

Women, Peace and Security

February 2023

Sudan

For February, in which **Malta** has the presidency of the UN Security Council, the MAP provides recommendations on the situations in **Sudan, Ukraine, and Yemen**.

Despite recent political developments, namely the [5 December 2022](#) signing of a framework agreement and subsequent [launch](#) of the [final phase](#) of the political process, the situation in Sudan remains [unstable](#) due to ongoing [political and economic crises](#), climate-related disasters, and [intercommunal violence](#). Since November 2022, these factors have displaced [16,200](#) in South Darfur and [32,800](#) in West Kordofan and Central Darfur, and resulted in the destruction of [basic infrastructure](#) in [16 out of 18](#) states. Gender-based violence, grounded in [pre-existing](#) inequality and marginalization, is prevalent against diverse women and [girls](#), with [displacement](#), [age](#), disability, and participation in public life compounding the risk of experiencing violence, while access to services, including sexual and reproductive care is often limited or non-existent. Since the military coup in 2021, [women](#) involved in ongoing [protests](#) as leaders, organizers, and [activists](#), have been met with gender-specific [violence](#) by security forces, including assault and [rape](#). Women human rights defenders, peacebuilders, and women's civil society groups, particularly those [documenting](#) GBV carried out by armed groups, have been [targeted](#) by security forces in attempts to [intimidate](#), including through interrogation and surveillance. In the context of discussions within the Security Council, there should be unequivocal support expressed for the protection and promotion of diverse women's human rights, in line with existing international human rights obligations, and condemnation of all forms of gender-based violence. Council members should explicitly call for cessation of all efforts to intimidate and prevent women human rights defenders, peacebuilders, and women's civil society groups from continuing their work, and call for accountability, through gender-sensitive transitional justice processes, for all violations committed over the last year. All briefers and speakers in any forthcoming meetings should explicitly call for women's full, equal, meaningful, and safe participation and leadership at all levels and stages of the peace and political process, including in formal positions with influence. Further, Council members should articulate their support, including through the provision of resources in their national capacity, for a [diverse civil society](#), including women's groups and networks, and recognize that without ensuring civil society organizations have the capacity and resources to contribute to the peace and political process, the process will not be inclusive and in all probability will maintain the status quo.

Ukraine

As the one-year anniversary of the war in Ukraine approaches, the impact of the crisis continues to grow in both scale and severity. Women are at the forefront of the emergency response to the situation, including as humanitarian workers and elected officials, as well as active in peacebuilding, mediation, and monitoring the human rights situation. Their work is carried out against a backdrop of increasing [gender-based violence](#) of all forms, including [sexual violence](#), [domestic violence](#), and trafficking, resulting from the [multiple and intersecting impacts](#) of the conflict, including lack of access to services, livelihoods, increased caregiving obligations, and lack of access to adequate shelter. Over the past year, the Security Council's discussion has been devoid of any reference to the critical role women have in current and future negotiation, mediation, or other peace process; across 46 separate meetings, fewer than 1% of all references to women in Ukraine made by Council members acknowledged women's role in peace, political or humanitarian efforts. There were no references to the importance of women human rights defenders and peacebuilders in Ukraine, nor any attention given to the risk to their safety and security, despite considerable attention to the issue in the context of thematic discussions on women, peace and security over the course of the year. In its discussions on the situation in Ukraine, the Security Council should:

- Demand an immediate cessation of hostilities; end to civilian harm caused by the use of banned weapons such as cluster munitions and explosive weapons in populated areas, hitting hospitals, homes, schools, and other civilian infrastructure; respect for international humanitarian and human rights law; and all investigations of violations, including alleged [war crimes](#) and crimes against humanity, fully encompass and address the gendered and intersectional elements of these crimes.

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- Urgently pursue a diplomatic way to peace negotiations and facilitate such a path and support measures to promote the inclusive and meaningful participation and leadership of women from diverse communities at all levels of peace and political processes and humanitarian response, including in-country coordination mechanisms, and further liaise, partner, and consult with diverse women leaders, women's rights and peacebuilding groups, persons with disabilities, [LGBTIQ+ people](#), stateless people, non-Ukrainians, and members of the Roma community and other minority groups.
- Promote and protect civil society space and ensure a safe and enabling environment for civil society, journalists, peacebuilders and all human rights defenders, including diverse women and LGBTIQ+ people, in both [Ukraine](#) and [Russia](#), in order to fulfill obligations under international human rights law, and actively push back against disinformation, stigmatization, [reprisals](#), and persecution of civil society actors engaged in criticizing warring parties, providing and disseminating information, defending human rights, providing basic services, promoting dialogue, and peacebuilding.
- Emphasize the importance of addressing the conditions and factors that heighten the risk of all forms of [GBV](#) by ensuring all aspects of the response are inclusive, non-discriminatory, and transparent, and further ensure that sex, age, gender, nationality, and [disability-sensitive](#) data and intersectional gender-sensitive analysis informs all facets of the humanitarian response, including at border crossings and reception centers, to ensure that individuals fleeing violence do not face additional gender-specific risks, such as sexual exploitation and abuse and trafficking, and accelerate efforts to support local organizations including diverse women's rights, humanitarian, peacebuilding and LGBTIQ+ groups, in their efforts to provide necessary, frontline support to [displaced populations](#).
- Reinforce that the rights of all individuals fleeing violence must be upheld, including 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 child care, and access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, including maternal, newborn and child health and GBV response services, and early medical abortion for displaced populations, safe abortion and post-abortion care, and a range of contraceptive options including emergency contraceptive and long-acting methods for displaced populations, and mental health and psychosocial support for adults and children.

Yemen

During any forthcoming discussions of the situation in Yemen, members of the Security Council should articulate their unwavering support for inclusive Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned political process with the full, equal and meaningful participation of [diverse women](#), youth and civil society of all political backgrounds from all regions of Yemen, including in the truce and ceasefire negotiations, as well as broader political and peace processes. Relatedly, Council members should demand that all UN-supported peace committees include women, including the Prisoners' Exchange, the Taiz, and the Security and Military Committees, as well as in any committees formed in the future. Further, Council members should demand all parties to conflict, and their allies, uphold international humanitarian, human rights, and refugee law, and emphasize that women's human rights should be non-negotiable in any peace and political process. Ongoing human rights violations [targeting](#) marginalized communities, including diverse women, persons with [disabilities](#), [displaced](#) persons, [migrants](#) and ethnic and religious minorities continue to be documented. In particular, [women and girls](#) face [restrictions](#) on their [freedom of movement](#) resulting from the requirement that women are accompanied by a mahram (male guardian), lack of [access](#) to basic services, including [sexual and reproductive health services](#), and [threats](#) and risks, including arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, hate speech, and even targeted killings, particularly for women peacebuilders, human rights defenders, political leaders, activists, artists, and journalists. Further, Council members should reinforce the unacceptability of the increase in [online violence](#) targeting women, which is threatening their [safety](#) and security and preventing their participation in public life.