

# Women, Peace and Security

## June 2025

### Afghanistan

Afghanistan remains the most serious women's rights crisis in the world as the Taliban impose escalating [policies](#) of [gender-based discrimination](#) intended to [erase](#) women and girls from [public life](#). The Taliban's [intensifying enforcement](#) of bans on women working for NGOs and the UN [increasingly hinders](#) humanitarian aid delivery, especially to women and girls. [Cuts](#) to humanitarian funding also threaten women and girls' access to healthcare, including [sexual and reproductive health](#) (SRH) services. Women and girls are also unsafe at home, as the Taliban have [dismantled all systems to respond to gender-based violence](#) (GBV) and have [compelled](#) men to [police the conduct of their female relatives](#). The Taliban continue to target and [arbitrarily detain](#) women [activists](#), [journalists](#), [human rights defenders](#) (WHRDs) and [protestors](#), as well as women and girls accused of [violating](#) the Taliban's [morality laws](#), including its [dress code](#); they face serious [abuses in custody](#) including torture and [sexual violence](#). Women and girls from minority [ethnic](#) and [religious](#) groups; [lesbian, bisexual and queer \(LBQ\) women](#); older women; women who are heads of households; and women and girls with [disabilities](#) also face intersecting forms of discrimination. These widespread, systematic and grave violations of the rights of women, girls and [LGBTIQ](#) people [may amount to gender persecution](#), a crime against humanity. [Afghan women](#) and [international experts](#) also increasingly [describe](#) the situation as [gender apartheid](#) and have [called](#) for [codification](#) of gender apartheid as a crime against humanity. Meanwhile, Afghan refugees face [deportation](#) and the [termination of protection](#) by member states, despite ongoing persecution and discrimination targeting Afghan women.

For June, in which Guyana is president of the UN Security Council, the MAP provides recommendations on the situations in **Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Israel/Palestine**.

The UN-led "Doha process," an outcome of the independent assessment requested by [Resolution 2679](#) (2023) to facilitate structured engagement between the international community and the Taliban, has thus far [failed](#) to prioritize women's rights or meaningfully include Afghan women, despite the Council's explicit request in [Resolution 2721](#) (2023) to ensure the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of Afghan women throughout the process, and for Afghanistan to meet its [international obligations](#). Afghan WHRDs and civil society continue to [express serious concerns](#) that current UN efforts to develop a "roadmap" for such engagement, including through the "[Mosaic Process](#)," risk continued exclusion of Afghan women, deprioritization of their rights and further normalization of the Taliban's abuses.

The Security Council should:

- Demand that the Taliban immediately reverse all policies and practices that prevent the full enjoyment of all women's human rights in accordance with Afghanistan's international obligations, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and [relevant Security Council resolutions](#).
- As per Resolutions [2593](#) (2021), [2679](#) (2023), [2681](#) (2023), [2721](#) (2023), and all resolutions on women, peace and security, demand the protection of women's rights and the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of diverse Afghan women and LGBTIQ people, especially WHRDs, peacebuilders and victims of gender-based crimes, in all international discussions and outcomes about Afghanistan's future, including all aspects of the "[Doha Process](#)."
- Support all efforts to seek accountability for all international crimes, including gender-based crimes, such as a [case against Afghanistan for violations of CEDAW](#) at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the [creation of a UN accountability mechanism](#) to document and preserve evidence of international crimes committed in Afghanistan.
- Call on the Taliban to ensure that all UN entities can fully discharge their mandates without hindrance.
- Urge donors to fully fund the [humanitarian response](#) and allocate increased flexible and direct funding to Afghan women-led civil society and humanitarian organizations. Urge all actors to ensure safe, gender-responsive and non-discriminatory humanitarian delivery, with women's full and equal participation and leadership.
- Call on the Taliban to immediately stop targeting human rights defenders (HRDs), peacebuilders and [journalists](#), and release all who have been arbitrarily arrested and detained.
- Urge all Member States to refrain from [forcibly returning](#) refugees and asylum seekers to Afghanistan and to create and expand pathways to safe resettlement for Afghans who are experiencing persecution in Afghanistan, including WHRDs.

### Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

Violence since January 2025 in eastern DRC, including the M23's takeover of Goma and Bukavu and [dismantling of IDP camps](#), has displaced [over a million people](#) and exacerbated an [already severe](#) humanitarian crisis. Humanitarian providers have been forced to scale back or [suspend operations](#) amid [targeting of humanitarian actors](#) and [supply routes](#), and [severe funding cuts](#). Ongoing conflict, [displacement](#) and suspension of basic services threaten to [exacerbate food insecurity](#), [increase maternal mortality](#) and multiply the [risk of infectious diseases](#). Disruption of protection networks and [proliferation of weapons](#) have greatly compounded the [already acute risks](#) of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) for women and girls, including [widespread and systematic conflict-related sexual violence](#) (CRSV), with displaced women and girls particularly at risk. Services for [survivors](#), including [SRH care](#), are further restricted by damage to health infrastructure, supply chain disruptions, [attacks on providers](#) and [looting of supplies](#). [HRDs](#), [journalists](#), activists and members of civil society, including women and LGBTIQ people, face [serious protection risks](#) as a result of their essential work, particularly [in AFC/M23-controlled areas](#).

The Security Council should:

- Demand all parties immediately cease hostilities and ensure protection of civilians, including by issuing clear orders to refrain from violence against civilians, including SGBV, and to ensure accountability for such actions. Call on both the DRC and Rwanda to

cease support to their respective allied militias, and call on the Rwandan Defense Forces and its AFC/M23 proxies to immediately withdraw from the DRC [without preconditions](#).

