

Women, Peace and Security

August 2020

Iraq

In its discussion of the situation in Iraq and the most recent report on the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), the Council should urge UNAMI to continue monitoring the protests and ensure the protection of civic space and the right of individuals to protest, including women activists. As noted in the summary report of the March 2020 [Security Council Informal Expert Group \(IEG\) on WPS](#) meeting on Iraq, Iraqi women's leadership and participation in the protests have created opportunities, but have also risked their exclusion from decision-making processes and backlash against their demands. Although some protests have been suspended in light of COVID-19, the most recent report of UNAMI notes that continued violence against civil society, human rights defenders and protesters remains a serious concern ([S/2020/353](#), paras. 15, 53-58, 88). Council members should support calls of Iraqi civil society to set up an investigative mechanism that documents, with a gender-sensitive methodology, the violations perpetrated against peaceful demonstrators since 2019, and follow this up with an impartial and transparent mechanism to hold perpetrators accountable. Following the adoption of robust WPS language on women's full, equal and meaningful participation in the most recent mandate renewal ([S/RES/2522 \(2020\)](#)), UNAMI should brief on progress in ensuring women are participating in all aspects of peace, security and political processes, including in roles with influence and authority, particularly regarding the electoral reforms developed in response to protesters' demands and the new electoral law. The Council should also consider the extent to which the mission is mainstreaming gender as a cross-cutting issue ([S/RES/2522 \(2020\)](#), OP 2(e)), and follow-up on recommendations from previous IEG meetings, including on the documentation and investigation of attacks against women human rights defenders and on progressing the draft anti-domestic violence law produced following an inclusive, consultative process. There is a correlation between the increase in domestic and gender-based violence (GBV) and increased availability of and access to firearms, as shown by civil society research, which should be accounted for in such processes. It is imperative that UNAMI report on their support for the forthcoming second National Action Plan (NAP) on Resolution 1325 (2000), including in ensuring there are the necessary financial resources for implementation and the establishment of accountability mechanisms to track and measure progress and impact.

For August, in which Indonesia has the presidency of the UN Security Council, the MAP provides recommendations on **Iraq, Lebanon, Somalia, and South Sudan.**

Lebanon

In the upcoming renewal of the mandate of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the Council must maintain all existing WPS provisions and add new language that reflects its WPS commitments and aligns with existing good practice. The Council should modify the mandate provision calling for gender to be a cross-cutting issue ([S/RES/2485 \(2019\)](#), OP 25) to include the standard formulation of "full, equal and meaningful participation," and add a specific reference to consistent engagement and consultation with women's civil society organizations ([S/RES/2122 \(2013\)](#), [S/RES/2242 \(2015\)](#)). Further, the Council should explicitly request that UNIFIL support implementation of the [National Action Plan on WPS \(2019-2022\)](#) endorsed by the Council of Ministers last September ([S/2020/195](#), [S/2019/889](#)), in particular by providing technical support on security sector reform and political participation and encouraging the government to accelerate funding for its implementation. In the context of the proposed legal reforms, the Council should urge the government to strengthen women's protection and meaningful participation at all levels of decision-making processes, including by amending the nationality law to allow citizenship to be passed through matrilineal lines for Lebanese women married to foreigners ([CEDAW](#), Art. 9; [S/2019/574](#); [HRW](#); [Amnesty Intl](#)). In the enhanced reporting requested by the Security Council ([S/RES/2485 \(2019\)](#), OP 25), the barriers to women's political participation should be analyzed and the role of women as leaders should be highlighted ([HRW](#), [S/2020/195](#), [S/2019/889](#)). Enhanced reporting should also include gender-sensitive conflict analysis of the impact of the current health and economic crises on marginalized groups, including migrant workers ([Amnesty International](#), [UNSCOL](#)). Recent research has clearly shown the gendered impacts of the current crisis are directly connected to the concerning deterioration of the rule of law ([Amnesty International](#)), inequalities in the labor market and the rise in domestic violence ([UNSCOL](#)), all of which undermine safety and security at the local level. Relatedly, UNIFIL must undertake a gender-sensitive needs assessment to more effectively support and coordinate humanitarian assistance; this needs assistance should recognize and partner with women's groups, which are at the frontline of providing critical services in communities.

