

Women, Peace and Security

January 2023

Colombia

For January, in which Japan has the presidency of the UN Security Council, the MAP provides recommendations on the situations in Colombia, Haiti, and Iraq.

As the Security Council discusses the situation in Colombia, it's important to acknowledge the positive developments, notably the [historic](#) number of women elected to the legislature and increased representation of women in the executive branch, including the [cabinet](#), while also continuing to focus on the insecurity that exists for a large portion of the population. Civilians in many areas of Colombia, particularly [rural](#) areas are experiencing increasing levels of violence at the hands of armed actors, including [killings](#), abductions, [disappearances](#), [sexual violence](#), and displacement, particularly within Afro-descendant and [Indigenous](#) communities with profound impacts on women human rights defenders, signaling an urgent need to [prioritize civilian protection](#) in state responses to violence and shift away from strategies, including those involving increased presence of security forces, that perpetuate and exacerbate the harm that has been experienced by rural communities for decades. In line with the [Report of the Truth Commission](#), the Security Council should call for cessation of the [use of violence](#), often targeting [Afro-descendant](#), Indigenous, and LGBTIQ+ individuals, including [excessive force](#), killings, beatings, [sexual and gender-based violence](#), and arbitrary detention, by members of the Colombian police and military forces against protestors, [human rights defenders](#), and bystanders, including those who advocate in opposition to certain [corporate](#) activity especially the large-scale exploitation of natural resources. The Council should reiterate the need for a negotiated solution to conflicts with all the various illegal armed actors, in line with the intentions of "total peace" discussions and ensure that gender and women's rights are central to any conversations, including in any dialogue with the ELN. Further, the Council should underline the importance of ensuring "total peace" discussions are participatory and inclusive of civil society, particularly with women in all their diversity, youth, LGBTIQ+, Afro-descendant, Indigenous, and rural authorities and communities. Further, Council members should call for any briefings and updates by senior UN leaders to integrate gender-sensitive conflict analysis and data disaggregated by gender, sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity, and disability, including in the context of information related to violence against former combatants, social leaders, and Indigenous, Afro-descendant, rural and LGBTIQ+ communities, who receive additional threats of gender-based violence, including domestic violence ([CARE Intl.](#), [HRW](#), [Amnesty Intl.](#), [Amnesty Intl.](#)).

Haiti

In the context of discussions on the situation in Haiti, Council members must ensure there is a focus on the violations of human rights, including women's rights, in the context of state violence perpetrated against [protestors](#) as well as alleged state involvement in attacks against civilians allegedly perpetrated by gangs ([BINUH](#), [Miami Herald](#)). Briefings by senior UN officials and statements delivered by Council members should focus on BINUH's implementation of the full scope of its WPS mandate and include details on ways that the mission is addressing gender-based violence and SEA by UN peacekeepers and personnel. Survivors of gender-based violence, including women, girls and gender-nonconforming people, continue to face barriers to justice, exacerbated by political instability and the national lockdown, resulting from weak legal protections and limited institutional support structures and services

([Pass Blue](#), [OutRight Action Intl.](#), [Miami Herald](#)). Importantly, the penal code reforms, which include better legal protection against gender-based violence by criminalizing marital rape, sexual harassment, and hate crimes based on sexual orientation, represent long overdue improvements in addressing gender-based violence. However, the process through which the reforms were implemented was opaque and has been referred to as unconstitutional; thus, it remains a challenge to ensure that gender-based violence prevention and protection is integrated into a procedurally clear and accepted law before and after the reforms come into effect in two years.

Iraq

In its forthcoming discussion on the situation in Iraq, gender-sensitive analysis of the political, economic, and security situation should be integrated throughout any briefing, including in any updates on the humanitarian situation and climate crisis. Unfortunately, past briefings to the Security Council have been devoid of gender-sensitive analysis and included minimal updates on women, peace and security overall, preventing the Council from getting a comprehensive picture of the current situation. Political violence continues to increase, placing diverse women activists, peacebuilders and human rights defenders at risk of [targeted violence](#) due to their leadership and participation in public processes. This increase can be directly linked to impunity for past crimes committed before 2019 and the failure of the justice system to ensure accountability. Violence targeting women, including from the LGBTIQ+ community and minority groups, in public life is part of a continuum of violence women experience throughout their lives, necessitating robust legal frameworks criminalizing all forms of gender-based violence, addressing widespread [impunity](#) through gender-responsive justice institutions, and ensuring access to multi-sectoral, survivor-centered services. In this context, Council members should emphasize the importance of strengthening protection mechanisms for diverse women by leveraging the momentum surrounding the adoption of the Yezidi Female Survivor Law to enact the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence with a provision that ensures civil society engagement and legally recognizes civil society-run safe homes ([UNFPA](#), [HRW](#), [UNFPA](#), [OHCHR](#), [UNICEF](#), [UN Women](#), [CEDAW](#), [MADRE](#)). Further, [diverse women and girls](#) must be actively involved in implementing any legislation, including gender-based violence prevention and response. The Council should call on the Government to ensure its response to the COVID-19 pandemic is gender-responsive, grounded in [gender-sensitive analysis](#), and inclusive of diverse women's perspectives.

There should be a strong emphasis in any briefing on the importance of ensuring women's inclusion and meaningful participation and leadership in all peace, security, political, and electoral processes, including in the digital space, and details regarding UNAMI's successes and challenges, with analysis regarding particular barriers facing women in public life. Finally, it is imperative that there is an update on UNAMI's support for the forthcoming second National Action Plan (NAP) on [Resolution 1325 \(2000\)](#), including ensuring [necessary financial resources](#) for implementation and the establishment of accountability mechanisms to track and measure progress and impact, including through the creation of required government [structures to ensure oversight](#).