

# 2020 CIVIL SOCIETY ROADMAP ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

## RECOMMENDATIONS



## BACKGROUND

The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security (NGOWG) is an independent advocacy coalition consisting of 18 international NGOs that advocates for the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in all efforts to create and maintain international peace and security.

Our members work alongside women and women-led organizations in conflict and post-conflict situations in over 50 countries and work directly with over 200 NGOs and 75 networks of civil society actors and activists. Our members<sup>a</sup> represent a broad spectrum of fields spanning the entire peace and security spectrum, including: human rights and women's rights, humanitarian assistance, disability rights, refugees and forcibly displaced populations, international humanitarian law, disarmament, security sector reform and transformative justice. This breadth of issue expertise, along with our joint expansive global civil society networks, enables us to develop and promote country-specific policy recommendations that positively impact the lives of women affected by conflict to Member States and United Nations (UN) leadership.

The [2020 Civil Society Roadmap on Women, Peace and Security](#) outlines key priorities and recommendations to the UN, Security Council and Member States in 2020 and beyond in **five key areas**:

- 1. Prevention of conflict.** Take decisive action to prevent conflict, end violence and avert crisis, including by addressing gendered drivers of conflict and instability.
- 2. Women's meaningful participation.** Ensure women's full, equal, and meaningful participation in all aspects of peace and security.
- 3. Human rights defenders (HRDs), peacebuilders and civil society space.** Defend the legitimacy of the work of all HRDs and peacebuilders and their role in promoting peace and security, and effectively prevent and address attacks against them.
- 4. Gender equality and the human rights of all women and girls, including access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR),** must be central to maintaining international peace and security.
- 5. Accountability for implementation.** In addition to ensuring implementation by Member States, promoting system-wide accountability of the UN for implementation of the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda.

The following document presents [recommendations to the UN, Security Council and Member States](#).

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<sup>a</sup>Current members of the NGOWG 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 International; Refugees International; Women Enabled; Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; and Women's Refugee Commission.

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## CONTENTS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| I. Prevention of conflict   | 3  |
| II. Women’s full, equal and meaningful participation in all aspects of peace and security | 6  |
| III. Human rights defenders, peacebuilders and civil society space                        | 8  |
| IV. Promotion of human rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights        | 10 |
| V. Ensure system-wide accountability across the UN for implementation of the WPS agenda   | 12 |

## 2020 Civil Society Women, Peace and Security Roadmap Recommendations

### I. Prevention of conflict

#### To the UN:

- ❑ **Require gender-sensitive conflict analysis and an analysis of root causes of conflict in all UN programming and decision-making, including conflict prevention, humanitarian programming, preventing violent extremism, peacebuilding, peacekeeping and development efforts.** All UN entities, including the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), must ensure that all gender-sensitive conflict analysis meets certain minimum standards, which reflect existing standard operating procedures, policies and commitments.<sup>1</sup> Such analysis must be translated into gender-sensitive programming, inform humanitarian needs assessments, and be included in all country- and region-specific reports of the Secretary-General and briefings delivered by senior UN officials. All conflict analysis must include a robust, intersectional discussion of gender, including gender norms, sexual orientation and gender identity, take into account diverse ethnic, cultural and religious identities, and be grounded in sex-, disability- and age-disaggregated data. As part of carrying out gender-sensitive conflict analysis efforts, and in order to ensure all programming is reflective of local realities, all UN entities, including DPO, DPPA, OCHA, UNDP and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), must be required to regularly and meaningfully engage with women’s civil society organizations, activists, peacebuilders and HRDs through all stages of such processes.<sup>2</sup>

#### Women, Peace and Security under COVID-19

**Require rights-based and age-, gender- and disability-sensitive pandemic responses:** COVID-19 responses must be grounded in data disaggregated by gender, age and disability, and intersectional analysis that recognizes the gendered impact of the crisis. Where this data does not yet exist, the Security Council must request it to inform its own response to the pandemic.