The Council should ensure that the humanitarian assistance is in line with existing obligations under international humanitarian law and that women and girls have access to the full range of livelihood, legal, psychosocial and medical services, including sexual and reproductive health services, without discrimination ([S/RES/2242 \(2015\)](#), [CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5](#)). Finally, the Security Council must urge the government to continue taking action to reduce the presence and availability of weapons in a way that addresses the gendered implications of high levels of armament among civilians and engages women's groups in buy-back programs and other local efforts.

Somalia

The Security Council is expected to consider reports on the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSAM) and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). In its discussion, the Council should request that senior officials from UNSAM and AMISOM identify, discuss and reflect on their concrete efforts to address the barriers and risks associated with women's participation, including those brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, in line with the [recommendations from August 2019 civil society briefer, Amina Arale](#). These include quarantine measures, economic stressors and the absence of essential health services, including sexual, reproductive and psychosocial health services ([Saferworld](#)). Briefings by UNSAM should mainstream gender-sensitive analysis in updates related to conflict prevention efforts, including those undertaken as part of addressing the link between the climate crisis and violence ([S/RES/2461 \(2019\)](#), OP 21). Further, the Council should expect detailed information from UNSAM and AMISOM in their briefings on regular, ongoing consultations with diverse civil society organizations, including women's groups ([S/RES/2461 \(2019\)](#), OP 4). Finally, the Council should continue to express its support for the full implementation of the NAP on Resolution 1325 (2000) and the Sexual Offences Bill and inquire as to progress.

South Sudan

In any discussion regarding the **situation** in South Sudan, the Security Council must ensure women's rights and meaningful participation are mainstreamed as priorities. As implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ACRSS) proceeds, the increased role of women in all aspects of the process must be addressed with greater urgency. Women leaders in South Sudan continue to express concern regarding the lack of inclusion of diverse voices, including women from diverse communities, in the peace process and their representation in the government, national ministries and as state governors. Women's involvement in these institutions has not met the 35% quota required under the peace agreement and reiterated by the Council in [Resolution 2514 \(2020\)](#) – currently, it reaches only 25%, or nine women ([S/2020/536](#)). Any briefing to the Council should update on the extent to which the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) is taking concrete steps to support women's participation in all peace and political processes. Further, UNMISS should track violence targeting women human rights defenders and GBV as indicators of progress in addressing key violations of women's rights that undermine the implementation of the R-ACRSS, destabilize leadership, heighten intercommunal violence ([S/2020/342](#)), and are further exacerbated by COVID-19. In efforts to prevent GBV, the government must implement the October 2014 signed [Joint Communiqué](#) on the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence. Further, there must be improved protection and security measures for women and girls and persons with disabilities both within and outside of protection of civilians sites. Additionally, UNMISS should consult with civil society organizations in reporting incidents of GBV and in providing up-to-date gender analyses of the region. Relatedly, violations of the UN arms embargo on South Sudan need to be addressed. As described by the Panel of Experts on South Sudan in their report ([S/2020/342](#)), the continued flow of weapons and ammunition facilitate and enable all forms of GBV and undermine efforts to implement peace. The Council should call on the government to operationalize the mobile court system, ensure that standard procedures to respond to cases of GBV are in place and implemented, and implement chapter five of the Revitalized Peace Agreement, which provides for accountability and reconciliation mechanisms that have yet to be formed. In implementing transitional justice processes, it is imperative that the government incorporate a gender-sensitive approach, for example by requiring diverse women's inclusion in criminal justice institutions, and that reparations to victims of GBV and violence in conflict include mental health support. In any briefings, the extent to which there is meaningful consultation with women's groups in gender-sensitive community violence reduction (CVR) programs, developed in consultation with women, especially those in protection of civilians sites, should be prioritized. They must also incorporate an intersectional gender analysis of the broader context and ensure that women, girls, the elderly, LGBTQI+ individuals and persons with disabilities are meaningfully taken into account.

NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security members are: Amnesty International; CARE International; Center for Reproductive Rights; Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights; Cordaid; Global Justice Center; Global Network of Women Peacebuilders; Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict; Human Rights Watch; International Alert; MADRE; Nobel Women's Initiative; OutRight Action International; Oxfam; Refugees International; Women Enabled International; 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.