

Women, Peace and Security

February 2025

For February, in which China is president of the UN Security Council, the MAP provides recommendations on the situations in **Sudan**, **Syria** and **Ukraine**.

Sudan

Sudan's civil war has had a devastating impact on civilians, particularly women and girls. UN and international experts have documented widespread violations of international law by all warring parties, some of which could amount to [war crimes](#), [crimes against humanity](#) and acts of [genocide](#). Sudan is the world's [largest](#) displacement crisis; further, [ongoing conflict and humanitarian access restrictions](#) have also created the world's largest [hunger crisis](#), escalating rapidly with [famine conditions](#) in Darfur and the Western Nuba Mountains, and approximately [half the population](#) facing acute food insecurity. These conditions [exacerbate pre-existing gender inequalities](#), with women eating last and least and often compelled to adopt harmful coping strategies that [increase protection risks](#) and the [risk of sexual and gender-based violence](#) (SGBV).

[Widespread SGBV](#) enabled by the proliferation of arms has been a hallmark of the conflict, particularly [conflict-related sexual violence](#) (CRSV) including [kidnapping](#), rape, [sexual slavery](#) and sexual exploitation. Women and girls from non-Arab tribes have been targeted [based on their ethnicity](#), which could constitute [an act of genocide](#). [Women activists](#), peacebuilders and [human rights defenders](#) (HRDs), including those documenting rights violations, have been [targeted and intimidated](#) for their work. With the near [collapse of health infrastructure](#) and continued [attacks on providers](#) and [medical facilities](#), survivors have [limited access to health care](#), including [sexual and reproductive health](#) (SRH) care and psychosocial support. Rates of maternal and newborn death have also [risen dramatically](#). [Emergency response rooms](#) and local organizations, including [women-led organizations](#), play a pivotal role in delivering assistance to those unreachable by international actors and must be included in humanitarian coordination mechanisms and decision-making fora.

The Security Council should:

- Demand all parties fully comply with [Resolution 2736](#) (2024), including by:
 - Immediately halting the [siege of El Fasher](#), seeking an [immediate cessation of hostilities](#) and complying with their obligations under international law by stopping attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, including ending all acts of SGBV and ensuring accountability for such violations and services for survivors;
 - Calling on [external actors](#) to refrain from interfering in the conflict, including by [supplying arms](#) to the warring parties in violation of the [arms embargo](#);
 - Demanding that all actors, including the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy on Sudan, the African Union and the League of Arab States, ensure the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of diverse women in all efforts to build peace;
 - Ensuring rapid, safe, unhindered and sustained humanitarian access into and throughout Sudan and the protection of humanitarian personnel, including local and national women-led organizations.
- Urgently identify options for civilian protection, including but not limited to [options elaborated by the Secretary-General](#).
- Call on Member States to urgently fund gender-responsive multi-sectoral response, including the [humanitarian](#) and [refugee](#) response plans, and support neighboring countries and host communities.
- [Expand the jurisdiction](#) of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to cover the entire territory of Sudan. Strengthen the [existing sanctions regime](#) to include SGBV as a stand-alone designation criterion.
- Provide increased, flexible, sustainable and direct funding to diverse local civil society and humanitarian organizations, including women-led and LGBTIQ-led organizations. Ensure that disaggregated data, intersectional gender analysis and SGBV risk mitigation assessment inform all aspects of the crisis response.
- Strengthen the UN Country Team's capacity to monitor, document and report on human rights violations, including reprisals against women HRDs, including by establishing [Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements](#) on CRSV.

Syria

The fall of the Assad regime in December 2024, ending over 50 years of dictatorship, was a historic moment for Syria; however, many challenges remain to ensure peace, stability and respect for human rights. The Assad regime was responsible for [war crimes and crimes against humanity](#) including [SGBV](#), arbitrary arrest and detention and [torture](#). Enforced disappearance, primarily perpetrated by the Assad regime, was also a pervasive feature of the conflict, with [wide-ranging gendered impacts](#) on victims and [their families](#). [Women relatives of disappeared persons](#) have been at the forefront of activism to seek answers about the fate of missing persons in Syria, at great risk to their own safety.

Non-state armed groups have also committed international law violations, including violations of women's human rights such as [movement restrictions](#) and [repression of women HRDs and women's civil society](#). All of these violations occurred within a wider context of [entrenched social and legal discrimination](#) against women and girls in Syria.