- ❑ **Require all senior officials across all UN entities to uphold gender equality and human rights as a fundamental part of their prevention mandate, including in public statements and policy frameworks.** Given the primacy of conflict prevention in the mandate of the UN, senior officials, including the Secretary-General, should regularly and publicly champion gender equality, call for the promotion of all human rights, including comprehensive SRHR, in all efforts to prevent conflict at all levels, and call out governments that undermine these rights. Senior officials must consistently emphasize gender equality, human rights and the political primacy of women’s full, equal and meaningful participation across all peace and political processes, in all discussions with government officials, and further reinforce their necessity in establishing and strengthening institutions, legislation and policies. This should

also be reflected in all internal planning and policy frameworks, including in the areas of sustainable development, humanitarian action and peacebuilding.

- ❑ **Invest in early warning systems that are gender-responsive, disability-accessible and inclusive to avert crises and prevent conflict.** Programming and decision-making processes, including within the Security Council, must be informed by regular assessment of early warning indicators that are context-specific, gender-sensitive, disability-accessible, evidence-based and developed in partnership with local communities.

#### To the Security Council and Member States:

- ❑ **Defend the centrality of gender equality and the full scope of human rights of all women and girls in all international peace and security processes and all outcome documents.** This includes calling for gender equality and human rights to be at the center of negotiations in the context of all peace processes. This also requires including specific provisions in the mandates of all peace operations that call on them, along with UN Country Teams, to monitor and report on violations and abuses of human rights, including violations of all women’s human rights in line with the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women](#) (CEDAW). In addition, this should also require both peace operations and Country Teams to consult with women’s civil society organizations as part of their mandate to protect and promote human rights.
- ❑ **The Security Council has the primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security.** Its members should support timely and decisive action aimed at preventing or ending the commission of genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes. They should publicly pledge not to vote against a credible draft resolution before the Security Council aimed at halting or preventing such crimes, in line with the [Accountability Coherence and Transparency Group’s Code of Conduct \(A/70/621\)](#).<sup>3</sup> Relatedly, members of the Security Council and Member States must not enable arms transfers when there is a substantial risk that they may be used to “commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence (GBV) or serious acts of violence against women and children,” in line with the [Arms Trade Treaty](#) (ATT). Members States must also intensify efforts towards reducing the flow of small arms and light weapons (SALW) by implementing all relevant treaties and protocols, including the ATT, Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition ([A/RES/55/255](#)), and the [Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects](#) (UN PoA).<sup>4</sup>

#### Women, Peace and Security under COVID-19

**Protect civilians and ensure principled humanitarian access to all people in need:** Demand cessation of attacks against civilians, healthcare workers and humanitarian actors, which violate [international humanitarian, criminal and human rights law](#) and [Security Council Resolution 2286 \(2016\)](#). Support the [Secretary-General’s call](#) that national authorities designate humanitarian workers as essential, given their direct and indispensable role in delivering life-saving assistance.

- ❑ **Respect, protect and fulfill all obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law, unequivocally condemn any violations, including abuses targeting women and girls, by all parties to armed conflict, and ensure accountability of perpetrators.** This should include consistently condemning direct and indiscriminate attacks on civilians, deliberate targeting of schools, hospitals or other civilian infrastructure, denial of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, and arbitrary denial of humanitarian access, all of which undermine women’s human rights. Ensure that there are consequences for state and non-state actors who deliberately violate or disregard international obligations, including through accountability mechanisms. Consistently support the creation of international, independent investigative mechanisms in situations of armed conflict. Commit to making the reports of such mechanisms public to bring greater transparency to the Security Council’s work in pursuit of accountability for grave violations and to deter future violations. Encourage parties to armed conflict to decisively and transparently investigate allegations of civilian harm committed by their forces.<sup>5</sup>
- ❑ **Center deliberations and decision-making regarding the formation, review and drawdown of peace operations on long-term approaches to sustaining peace, including gender-sensitive analysis of the root causes of conflict,** in line with [Resolution 2282 \(2016\)](#). This entails the inclusion of provisions related to gender-responsive early warning and peacebuilding in the mandates of peace operations, and ensuring that capacity for gender-responsive peacebuilding is prioritized during any transition. In this respect, the Security Council should regularly request, deliberate and draw upon the specific advice of the Peacebuilding Commission and ensure complementarity of efforts.
- ❑ **Intensify efforts to employ gender-sensitive small arms control as part of arms embargoes to safeguard against proliferation and diversion.** Explicitly call for all associated expert groups to carry out intersectional gender-sensitive analysis of the role that small arms play in exacerbating conflict and undermining peace and security, and call for detailed information related to arms transfers that violate the ATT and thus contribute to violations of [international humanitarian law](#), including GBV.

