

# Women, Peace and Security

## December 2019

### Afghanistan

In the forthcoming report on the implementation of the mandate for the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the level of detail and analysis provided on WPS should be improved upon, in line with the mission's mandate (S/RES/2489 (2019)). The Council should inquire about the mission's progress in providing technical expertise and supporting the establishment of clear procedures to engage Afghan women from diverse backgrounds in peace negotiations and conflict resolution efforts, including as negotiators, developed in consultation with women members of the High Peace Council (CEDAW/C/AFG/CO/1-2). There should be follow-up on the extent to which powerbrokers leading the peace process are taking concrete action to ensure women's meaningful participation and are also ensuring the planning, process, and outcome(s) reflect Afghan women's expertise and priorities. It is crucial to note that the conflict has exacerbated the vulnerability to marginalization, poverty, discrimination and violence, especially among local and rural women. The Council should seek an update on UNAMA's support to the government in providing basic services for female victims and survivors of air operations, ground engagements, and other complex attacks, which are at the highest levels recorded since 2009 (UNAMA). There should also be information on measures taken to ensure the security and protection of women officials and leaders, women's rights activists, women human rights defenders, and journalists (CEDAW/C/AFG/CO/1-2). Finally, senior officials should provide detailed updates regarding UNAMA's support to, and progress on, implementing the National Action Plan (NAP) on Resolution 1325 (2000), including in the development of institutional and accountability structures, and finalization of the financial mechanism to ensure implementation (S/RES/2242 (2015)). The Council should recognize the gendered impact of small arms and light weapons (SALW), as well as encourage arms exporting countries and the government to identify and regulate the influx of SALW to and within the country. Additionally, the Council should continue to ensure that counterterrorism efforts do not undermine human rights or impede the ability of civil society organizations (CSOs), including women's groups, to operate effectively.

For December, in which the United States has the presidency of the UN Security Council, the MAP provides recommendations on **Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Israel / Palestine, and Syria.**

### Democratic Republic of the 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 references to women and girls in both the preambular and operative paragraphs of MONUSCO's mandate should be maintained. The outcomes of Security Council Informal Expert Group on WPS meetings (S/2019/296, S/2018/885, S/2018/362) should be reflected; thus far, they have been inconsistently integrated (NGOWG). In addition, the Council should:

- Include new language mandating that the mission prioritizes women's meaningful participation in all efforts to ensure inclusive peace and security, good governance and peace consolidation. The mission should also be mandated to ensure these efforts are gender-sensitive and informed by gender-sensitive conflict analysis and consultations with diverse women-led groups, women peacebuilders and women civil society leaders.
- Include new language mandating that the mission engages with diverse women-led groups, women peacebuilders, and women civil society leaders, including those representing marginalized communities, in all priority tasks, including those related to its protection of civilians efforts (S/RES/2409 (2018), OP 36(i)(c)).
- Include new language mandating that the mission monitors threats to CSOs, including women's groups, and restrictions on democratic space, as well as prioritize the protection of women politicians, candidates, activists, and human rights defenders (CEDAW/C/COD/CO/8).
- Include new language mandating that the mission ensures its "enhanced political and conflict analysis" is gender-sensitive (S/RES/2463 (2019), OP 25).
- Include new language mandating that the mission supports local women-led groups, which are currently preventing violence and providing services to victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) including medical, psychosocial, legal and socioeconomic assistance.
- Call on humanitarian efforts, including the Ebola response, to be gender-sensitive and for all stakeholders to engage with diverse, local women-led groups, women peacebuilders and women civil society leaders.
- Call on the Government and international partners to ensure there is adequate funding for the implementation of the NAP on Resolution 1325 (2000) and that the planning, implementation, and monitoring is done in partnership with diverse women-led groups, women peacebuilders, and women civil society leaders.

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- Call on the Government to ensure accountability and access to reparations for victims of conflict-related sexual violence, and to add domestic violence and marital rape into its penal code (CEDAW/C/COD/CO/8).
- Call upon the Government to effectively implement Act 08/005 (Article 3(5)) of 10 June 2008, which requests that political parties consider gender parity when establishing electoral lists and ensure that women are significantly represented in high-level decision-making positions.
- Call on the Government to pass a comprehensive reparations law that eliminates barriers to reparations for victims of SGBV and ensures full compliance with court-ordered reparations.
- Call upon the Government to enact the “Law on the prevention, control and reduction of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition,” which has been pending since 2013, and further engage CSOs, including women’s groups, in the development and implementation of disarmament and arms control programs that are gender-sensitive and tailored to the local context.

### Democratic People’s Republic of Korea

In the Security Council’s discussion of the **situation** in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), the Council should ensure that human rights, including women’s rights, and women’s meaningful participation in any future peace process are central to the conversation. The Council has typically discussed the situation in the DPRK with a narrow lens that ignores the human rights and gender dimensions of the situation. Reporting and discussion should be grounded in conflict-sensitive gender analysis, and further recognize the important role women and women’s groups have in any future peace process. The Council should conduct gender-sensitive humanitarian and human rights impact assessments of the sanctions currently in place and adopt measures available to mitigate and eliminate the adverse consequences of sanctions on the humanitarian and human rights situation. Furthermore, the Council should take into account gender considerations and the rights of women in all deliberations concerning the sanctions regime.

### Israel / Palestine

As the Security Council considers the **situation** in the Middle East, including Israel & Palestine, issues related to women’s rights and meaningful participation must be made central to all discussions. The Council’s discussions on Israel / Palestine provide a stark example of how women’s rights and experiences are instrumentalized by the Council in order to make broader peace and security points, while simultaneously failing to concretely address legitimate barriers to inclusion (NGOWG) and violence faced by women and women human rights defenders. Palestinian women regularly face violence, threats, intimidation, restriction on movement, and discrimination as a result of Israeli policies that violate international humanitarian and human rights law. These violations also include property destruction, demolition, and the infringement on access to adequate housing. The Council must urge a stop to the continued expansion of settlements, settler violence, and use of collective punishment as a tool in forcible transfers.

### Syria

The urgent political and humanitarian **crisis** in northeast Syria has put an estimated 450,000 people at risk if all sides do not exercise maximum restraint and ensure safe, unhindered humanitarian access in line with international humanitarian law. The Council must urge all parties to cease attacks from further escalating the humanitarian crisis and ensure that civilians are not subject to retribution or detention by the Syrian authorities, or other parties who regain their positions. The Council must call for rights-based, survivor-centered humanitarian action that is gender-responsive and provides immediate and non-discriminatory aid response as well as quality health services, including sexual and reproductive health services, to all affected communities. This means providing specialized staff trained in administering first-line support, clinical management of sexual assault and rape, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), identification of SGBV cases, and referrals in a manner that guarantees the safety, confidentiality, and privacy of survivors. Women’s meaningful participation should be supported in future meetings of the Constitutional Committee. Further, gender equality must be firmly enshrined in the new Constitution in order to ensure that women’s rights are guaranteed in Syria’s future. The meaningful dialogue and inclusion of Syrian women human rights defenders should be prioritized in the Office of the Special Envoy, as well as all other multilateral processes. As a means of ensuring accountability, reporting must include analysis and information on efforts to support women’s meaningful participation (S/RES/2449 (2018), OP 12). Furthermore, the Council must urge inquiry into more than 100,000 people forcibly disappeared, detained, abducted or gone missing throughout the past eight years in Syria, according to the Independent International Commission of Inquiry (IICI) on the Syrian Arab Republic and groups on the ground. Addressing detention and forced disappearances of Syrians is a critical confidence-building measure between the parties to the conflict and the Syrian people.