After nearly 14 years of war, Syria faces a [significant humanitarian crisis](#). While many Syrians are [cautiously optimistic](#) about the future, obstacles remain to the [safe, voluntary and dignified return](#) of refugees and IDPs, including continued hostilities across Syria, destroyed infrastructure, lack of access to basic services, economic decline, lack of livelihood opportunities and [continued food insecurity](#). Women-led and women's rights organizations are instrumental in the humanitarian response, but they continue to face chronic underfunding and [operating restrictions](#).

The Security Council should:

- Call on all parties to immediately cease hostilities, protect civilians and ensure full, safe and unhindered humanitarian access into and throughout Syria, including freedom of movement for women aid workers.
- Prioritize and ensure the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of diverse women in a [Syrian-owned and Syrian-led](#) political transition, and demand respect by all parties for the human rights of diverse women and girls. The Security Council, UN and Member States must not endorse, facilitate, participate in or otherwise support any process where women are excluded or their rights undermined.
- Call on Member States to fully fund the [humanitarian response](#) and provide direct, flexible and consistent funding to local women-led organizations.
- Call on transitional authorities to urgently [secure and preserve](#) evidence of atrocities, and to [cooperate with and facilitate access](#) for accountability mechanisms such as the [International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism](#), [UN Commission of Inquiry](#) and the [Independent Institution on Missing Persons](#). Ensure that all justice and accountability efforts are human rights-based, non-discriminatory, gender-sensitive, designed and implemented in partnership with survivors and adequately account for sexual and gender-based crimes.
- Refer the situation in Syria to the ICC and encourage the transitional authorities to ratify the Rome Statute and align Syria's national legislation with international law.
- Call on Member States to [maintain temporary protection or refugee status](#) for Syrian refugees and [refrain from deportations or refoulement](#).

Ukraine

Three years on, the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine continues to have unique impacts on diverse women and girls. Women in Ukraine have assumed leadership positions in all areas of public life, including as [humanitarian workers](#) and elected officials, and they are active in peacebuilding, mediation and human rights monitoring. However, women-led and women's rights organizations [remain underfunded](#) and women's political representation [falls short](#) of [established quotas](#). Rates of [gender-based violence](#), including intimate partner violence, have risen, particularly involving [men returning from combat](#), which many women are [reluctant to report](#). Women refugees are also at heightened risk of sexual exploitation and trafficking. Women face [increased unpaid care obligations](#) and lack of access to services, livelihoods and adequate shelter. [Attacks on healthcare facilities and providers](#) have [hindered access](#) to SRH care, especially in rural areas. UN and international investigations have also [documented](#) CRSV perpetrated by Russian forces against both women and men, including [as a form of torture in detention settings](#).

The Security Council should:

- Demand an immediate cessation of hostilities, including immediately stopping all attacks on civilians, [civilian infrastructure](#) and humanitarian actors and ending the use of banned weapons such as [cluster munitions](#) and [landmines](#). Urgently prioritize diplomatic efforts to negotiate peace, and support measures to promote the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation and leadership of diverse women at all levels and stages.
- Demand compliance with the [provisional measures](#) ordered by the International Court of Justice; and urge that investigations of all violations [since 2014](#), including alleged [war crimes](#) and [crimes against humanity](#), fully address the gendered and intersectional elements of crimes.
- Demand that all parties respect their obligation under international humanitarian law to protect humanitarian personnel, infrastructure and relief items and ensure their safe and unhindered access in all conflict-affected areas, especially in territories occupied by the Russian Federation.
- Call for the protection and promotion of civic space and condemn all threats and reprisals against [civil society](#), journalists, peacebuilders and [HRDs](#), including diverse women and LGBTIQ people, in both Ukraine and [Russia](#).
- Ensure that intersectional data and analysis inform all facets of the humanitarian response so that individuals fleeing violence do not face additional gender-specific risks such as sexual exploitation, abuse or trafficking. Provide increased, flexible and direct medium- and long-term funding to diverse local women-led and women's rights organizations.
- Promote and protect the rights of all individuals fleeing violence; respect the right to [conscientious objection](#); and ensure: equal application of temporary protection for all people wishing to cross a border; provision of opportunities for livelihoods for displaced people that include social support such as childcare; and access to comprehensive SRH care and mental health and psychosocial support.