## II. Women’s full, equal and meaningful participation in all aspects of peace and security

### To the UN:

- ❑ **Make direct participation of diverse women a requirement in all UN-led or co-led peace processes, and actively advocate for and support the leadership of diverse women from local communities in line with State obligations to ensure women’s full, equal and meaningful representation in all stages of peace processes.** These obligations are expressed in the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women \(CEDAW\)](#) and [CEDAW General recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations](#), and emphasized in Resolutions [1325 \(2000\)](#), [1820 \(2008\)](#), [1889 \(2009\)](#), [2106 \(2013\)](#), [2122 \(2013\)](#), [2242 \(2015\)](#), [2467 \(2019\)](#), and [2493 \(2019\)](#).<sup>6</sup> All peace processes must include full, equal and meaningful participation of diverse women and fully integrate a gender perspective. Where delegations exclude women, UN mediation teams, Special Envoys and Special Representatives should insist on women’s direct participation and take specific steps to facilitate and ensure their participation in a way that gives them the opportunity to influence the outcome of any given process. Symbolic, superficial, advisory, last-minute, informal or ad hoc representation through advisory boards or other observer status must never be presented as substitutes for direct participation. Explicit language on the need to include diverse women in all stages of peace processes must be included in all senior compacts, terms of reference and directives to all senior UN leadership. In addition, UN mediation teams, Special Envoys and Special Representatives must regularly consult with women’s civil society, as called for in [Resolution 2122 \(2013\)](#) and outlined in DPO’s [Gender Responsive United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Policy](#) and DPPA’s [Women, Peace and Security Policy](#).
- ❑ **Take concrete steps to ensure that women do not face retaliation for their participation.** Prevent and respond to women who face reprisals for participating in peace and political processes, including elections, at all levels. Ensure that all planning and decision-making is gender-sensitive and takes into account measures to mitigate such risks.
- ❑ **Regularly review UN-led or co-led peace processes, and make the results publicly available, in order to assess the inclusivity of such processes, boost accountability of UN staff and leadership for promoting women’s meaningful participation, and identify concrete ways to support participation and avoid exclusion in the future.**

### Women, Peace and Security under COVID-19

**Require women’s full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership:** Recommend that all COVID-19 decision-making bodies are inclusive, gender-balanced and include dedicated gender expertise. All response design, implementation and evaluation should involve local civil society, particularly women-led organizations and those working on human rights.

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### To the Security Council:

- ❑ **Actively support women’s full, equal and meaningful participation and refrain from supporting new peace processes that exclude women.** Include explicit language calling for the full, equal and meaningful participation of diverse women in all thematic, country- and region-specific outcome documents, mandates of peace operations, and in any public statements. Call for the removal of all barriers to participation, including logistical, technical, legal, accessibility-related and financial barriers; proactively ensure accessibility of peacemaking spaces and communications, and address threats and violence against women participating in peace and security processes. Emphasize at all relevant opportunities that participation in informal processes or advisory roles can complement, but is never a substitute for, structured, direct participation in formal processes.
- ❑ **Security Council members and Member States must hold the UN accountable for ensuring the direct participation of diverse women in peace and political processes within, and between, all formal and informal peace tracks.** This includes asking UN leadership to brief the Security Council on specific efforts and strategies to ensure meaningful participation, highlighting the extent to which processes are gender-sensitive, and holding UN leadership accountable when they fail to ensure inclusive and representative processes.

