

Women, Peace and Security

March 2021

Afghanistan

For March, in which the United States has the presidency of the UN Security Council, the MAP provides recommendations on **Afghanistan, DRC, Libya and South Sudan.**

In the forthcoming report on the situation in Afghanistan, information on women, peace and security (WPS) and gender-sensitive conflict analysis should be mainstreamed across the entire report (S/RES/2543 (2020)). The Council should inquire about the progress of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in providing technical expertise and supporting the establishment of clear procedures to engage with and ensure the **leadership of diverse women**, including **women with disabilities, young women** and displaced women, in all stages of peace negotiations, conflict resolution efforts, ceasefires and in implementing and monitoring any agreements (CEDAW/AFG/CO/1-2, Oxfam, WEI). There should be follow-up on the extent to which powerbrokers leading the peace process are taking concrete action to ensure the planning, process and outcome(s) reflect the expertise and priorities of diverse Afghan women, including preserving all constitutional protections for women's rights as a priority. To create an environment conducive to the intra-Afghan dialogue, the Council should support the call of Afghan civil society for an immediate nationwide ceasefire. The Council should also request an update on UNAMA's support to the government and civil society organizations (CSOs) in communicating with local leaders, communities, partners and media about the increased risk of **domestic violence**, particularly targeting women and girls with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities (WEI), resulting from the measures taken to address the **COVID-19 pandemic**. The Council's discussions on gender-based violence (GBV) should also address the **continued attacks** perpetrated against women human rights defenders, peacebuilders, journalists and media workers (HRW). Despite President Ghani's **authorization** to create the Joint Commission for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders in December 2020, the situation remains dire. The Council must focus on deterring further violence and on ensuring there is accountability.

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

The DRC continues to face heightened inter-communal violence and attacks against civilians and **humanitarian personnel** by armed groups in the Ituri, Mambasa and Beni territories. Over **2,000** civilians were killed in 2020, with violence often targeting displaced populations. Women and girls face ongoing insecurity due in part to the current crisis, which has undermined access to livelihoods, food and water, but also as a result of the containment measures enacted in response to COVID-19 and the ensuing spike in domestic violence (CARE). Council members must call for humanitarian responses to be gender-responsive and emphasize the importance of timely and adequate multi-sectoral assistance for survivors of GBV, including medical, psychosocial, legal and socioeconomic support, that is inclusive and accessible. Further, the Council should request updates on the UN's support to women's groups in addressing GBV and ensuring women's participation and leadership in peacebuilding and political processes (CEDAW/C/COD/CO/8, Synergie des Femmes, HRW). Gender-sensitive conflict analysis of the drivers of conflict should inform all Council discussions, including as it relates to the flow of small arms and light weapons and the **repression** of human rights defenders, journalists, activists and civil society actors (HRW). The Council should request updates from senior UN leadership on responses to protection concerns facing women human rights defenders and activists, as well as the extent to which there have been consultations with women's CSOs in efforts to enact legal reform in the context of a comprehensive reparations law and the addition of domestic violence, including marital rape, to the penal code.

Libya

In its discussion of the situation in Libya and the latest report of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Council members must call for women's rights and the **full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership** of diverse women, including young women, displaced women, Indigenous women and women with disabilities, in formal, substantive and specific roles at every level of the peace process, including the UNSMIL-facilitated intra-Libya dialogue tracks (S/2021/62), the current Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF) and in provincial councils at the local level. In the context of the failure of the new government to include any women, Council members must articulate their strong support for women's participation as **non-negotiable in the LPDF** and stand with the **women participants in the LPDF** who recently urged the government to uphold its **stated commitment** to women's participation. Council members should urge the newly appointed Head of UNSMIL to adopt a concrete plan regarding the implementation of the WPS agenda that, in particular, focuses on the full, equal and meaningful inclusion and leadership of diverse women, including young women, in the design and implementation of all aspects of any peace processes, including the ongoing political processes and the ceasefire agreement monitoring. Council members are encouraged to welcome the **recommendations** by Libyan women participating in the LPDF, as well as the recommendations from the 2020 multi-stakeholder consultations with diverse women. In the context of the continued threat to women peacebuilders, human

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rights defenders, politicians, activists and civil society leaders, the Council should call on UNSMIL to support the development of inclusive, consultative protection mechanisms to enable diverse women to participate safely and meaningfully without fear of reprisal. Finally, members of the Council are encouraged to financially and politically support the [Independent Fact-Finding Mission on Libya](#) as a step towards justice and accountability.

South Sudan

The situation in South Sudan remains dire, with civilians facing a range of threats, including floods, famine and ongoing violence and displacement. Implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ACRSS) continues to be the only vehicle through which peace and security will be established, and women leaders continue to express concern regarding the lack of inclusion of diverse voices, including women from diverse communities, in the peace process and their representation in the government, national ministries and as state governors. Women's involvement in these institutions falls short of the 35% quota required in the R-ACRSS. In line with the WPS-related recommendations in the [UNMISS strategic review](#) and the outcomes of the latest meeting of the Security Council Informal Experts Group on WPS, the Security Council should:

- Strengthen all language on women's meaningful participation, including by adding a mandate provision explicitly stating that the mission's support for the implementation of the R-ACRSS (S/RES/2514 (2020), OP 8(c)) must prioritize the full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership of diverse women; calling on the mission to engage with a wide range of diverse women's CSOs across the mandate; and emphasizing that the conditions necessary to advance the peace process must be inclusive of diverse women in leadership positions.
- Welcome the recent [announcement](#) by the government regarding the establishment of the hybrid court and other transitional justice mechanisms laid out in Chapter V of the R-ACRSS, and emphasize that the mechanisms must be designed and developed with women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership, and be gender-responsive, inclusive, accessible and fully-resourced.
- Maintain existing preambular paragraphs addressing threats against civil society and call on UNMISS and other relevant actors to strengthen their monitoring and reporting on threats and reprisals targeting women peacebuilders, human rights defenders, civil society leaders and women's rights organizations, and emphasize the importance of creating an enabling environment that allows civil society to carry out their work safely and freely as central to sustainable peace.
- Emphasize that all mandated tasks related to protection must address the specific protection and security concerns for women and girls with disabilities, and further emphasize the importance of full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership of women and girls with disabilities in designing protection measures.
- Call on the mission to ground its efforts to prevent conflict in gender-sensitive conflict analysis accounting for community-identified root causes of conflict and violence, including inequality; discrimination; violence targeting women human rights defenders, peacebuilders, civil society leaders and women's rights organizations; the proliferation of small arms and light weapons; corruption; and restrictions on civic space, and request future reporting mainstream gender-sensitive conflict analysis.
- Highlight women's leadership in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, recognizing the pandemic's gendered impact on women and girls, and calling for a gender-responsive approach to post-pandemic recovery.