the mission and given the political and technical support to carry out their duties.<sup>73</sup>

- Including a request for the Secretary-General to call for “enhanced reporting” on all peace operations, with an emphasis that this reporting should include detailed information on efforts to support women’s meaningful participation and gender analysis of ongoing barriers.<sup>74</sup>
- Call for strengthened gender analysis which takes into account the differentiated needs, power relations, or vulnerability of different women and girls based, for example, on age, location, class or (dis-) abilities; critically examines the role played by masculinities, as well as particular needs of men and boys; and considers potential vulnerabilities of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex (LGBTI) individuals and communities. Relatedly, all peace operations should receive training on gender-sensitive conflict analysis to ensure each section of a mission is incorporating this into mission planning, implementation, and reporting.
- Including language in all outcome documents supporting women’s meaningful participation in peace processes, conflict resolution and other relevant efforts which explicitly recognizes the importance of women’s and women’s civil society participation. This language should be in the preambular paragraphs and coupled with provisions in the operative paragraphs which call on the government to support women’s participation, including in ongoing consultations and high-level discussions.<sup>75</sup>
- Continue to emphasize the importance of and call for the recruitment, retention, and professionalization of women across all justice and security sector components, including in peacekeeping operations.

**Support the key role that CSOs, including women-led organizations and women’s human rights groups, have in peace and security processes at local, regional and international levels by:**

- Including provisions in resolutions and presidential statements which recognize the important role of civil society, call for government support of inclusive processes and further call on peace operations missions to actively engage with diverse CSOs, including representatives of Indigenous and minority groups, in carrying out their mandated duties, such as peace processes and donor conferences.
- Holding all peace operations accountable for consulting with CSOs and requesting information in reports of the Secretary-General and briefings by senior officials on consultations and meetings with local groups, as well as details regarding outcomes and follow-up.<sup>76</sup> Security Council members should call on all missions to conduct and systematize CSO consultation processes which include meeting regularly with women and women’s groups, both near mission headquarters and where there is the most violence.
- Increasing its attention to attacks, intimidation, targeted violence and disappearances on civil society by condemning them in resolutions and presidential statements, as well as when engaging with national governments, and further requesting information to be included in reporting on shrinking civil society space and restrictions.<sup>77</sup>
- Inviting women civil society briefers to all discussions on country-specific situations; requesting and following up on information in reports and briefings on women’s meaningful participation, and

<sup>73</sup> S/RES/1325 (2000), OP 7; S/RES/1888 (2009), OP 20, 15; S/RES/1889 (2009), OP 7; S/RES/1960 (2010), OP 13, 16; S/RES/2242 (2015), OPs 1, 7, 11.

<sup>74</sup> UN, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, 2015, paras. 91, 94.

<sup>75</sup> Women, peace and security (S/2016/361, para. 42)

<sup>76</sup> Women, Peace and Security (S/2015/716, para. 72)

<sup>77</sup> UN, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, 2015, para. 159.

actively participating in meetings of the informal experts group on WPS.<sup>78</sup>

- Maintaining and increasing civil society access to all UN decision-making spaces to ensure full, equal and effective and meaningful participation of women, including HRDs, at all levels.<sup>79</sup>

### Strengthen accountability mechanisms aimed at ensuring the implementation of the WPS agenda, including necessary gender architecture and technical support, by:

- Asking follow-up questions in briefings from senior mission leadership during country-specific briefings at UN Headquarters.
- Maximizing the role and effectiveness of the IEG on WPS by actively attending all meetings, following up on recommendations in Security Council discussions and decision-making and ensuring engagement with CSOs.
- Conducting Arria Formula meetings on WPS, focused on implementation and accountability, which engage with civil society from a broad range of fragile, conflict and post-conflict states; are attended by senior representatives from Security Council members; and produce concrete actions and recommendations.
- Calling for full implementation of the [Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy on SEA \(ST/SGB/2003/13\)](#), as well as the provisions of [Resolution 2272 \(2016\)](#), including robust and mandatory pre-deployment training and vetting of all personnel, and comprehensive reporting which contains a conduct and discipline section with information on allegations, repatriation and judicial measures, as well as the steps taken to prioritize the security and well-being of survivors and their access to rapid medical and psychosocial care.
- Condemning and calling for accountability for crimes perpetrated by all sides of a conflict, by supporting the documentation and investigation of human rights abuses, war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, particularly for sexual and gender-based violations.
- Explicitly calling for gender analysis in strategic reviews, conducted by GAs, in order to inform mission reconfiguration and drawdown.
- Including mandate provisions which explicitly call on missions to implement the Secretary-General's Human Rights and Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) ([S/2013/110](#)).
- Ensure designation criteria and terms of reference for associated expert groups and sanctions committees contain specific provisions regarding gender considerations and a requirement for frequent and ongoing collaboration with CSOs in the field as part of information gathering. Reports of associated expert groups should contain gender analysis throughout.