### To Member States:

- ❑ **Ensure that peace processes or negotiations they host or fund have diverse women’s full, equal and meaningful participation in decision-making roles, in formal and informal processes.** Member States supporting peace processes should ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and women’s civil society organizations by providing timely support and proactively funding their participation in peace processes, in line with [Resolution 2242 \(2015\)](#).<sup>7</sup>



### III. Human rights defenders, peacebuilders and civil society space

#### To the UN:

- ❑ **All relevant UN entities and experts, including senior officials, such as Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, Humanitarian Coordinators and Resident Coordinators, should issue statements of condemnation in response to violent rhetoric and crackdowns on civil society, including on women human rights defenders (WHRDs) and peacebuilders.**
- ❑ **The UN must, in the context of its conflict prevention and early warning efforts, and its human rights monitoring and reporting, monitor all attacks and threats of violence targeting WHRDs and peacebuilders. This should occur across the UN system, including by peace operations.** Attacks and violence should be taken as a sign of escalating instability or potential conflict. Monitoring efforts should include robust data collection that is intersectional, disaggregated and considers the identity of the HRD, as well as the issues and populations they work with. Information and analysis must be included in reports of the Secretary-General on country- and region-specific situations, and provide analysis of any attempts to restrict the activities of women civil society leaders and HRDs. As part of efforts to monitor these threats, UN system entities at the local level must consult with diverse women's civil society organizations and HRDs. In contexts where legal recognition and registration of organizations working on these issues is impossible, adopt alternative measures to ensure diverse inclusion including, but not limited to, consulting with organizations inside and outside of the country that have partnerships with organizations and individuals working in these areas.

#### To the Security Council:

- ❑ **Support the participation of civil society briefers, including peacebuilders and HRDs, at the Security Council.** Actively invite and support diverse women civil society briefers on all country situations, prioritizing invitations to briefers who have been independently selected by civil society organizations, networks and coalitions. Council members should provide political and financial support as required, including any assistance or diplomatic support to obtain visas in order to brief UN bodies such as the Security Council. With a view to coherence and inclusivity, consider more diverse and independent sources of information from women-led and women's rights groups, as part of their deliberative process, including civil society alternative reports submitted to other UN bodies, such as the Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Universal Periodic Review, as well as formal and informal civil society briefings.
- ❑ **Include provisions in the mandate of peace operations requiring the monitoring and reporting of attacks, threats and killings of HRDs, including WHRDs, and further require all peace operations to meaningfully consult with diverse women's civil society organizations** in all aspects of mandate implementation, including conflict prevention, protection of civilians, peacebuilding and electoral support, as called for in [Resolution 2122 \(2013\)](#) and outlined in DPO's [Gender Responsive United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Policy](#) and DPPA's [Women, Peace and Security Policy](#).
- ❑ **Prevent reprisals against civil society representatives, including peacebuilders and HRDs, for cooperating with UN bodies.** Recognition of the legitimacy and value of HRDs in promoting peace and security can be an important deterrent against attacks or reprisals against them, and can contribute to an enabling environment for them to continue to carry

out their work safely in the long-term. For this reason, public recognition of the legitimate role of HRDs, including women’s civil society, and condemnation of all attacks against them, including in the context of counter-terrorism efforts or for cooperating with UN bodies such as the Security Council, can be expressed in outcome documents and public statements. When reprisals occur for engaging with UN bodies, the agency, concerns and safety of the HRD, and the context in which they work, must be at the center of any response, which should be gender-sensitive and crafted in consultation with the defender at risk. Finally, it is critical that any avenues for civil society participation or contributions to the work of UN bodies remain dedicated and independent spaces for women civil society, and any efforts to mitigate or respond to reprisals must never compromise their participation. Any response by the Security Council or other UN bodies must comply with international standards, principles and recommendations made by relevant UN experts such as the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders.

