

March 2017

Afghanistan

In the forthcoming **mandate renewal** for the UN Assistance

Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Council members must call on the Government of Afghanistan to ensure peace and security policies address women's participation and protection as a priority in the country's period of transition following the September peace agreement with the Hezbi-Islami group. In the preparatory talks with Hezbi-e Islami, the deputy Head of the High Peace Council, Habiba Sarabi, became the first Afghan woman in a senior role to be involved in such talks. This offers some hope for negotiations with the Taliban and other armed insurgent groups, which have so far excluded women. As peace talks continue and the international community looks to demonstrate its continued commitment to Afghanistan following the Warsaw NATO Summit and Brussels Donor Conference, it is critical for women's voices to be included in peace and security decision-making – both in peace talks and in prior consultation – particularly given the sustained violence against Afghan women leaders and human rights defenders. Per obligations articulated in previous women, peace, and security (WPS) Council resolutions, any upcoming consultations hosted by Council members must include the direct participation of women leaders, particularly from civil society, to ensure the discussions are representative of realities on the ground. In the UNAMA mandate, the Council should maintain the existing references to women and girls in both preambular and operative paragraphs, and further, add new provisions which strengthen UNAMA's mandate to address WPS issues. Specifically, there should be a provision which explicitly calls on UNAMA to support the Government's efforts in implementing its National Action Plan (NAP), as well as a call for UNAMA to prioritize its activities and efforts to promote women's protection and participation. Given the existing request for UNAMA to prioritize child protection activities, adding a similar call for women would demonstrate that the Council is equally valuing the rights and concerns of women. Finally, in order to strengthen information and analysis on the gender dimensions of the situation, the Council should invite women civil society representatives to brief the Council (SCR 2122 (2013), OP 1(a)(c)).

For March, in which the United Kingdom has the presidency of the UN Security Council, the MAP provides recommendations on the situations in **Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Colombia, Haiti, Mali, and Yemen.**

Democratic Republic of Congo

The Security Council is expected to renew the **mandate** and consider a **report** of the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO). The existing provisions of MONUSCO's mandate related to WPS must be maintained (SCR 2277 (2016), OPs 29(a), 35(b), 38), and further provisions calling for MONUSCO to support the Government and UN Country Team in efforts to ensure women's participation in the context of support for inclusive dialogue on reconciliation, elections, and security sector reform should be added (SCR 2122 (2013), OP 4). Significant barriers to women's representation and participation in political and security processes remain, due, in part to a lack of political will, financing, and implementation of relevant gender equality policy frameworks. MONUSCO is well-placed to support existing efforts and call for the national and regional implementation of gender equality norms. When discussing the latest report on MONUSCO, the Council should follow-up on any imbalance in reporting on WPS issues; past reporting has failed to detail mission efforts to support women and women's civil society participation in peace and security processes, despite a request by the Security Council for the inclusion of such information. Security Council members should also follow-up and inquire as to efforts by MONUSCO and other relevant UN entities on: measures which ensure women's full and equal participation, including engaging with women's civil society organizations, in the strategic dialogue on MONUSCO's progressive withdrawal, as well as all disarmament, justice, and security sector reform efforts; and strategies which aim to protect women, men, girls, and boys from sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), including coordinated monitoring and analysis arrangements to track SGBV, availability of comprehensive, multi-sectoral services for survivors (SCR 2106 (2013) and SCR 2122 (2013)), and deployment of women's protection advisers (WPAs) (SCR 1888 (2009), OP 12). Furthermore, it is imperative that human rights violations, including SGBV, continue to be monitored, through consultation with civil society, including women leaders and, human rights defenders during field visits (SCR 2122 (2013), OP 6), and perpetrators are identified, arrested, and prosecuted.

Colombia

As the Council discusses the **situation** in Colombia and considers a report on the implementation of the mandate of the UN Mission in Colombia, there should be an emphasis on ensuring that gender is mainstreamed across the work of the mission. In previous reporting, the Secretary-General noted a particular effort by the mission, to consult with women's groups on the role and activities of the mission (S/2016/1095, paras. 34, 46); this is a positive example of civil society engagement and should be continued regularly moving forward, both at the local level as well as at UN Headquarters, including with Afro-Colombian, indigenous, and rural women's organizations. Reporting should include gender as a crosscutting issue across all sections, including on the way in which a gender perspective is adopted in the mission's coordination of the Monitoring and Verification

Mechanism (MVM) and in the implementation and monitoring of the ceasefire. The Council is encouraged to follow up with particular questions regarding consultations with local women's groups, in particular in regards to the establishment of a readily accessible protection and reporting mechanism to ensure there is transparency and accountability in the implementation of the ceasefire and final peace agreement, as well as opportunities to report instances of noncompliance.