- Demand that all actors allow and facilitate full, safe, unhindered and immediate humanitarian access to all affected populations and restore basic services in line with [Resolution 2773](#) (2025).
- Call for the full, equal, meaningful and safe [participation](#) of diverse women in [all efforts](#) to build peace. Any peace process or ceasefire negotiation should [center human rights](#) and [accountability](#) for all abuses against civilians, including SGBV.
- Support efforts to investigate and hold accountable all parties responsible for atrocity crimes, including gender-based crimes, such as the ongoing [International Criminal Court \(ICC\) investigation](#) and the OHCHR [fact-finding mission](#).
- Condemn threats and attacks against HRDs, journalists and civil society. Call for the protection and promotion of civic space and condemn the spread of mis- and disinformation.
- Urge donors to provide increased, sustainable, direct and flexible funding to local women-led and women's rights organizations, and organizations providing SRH care and interventions against SGBV, including domestic violence and CRSV response; and support their meaningful participation in humanitarian coordination and response.
- Call on MONUSCO and the DRC authorities to consult regularly and meaningfully with diverse women's civil society organizations in order to [protect civilians and safeguard women's human rights](#).

## Israel/Palestine

Israel's military offensive in Gaza since October 2023 — [described](#) by [many international experts](#) as [genocide](#) — has killed over [53,000](#) Palestinians (likely a [severe undercount](#)), injured over [121,000](#), and [forcibly displaced 90%](#) of Gaza's population multiple times, including [1 million](#) women and girls. Palestinians in Gaza face a humanitarian catastrophe in the wake of Israel's [continued bombardment](#) and its total blockade of aid since March 2025, which has put the entire population of Gaza at [critical risk of famine](#). Attacks on [healthcare facilities](#) and [providers](#) have decimated health infrastructure, violating Palestinian women's [sexual and reproductive health and rights](#) — with [pregnant and postpartum women](#) at particular risk — and their [rights to life, health, human dignity and non-discrimination](#). [GBV risks](#) are [heightened](#) for women and girls, including [in displacement sites](#); further, they are largely unable to access [menstrual products](#), [clean water](#) and hygiene facilities. Israeli laws [banning the operations of UNRWA](#), as well as [systematic denial](#) of visas for international NGOs, [further threaten](#) relief and civil society efforts. Israeli government efforts to control and [militarize](#) aid distribution undermine international law, violate humanitarian principles and risk [further entrenching](#) the [forced displacement](#) and [ethnic cleansing](#) of Palestinians in Gaza.

Violence is [escalating](#) in the occupied West Bank, where Israeli military operations since January 2025 have [displaced over 40,000](#) [Palestinians](#) and disrupted access to basic services, including SRH care for [over 232,000 women and adolescent girls](#). [Increased movement restrictions](#) further limit Palestinian women's access to healthcare, education, and livelihoods. Since 7 October 2023, at least [930](#) Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank by Israeli state or settler violence, some of which may amount to [extrajudicial killings](#). Arrests of Palestinians have also [surged](#), and Palestinian detainees, including women and girls, face [torture, including sexual violence](#), in detention.

The Security Council should:

- Demand an immediate, full and complete ceasefire in accordance with Resolution [2735](#) (2024), and an immediate end to violence and repression in the occupied West Bank.
- Demand all parties [comply with their obligations](#) under international law, including protecting and immediately stopping all attacks on civilians, civilian infrastructure and humanitarian actors.
- Demand full, immediate, safe and unhindered humanitarian [access](#) into Gaza and to all affected populations, as required by Resolutions [2728](#) (2024) and [2720](#) (2023). Demand respect for core humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, independence and neutrality, and reject [any proposed aid modalities](#) that do not adhere to these principles.
- Call on Israel to repeal legislation [banning UNRWA](#). All donors should urgently restore and scale up funding for UNRWA.
- Demand an [immediate halt](#) to the transfer of weapons, parts and ammunition to [Israel](#) and Palestinian armed groups [while there is risk](#) that they are used to commit or facilitate serious violations of international law.
- [Demand](#) the [humane treatment](#) and immediate and unconditional release of [all hostages](#) and [all forcibly detained and imprisoned without charge](#), in accordance with international humanitarian law.
- Demand Israel's compliance with all [provisional measures](#) ordered by the ICJ to prevent genocide against Palestinians in Gaza, including by allowing full humanitarian access into Gaza. All Member States must uphold their obligations to prevent genocide.
- Demand an immediate end to the forcible transfer of civilians and to [all measures](#) aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT), including [immediate cessation](#) of Israeli settlement activities in the West Bank.
- Urge all parties to cooperate with independent, impartial investigations, including the [Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the OPT, including East Jerusalem and Israel](#), to monitor, collect and verify evidence, and report on human rights violations and abuses, including GBV, committed by all parties on and since 7 October in Israel and the OPT. Call for all justice and accountability efforts to be human rights-based, survivor-centered and non-discriminatory and designed and implemented in partnership with survivors.
- Call on all Member States to take measures to [implement](#) the findings of the [July 2024 ICJ advisory opinion](#) on the legal consequences of Israel's occupation.
- Demand respect for the rights of diverse Palestinian women, including WHRDs, activists and journalists, and demand their full, equal, meaningful and safe participation in all efforts to build peace and shape post-conflict recovery.

NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security members are: Amnesty International; CARE International; Center for Reproductive Rights; Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights; 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 International; Oxfam; Refugees International; Women Enabled International; Women for Women International; Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; and Women's Refugee Commission. The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security is a project of Tides Center.