- ❑ **Reinforce and support the recommendations of experts**, such as the Special Rapporteur on Counter-terrorism and the recent recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, in relevant discussions and outcomes on country- and region-specific situations, including by calling for governments to refrain from using counter-terrorism and national security policies to target and restrict HRDs, including WHRDs.

#### To Member States:

- ❑ **Ensure a safe and enabling environment for civil society** in which WHRDs are protected, supported and their legitimacy is recognized. Adopt and implement legislation that recognizes and protects the rights of WHRDs, peace activists and humanitarian personnel, such as freedom of expression, association, assembly and other civil liberties in law and practice. Eliminate all laws that restrict and criminalize the work that HRDs do, as well as the issues and populations with which they engage, including counter-terrorism and national security legislation, which is often used to unduly attack, restrict and otherwise criminalize the work of HRDs. Adopt and implement gender-sensitive protection measures to enable both the participation and safety of WHRDs.

#### Women, Peace and Security under COVID-19

**Defend civil society space:** Call on all Member States to [uphold international human rights and humanitarian law](#) and refrain from enacting indefinite or disproportionate emergency measures that limit or entirely curtail the right to movement, assembly and information, or impose undue restrictions on civic space or the work of civil society and HRDs, including women’s rights organizations, as part of pandemic response.

## IV. Promotion of human rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights

### To the UN:

- ❑ **Ensure accountability for violations of sexual and reproductive rights** by meeting clearly established obligations to provide non-discriminatory access to SRH services and care in all crisis situations and conflict and humanitarian settings.
- ❑ **UN system entities must include detailed information, sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data and analysis on efforts to address SRHR** in all reports of the Secretary-General on country- and region-specific situations, as well as thematic issues.

### Women, Peace and Security under COVID-19

**Maintain essential health services:** Urge Member States and the UN system to maintain and prioritize non-discriminatory and comprehensive access to essential health services, including SRH in line with the Minimum Initial Services Package in accordance with [international humanitarian and human rights law](#), as well as psychosocial support and other mental health services.

- ❑ **UN senior officials must speak out publicly and regularly to ensure that there is no ambiguity regarding the obligation of states to guarantee, as a matter of right, access to the full range of SRH services without discrimination, in conflict-affected and humanitarian settings.** All senior UN leaders must reinforce the importance of the full range of women's human rights, including sexual and reproductive rights, in all public statements and as a priority in their decision-making and public messaging.

### To the Security Council:

- ❑ **Defend SRHR in both thematic and country-specific discussions and any outcome documents.** Reinforce previously agreed language on SRHR and ensure full implementation of all WPS resolutions. Outcomes that undermine, damage or fail to advance the core tenets of the WPS agenda, or endorse anything less than full implementation, are unacceptable.
- ❑ **Reinforce that a holistic survivor-centered approach to addressing, responding to and preventing GBV must be rights-based and designed with reciprocal communication in partnership with affected populations.** The Security Council should call for all governments to uphold their obligations to recognize that GBV services, including SRH services, are essential services and must be accessible in a safe and user-friendly way, including by allocating budgets and support for staff. The Security Council should reinforce this understanding in all relevant outcome documents adopted on country- and region-specific situations.
- ❑ **Reinforce recommendations articulated by independent experts and expert groups in country- and region-specific discussions and outcomes, including those resulting from human rights treaty bodies and special procedures.**

### Women, Peace and Security under COVID-19

**Prevent and respond to GBV:** Take necessary measures to prevent, address, and document all forms of GBV, particularly intimate partner violence and other forms of domestic violence, recognizing that violence against women, girls and other marginalized groups will increase due to the need for voluntary quarantines, social distancing, curfews and closure of non-essential services. Member States and donors must strengthen and fill gaps in the provision of local GBV survivor-centered referral systems and services.