### Promote an integrated approach to peace and security issues that breaks down artificial silos, is consistent with human rights and humanitarian legal obligations, and better reflects the reality and complexity of peace and security today by:

- Implementing the gender protections under international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (i.e. the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) ([A/RES/34/180](#)), the [Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Additional Protocols](#), the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide ([A/RES/260\(III\)](#)), the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees ([A/RES/429 \(V\)](#)), concluding observations, general comments (i.e. CEDAW General recommendation No. 30 ([CEDAW/C/GC/30](#))), and analysis into country considerations.<sup>80</sup> States should ratify and implement conventions related to disarmament, including the Arms Trade Treaty ([A/RES/67/234](#)), which requires exporting parties to take into

<sup>78</sup> Women, peace and security (S/2016/361, para. 42)

<sup>79</sup> UN, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, 2015, para. 67 (7).

<sup>80</sup> UN, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, 2015, para. 158.

account the risk of conventional arms being used to commit or facilitate SGBV.

- Ensuring gender-sensitive humanitarian responses, including for displaced populations, to ensure women and girls' needs are assessed and addressed. Women and girls, including LGBTI individuals, fleeing conflict must be afforded protection, including from sexual and gender-based-violence, while in transit and in final destinations. In line with IHL, women must also have access to the full range of livelihood, legal, psychosocial and medical services, including sexual and reproductive services, without discrimination.<sup>81</sup> It is important, additionally, for the international community to strengthen humanitarian response and preparation for transitional justice, including by fully funding the SGBV cluster of the Humanitarian Response Plan and strengthening financial support for women civil society in pledging conferences.
- Mainstreaming WPS at all stages of the conflict cycle. WPS should not be seen as a secondary issue to be considered once the country is stable. While integrating WPS within state policies, it must be acknowledged that, without achieving the human rights and meaningful participation in all aspects of public and private life, it is not possible to achieve long-term stability. Stages of transition are extremely important while peacebuilding and these need to be identified so that women's meaningful participation, promotion, and protection can be planned for at the various stages.<sup>82</sup>
- Actively supporting women's meaningful participation in all countering violent extremism (CVE) and counter-terrorism efforts and follow-up on implementation of the provisions of [Resolution 2242 \(2015\)](#) which called for an analysis of the risks to women and girls from counter-terrorism and CVE strategies. Women at all levels of society are critical in combating violent extremism and terrorism. Strategies for combating violent extremism overlap with and reinforce peacebuilding and conflict prevention efforts. All actions taken to prevent and respond to these threats should ensure women's full and meaningful participation in these efforts, as well as account for the need to better address the impact of violent extremism and terrorism on women and girls. Combating extremism requires addressing pre-existing threats to women and girls, embedded in laws and social norms, and engaging women and women's civil society in SSR and in efforts to strengthen the ROL. Any technical assistance called for by the Security Council, as noted in [Resolution 2129 \(2013\)](#), to Member States and regional and sub-regional organizations on countering terrorism should emphasize and promote the meaningful participation of women in these efforts. In addition, the Security Council should stress the need for greater recruitment of women in positions of decision-making within Member State and UN institutions involved in supporting counter-terrorism efforts.
- Operationalizing rhetoric on disarmament into concrete commitments. Peaceful rhetoric constantly fails to translate into concrete commitments; Security Council members (particularly in the context of debates) generally fail to recognize and internalize the value of disarmament in sustaining peace. Despite widespread agreement regarding the need to prevent the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), few members express their concerns about broader themes of state disarmament and gender perspective on disarmament. Building on the Council's recognition of the impact of small arms on women and children and calls for women's participation in preventing armed violence and disarmament, it is important to strengthen this gap area, including by recognizing the gendered and humanitarian impact of arms and calling for arms embargoes where arms transfers provide an overriding risk of SGBV or when constituting a violation of humanitarian or human rights law.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>81</sup> UN-Women, *A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, 2015, para. 39.

<sup>82</sup> GAPS, *UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS) and HMG Consultation*, 2013.

<sup>83</sup> Small arms and light weapons (S/RES/2220 (2015)), Women, peace and security (S/RES/2242 (2015)), OP 15; S/2015/716, para. 57).

The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, a project of Tides Center, is a coalition of 14 international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working to advance the Women, Peace and Security agenda at the United Nations and around the world. We believe that sustainable peace can only be achieved if women's human rights are promoted and respected and that women have meaningful participation across all conflict prevention and resolution efforts, as well as in post conflict rebuilding activities.

Our members are: Amnesty International; CARE International; Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights; Femmes Africa Solidarité; Global Justice Center; Human Rights Watch; Inclusive Security; International Alert; MADRE; Nobel Women's Initiative; Refugees International; Oxfam; Women's Refugee Commission; and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

The development of this policy brief was led by Kristina Mader with contributions from Gabrielle Belli, Emma Ogg, and Joeylyn Yockey.

NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security  
777 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017  
[info@womenpeacesecurity.org](mailto:info@womenpeacesecurity.org)  
[www.womenpeacesecurity.org](http://www.womenpeacesecurity.org)

