

Women, Peace and Security

January 2019

Democratic Republic of the Congo

For January, in which the Dominican Republic has the presidency of the UN Security Council, the MAP provides recommendations on the **Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, South Sudan, Sudan (Darfur), and Yemen.**

In light of the forthcoming discussion of the December 2018 elections and the broader political **situation** in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Council must closely follow the ongoing electoral process and push all parties toward a transparent, credible, and peaceful transition of power in the post-electoral period. The final weeks leading up to the election were marked by violence, voter suppression, and violations of candidates' rights to campaign freely. Incidents involving security forces and provincial authorities, including police shooting live bullets at supporters of the opposition, resulted in repressing the campaigns of two of the main opposition candidates and at least five deaths and multiple injuries to supporters. Other incidents involving clashes between supporters and security forces have threatened to revive inter-community violence, such as was recorded in the Kasai province on 16 December 2018. Armed groups also perpetrated election-related violence across the country. Further, more than one million Congolese were unable to vote due to postponement of voting until March 2019 in Beni, Butembo, and Yumbi. A high level of distrust in political parties and state institutions as well as the current election process has been exacerbated in the last two years by vote slippage and delays in reporting the results. This has led to increased activity by armed groups, demonstrations and violent repression. The DRC government must guarantee the safety of all candidates, including the opposition, their supporters and the wider population. The Council must call on all parties to refrain from hate speech and inciting violence and to ensure credible and fair elections.

Libya

In its discussion of the latest **report** of the Secretary-General on the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), there should be discussion on the extent to which women, peace and security (WPS) is mainstreamed across the work of the mission, including in implementation of its Action Plan for Libya. The Council should acknowledge that while the latter has helped revive the political process, re-establish the UN in Tripoli and hold elections in Zawiya, it has failed to ensure gender parity in its consultative phase. In fact, less than 25% of participants were women; women's participation is also low in high-level meetings and decision-making concerning Libya at both national and international levels. The forthcoming National Conference and elections must provide women with equal opportunity to substantively engage in and influence all phases of these processes, from consultation and implementation to monitoring, evaluation and reporting. UNSMIL should provide an update on activities it has undertaken to address displacement and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) as well as its efforts to support women's participation in reconciliation efforts, the security sector and in national institutions.

South Sudan

The Security Council should ensure that gender is mainstreamed across all discussions of the **situation** in South Sudan. As implementation of the IGAD-facilitated Revitalized Peace Agreement proceeds, the increased role of women in all aspects of the process must be addressed with greater urgency. The Council must call on parties to engage with civil society organizations and commit to meeting the 35% quota for women's representation in the pre-transition committee as well as all other implementation mechanisms during the formation of the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity. Thus far, only one committee has met or exceeded the quota:

- 43% of the participants on the Ceasefire Transitional Security Arrangement Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (CTSAMVM) are women.
- 10% of the participants on the National Pre-Transitional Committee (NPTC) are women.
- 13% of the participants on the National Constitutional Amendment Committee (NCAC) are women.
- 17% of the participants on the Strategic Defense and Security Review Board (SDSSRB) are women.
- 0% of the participants on the Joint Transitional Security Committee (JTSC) are women.
- 0% of the participants on the Joint Defense Board (JDB) are women.

SGBV continues to be a key concern in South Sudan; a way in which the Government should address SGBV is by implementing the signed joint communique on the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence.

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Further, there must be improved protection and security measures for women and girls, both within and outside of protection of civilian (PoC) sites. In PoC sites, women's access to resources and food security is inexorably linked with their physical security. The mission should therefore take effective steps to prevent violence and reduce protection risks for women, particularly through livelihoods patrols, protective accompaniment, sensitization campaigns and establishment of safe areas. The Council should acknowledge that deteriorating food insecurity across the country and the lack of water and sanitation resources are further exacerbating the humanitarian crisis.

Sudan - Darfur

The Security Council will be considering the forthcoming **report** and **update** on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID); the report should reflect the extent to which WPS provisions of UNAMID's mandate have been implemented in the context of the two-pronged approach mission concept as well as a whole-of-system approach to Darfur (S/2018/530). UNAMID has been crucial in providing protection for civilians and security for humanitarian workers and ensuring the free flow of and access to humanitarian aid. Despite improvements in the security situation since 2017, the root causes of the conflict remain unaddressed and withdrawal of the UN presence without ensuring a robust process that includes independent monitoring and clear benchmarks will result in a reversal of any gains in peace. Senior UN officials should provide detailed information on efforts to meet any WPS-related benchmarks, particularly those that are time bound, including the cessation of SGBV, efforts to strengthen rule of law in prosecuting SGBV crimes, and establishment of an office to effectively monitor protection and promotion of human rights at the national level.

Yemen

As the Council discusses the **situation** in Yemen, including implementation of resolution 2451 (2018) and forthcoming peace talks in early 2019, women's participation in all aspects of the process should continue to be emphasized. There was only one woman included in the formal peace talks that took place in Sweden in December 2018; future peace talks must include more women as full and active participants. All parties to the conflict continue to impose restrictions that prevent delivery of humanitarian assistance and deny the UN and other humanitarian actors' access to civilians in Hodeida. The Council must continue to pressure all parties to comply with their obligation to allow and facilitate impartial, rapid and unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance to civilians in need under international humanitarian law. Any humanitarian assistance in the region must be gender-sensitive, respond to women and girls' differentiated experiences and be developed in partnership with local civil society organizations. Such assistance should include a full range of medical services, including psychosocial and sexual and reproductive health services, as well as access to legal assistance, education and employment, before, during, and after armed conflict (S/RES/2122 (2013), CEDAW/C/YEM/Q/7-8). The Council and UN offices in Yemen must support civil society efforts to establish emergency plans and humanitarian operation room teams, including hotlines for civilians to report violence or request humanitarian assistance, and ensure their protection. Moreover, the Council should ensure participation of civil society organizations (CSOs), women leaders, women's groups, and youth representatives that reflect the ethnic, geographic, and political diversity of Yemen's population in all conflict resolution and conflict management processes. Further, Council members should ask senior UN officials to provide updates regarding efforts to protect women human rights defenders and civil society activists and their access to legal support and essential services. Council members should call for an international commission of inquiry as well as continued support of the national human rights monitoring and reporting mechanism to ensure that information and analysis are comprehensive and include documentation of attacks and threats against civil society. Further, national human rights organizations must be allowed to monitor and report on the human rights situation freely. All stakeholders, including the Arab coalition, must ensure women's meaningful participation in discussion, design and implementation of peace and security strategies, including those that aim to counter violent extremism (S/RES/2122 (2013), OP 13; S/RES/2242 (2015), OP 13; CEDAW/C/YEM/Q/7-8). Finally, for this to be done effectively, capacity building for relevant experts, including peacebuilding and women's CSOs, to undertake gender-sensitive conflict analysis and translate it into concrete actions, must be a priority.