## V. Ensure system-wide accountability across the UN for implementation of the WPS agenda

### To the UN:

- ❑ **Hold UN senior leadership accountable for WPS implementation.** As advised by the [independent assessment](#), the Secretary-General should commit to updating and making publicly available the compacts for senior leadership — all Special Envoys, Special Representatives to the Secretary-General, Resident Coordinators, Humanitarian Coordinators, Senior Advisers and other senior managers throughout the UN system — to reflect WPS as a key priority. Special Envoys should be requested to regularly report on their efforts to explore all available avenues to support the direct participation of diverse women in peace processes. In addition, Special Envoys should also publicly report on the gender composition of all negotiating parties.
- ❑ **Prioritize, resource and politically support recruitment of gender advisers.**<sup>8</sup> Prioritize and fund systematic recruitment and appointment of senior women's protection advisers and gender advisers, and ensure they are located in the offices of all Special Representatives, Special Envoys and strategic assessment or review teams. Publicly report on deployment in order to ensure greater transparency on which posts are filled and which remain vacant.
- ❑ **Fund gender equality and the WPS agenda.** Meet the target of 15% of funds being earmarked for programs that further gender equality and women's empowerment in peacebuilding contexts by 2020, and increase the target to 30% after 2020 with a view to further increasing it in the future.

### To the Security Council:

- ❑ **Ensure all peace operations have robust, holistic and comprehensive mandates to address WPS.** Include provisions in all peace operations mission mandates that call for gender to be a cross-cutting issue, in addition to specific language with regard to the need for effective protection and full, equal and meaningful participation of women and girls within each mandate component. Additionally, the Security Council should explicitly require the integration of WPS as a cross-cutting issue in all reports of the Secretary-General on country-specific and regional situations, as well as thematic issues; this analysis should be accompanied by sex-, disability- and age-disaggregated data. Further, all peace operations must be mandated to consult regularly with diverse women's groups as part of implementing their WPS mandate.

<sup>1</sup> UN, *Directive of the Secretary-General on Planning*, 2019.

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(2019.35), 2019. <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/DPO-DPPA-SRSG-SVC-OHCHR-Policy-on-Field-Missions-Preventing-and-Responding-to-CRSV-2020.pdf>

UN Security Council, *Letter dated 28 October 2019 from the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2019/845)*, 2019. <https://undocs.org/S/2019/845>

<sup>2</sup> Saferworld, WILPF & Oxfam, *Building inclusive peace: Gender at the Heart of Conflict Analysis*, 2017. <https://wilpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/BuildingInclusivePeace-GenderHeartConflictAnalysis.pdf>

Cordaid, *Delivering SRHR Services in Fragile Contexts*, 2017. [https://www.cordaid.org/en/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2018/01/Cordaid\\_Healthcare\\_-SRHR-programs\\_EN\\_June-2017\\_LR.pdf](https://www.cordaid.org/en/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2018/01/Cordaid_Healthcare_-SRHR-programs_EN_June-2017_LR.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> *Joint Statement: 22 NGOs Call for Action to Strengthen the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, 2019.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/joint-statement-22-ngos-call-action-strengthen-protection-civilians-armed-conflict>

<sup>4</sup> Gerome, *Preventing Gender-Based Violence through Arms Control*, 2016.

<sup>5</sup> *Joint Statement: 22 NGOs Call for Action to Strengthen the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Resolution 1325 (2000), OP 2; Resolution 1820 (2008), OP 12; Resolution 1889 (2009), OP 1; Resolution 2106 (2013), OP 5; Resolution 2122 (2013), OPs 1, 7; Resolution 2242 (2015), OP 1; Resolution 2467 (2019), OP 20; Resolution 2493 (2019), OPs 2, 3, 9(a); CEDAW, Arts. 7-8.

<sup>7</sup> Resolution 2242 (2015), OP 1.

<sup>8</sup> See [independent assessment](#).