

Women, Peace and Security

March 2022

Afghanistan

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

The situation in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate with [95% of people](#) experiencing insufficient food consumption and [1 million children](#) at risk of dying from malnutrition. [Child labor, child marriage, selling children, and child recruitment](#) are common means by which households cope with the economic crisis; and [violence](#), threats, and [intimidation](#) targeting [civilians](#) – including women, [LGBTIQ+](#) individuals, ethnic and religious [minorities](#), [former government officials](#), [journalists](#), and [protestors](#) – has increased and civic space is almost entirely closed. Women activists, human rights defenders, and civil society leaders have been [arbitrarily arrested and detained](#) after engaging in protests, with some being [released only weeks later](#), if at all. Since the Taliban takeover, women’s rights in Afghanistan have been rolled back in virtually every area, with the imposition of restrictions on [freedom of movement](#), access to [education](#) and [health care](#), and [employment](#), and the [dismantling of critical institutions](#) such as the Afghan Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MOWA) and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC). There are reports of increased [gender-based violence](#), including [forced marriage](#) and [domestic violence](#), and lack of access to services for survivors of GBV, including the [closure of safe houses](#). In this context, the Security Council must ensure that gender equality and human rights, including women’s rights, is firmly at the center of the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) by:

- Ensuring the mission maintains its a robust mandate to protect and promote women’s and human rights through regular engagement with diverse civil society and continues to mainstream gender across its work, including through monitoring and reporting on violations, including reprisals, and other violence targeting civilians – including human rights defenders and women in public spaces – grounded in a survivor-centered approach; and supporting the implementation of international human rights treaties, specifically CEDAW.
- Emphasizing that the mission should focus on promoting inclusive governance processes that are free from all forms of discrimination – including based on gender – and supporting the full, safe, equal, and meaningful participation and leadership of women across all peace, security, humanitarian and peacebuilding processes; and regularly consult with diverse civil society, including women’s groups throughout all mission activities.
- Reinforcing that the mission’s provision of humanitarian assistance must be in accordance with international humanitarian law and in partnership with all humanitarian organizations (local and international) and personnel, including women humanitarian workers.

Finally, all Member States should advocate for the necessary capacity, including through a strong and well-resourced gender unit and senior gender expertise, in relevant decision-making processes in the General Assembly Fifth Committee and elsewhere, to ensure the UNAMA can carry out its critical functions related to the protection and promotion of women’s rights.

Libya

In its renewal of the mandate of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), the Council should strengthen WPS-related provisions, in line with the recommendations of the independent strategic review ([S/2021/716](#)) by:

- Strengthening language related to women’s and [young women’s](#) meaningful participation and leadership, including by specifying that participation should be safe and inclusive of a diverse range of groups, and calling on UNSMIL to support the establishment of measures that ensure non-discrimination and equal rights to participate in political and public life, as well as ensuring candidates and voters are protected from reprisals, violence, coercion and intimidation.
- Emphasizing that security sector reform, disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration processes, rule of law efforts, elections, and governance institutions should be gender-responsive, human rights-based and attentive to

the needs of [youth](#) affected by conflict, including by ensuring human rights vetting for members of armed groups in the process of security sector reform.

- Including a new mandate provision calling on UNSMIL to monitor and document violence targeting women in public life – including women human rights defenders, peacebuilders, and politicians – and take concrete steps to ensure their protection; follow-up with the Government to ensure investigation and prosecution of human rights violations; and include information and analysis in periodic reports of the Secretary-General.

Finally, the Security Council should express its support for the [Independent Fact-Finding Mission on Libya](#) as a step towards justice and accountability and act on its findings.

South Sudan

The situation in South Sudan remains dire, with civilians facing a range of threats – including floods, famine and displacement – and humanitarian needs at the [highest level](#) since 2011. At the same time, humanitarian access is constrained by [attacks](#) against humanitarian workers, and security forces in South Sudan pose increasing [restrictions](#) against civil society leaders, human rights defenders and journalists. As civil society briefers ([March 2022](#), [September 2021](#), [June 2021](#), [April 2021](#), [March 2021](#), [September 2020](#), [June 2019](#), [March 2019](#), [September 2018](#), [May 2018](#)) have emphasized, since the signing of the [R-ARCSS](#) over three years ago, there has been limited to no progress in implementing crucial provisions on security sector reform, constitutional and electoral reform, and transitional justice. Although major towns – including the capital Juba – remain calm, violence increased in October and [November](#) of 2021, partially due to the exclusionary nature of political and peace efforts at all levels. Meanwhile, [impunity](#) prevails, communities do not feel represented by officials, and there is a lack of accountability for misuse of authority. Increased efforts must be made to ensure the 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. However, women's involvement in these institutions falls short of the 35% quota required in the [R-ARCSS](#). 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:

- Call on UNMISS to ensure the electoral process is safe, inclusive of diverse women and minorities, and in alignment with international standards; and explicitly emphasize that under its existing protection of civilians mandate, UNMISS is expected to ensure the safety and security of all voters, poll workers, candidates, and officials, as well as human rights defenders and activists.
- Call on parties to [prioritize](#) accountability through the [establishment](#) of the hybrid court [alongside the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing](#) and other transitional justice mechanisms laid out in Chapter V of the [R-ARCSS](#) 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.
- Call on UNMISS and other relevant actors to [support civil society advocacy for fundamental rights – including freedom of assembly, association and speech](#) – and to strengthen monitoring and reporting on threats and reprisals targeting women peacebuilders, human rights defenders, civil society leaders and women's rights organizations; further 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.
- Call on the mission to ground all its efforts pertaining to prevent conflict in gender-sensitive conflict analysis accounting for community-identified root causes of conflict and violence and request that future reports mainstream gender-sensitive conflict analysis.
- Call on all authorities in South Sudan to protect and [uphold human rights](#), including women's rights, and address impunity for violations of such rights.