Haiti

The Council will consider the outcome of the recent **strategic assessment** of the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), as well as a general **report** on the implementation of MINUSTAH's mandate. Reporting in the past, positively, has included general information on relevant developments regarding gender equality at a national level. However, future reporting should provide much more information on MINUSTAH's activities related to supporting women's participation and empowerment, and detail the extent to which the mission consulted with local women's organizations in carrying out its work. The Council should inquire as to challenges and barriers regarding women's participation in electoral and political processes, and encourage MINUSTAH to address the root causes of women's discrimination in their activities. Notably, recent reporting referenced efforts to promote and protect the rights of LGBTI persons. The Council should call for MINUSTAH to continue these efforts, and support LGBTI-sensitive training when conducting investigations and prosecutions of SGBV crimes, including violence motivated by sexual orientation or gender identity, and proper treatment of survivors by police, prosecutors, judges, new legislators and other newly elected and relevant Government officials who may interact with survivors. Given the lack of accessible services and assistance, the Council should also urge MINUSTAH to build the capacity of local organizations and the government to ensure gender-sensitive assistance services for survivors of SGBV and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by UN peacekeepers, and to establish transparent, survivor-centered and readily accessible mechanisms to hear claims for remedies. The Council should enjoin MINUSTAH to provide logistical and technical expertise for the establishment of protection and relocation mechanisms for human rights defenders, particularly women human rights defenders, and expand relocation funds to include family members and dependents of those at risk.

Mali

As the Security Council considers a **report** on the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), the Council must ensure that the mission is mainstreaming gender as a cross-cutting issue, including by supporting government efforts to promote women's participation at all levels, particularly in implementing the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation (SCR 2295 (2016), OP 26) and efforts to counter violent extremism (SCR 2242 (2015), OP 13). In addition, the Council should ensure the mission is fully equipped with its intended gender capacity and expertise, including through the full deployment of WPAs (SCR 2295 (2016), OP 19(c)(iii)), strengthening the presence of women deployed in all security-related capacities as well as in civilian personnel deployment, and consulting with women's civil society organizations on a consistent basis (SCR 2295 (2016), OP 9(a)(v)). The Council should inquire as to the mission's efforts to increase the participation of women in human rights and conflict-related sexual violence training provided to Malian forces, police, gendarmerie and legal authorities, as well as the mission's efforts to provide women associated with armed groups full access to disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs, through consultation with women's organizations (SCR 2295 (2016), OP 19 (v)). Finally, in order to strengthen information and analysis on the gender dimensions of the situation, the Council should invite women civil society representatives and the Executive Director of UN Women to brief the Council (SCR 2122 (2013), OP 1(a)(c)).

Yemen

In its expected discussion of the **situation** in Yemen, the Council should inquire about participation by women and women's civil society organizations in conflict resolution and conflict management processes, as well as efforts to protect women, including women human rights defenders and civil society, and access to legal support. Council members should call for the establishment of a national monitoring and reporting mechanism to document human rights violations, including attacks and threats against civil society. The Council should also specifically request the UN Special Envoy to meet with women civil society representatives that reflect the diversity of Yemen's population, including ethnic, geographical and political affiliation, and more broadly, all stakeholders, including the Arab coalition, must ensure women's meaningful participation in discussion, design, and implementation of peace and security strategies, including those which aim to counter violent extremism (SCR 2122 (2013), OP 13 and SCR 2242 (2015), OP 13). The protection and promotion of women's rights must be prioritized, and in this context, the Council should call for investigations of human rights violations, including increasing rates of SGBV, and ensure accountability for all perpetrators. Finally, all efforts to address the humanitarian situation must be gender sensitive and responsive to women's differentiated experiences, including as heads of households. Any assistance should provide for the full range of medical, including access to the full range of sexual and reproductive health services; legal; psychosocial; and livelihood services, and the need for access during conflict and post-conflict situations (SCR 2122 (2013)).