

Women, Peace and Security

May 2026

For May, in which China is president of the UN Security Council, the MAP provides recommendations on the situations in Israel/Palestine, Lebanon and Syria.

Israel/Palestine

Israel's military offensive in Gaza since October 2023 — which [Palestinian, Israeli, international](#) and [UN experts](#), including the [Independent International Commission of Inquiry \(COI\)](#) on the occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), have concluded amounts to [genocide](#) — has killed [over 72,000](#) Palestinians and injured over [172,000](#). [Despite](#) the October 2025 ceasefire agreement, Israel [continues to inflict conditions calculated to bring about the physical destruction](#) of Palestinians in Gaza, including through [daily attacks](#) and [continued obstruction of humanitarian aid](#). Most critical civilian infrastructure in Gaza, including healthcare facilities providing [sexual and reproductive health \(SRH\)](#) services, has been damaged or destroyed. About [90%](#) of people in Gaza remain forcibly displaced, with many living in overcrowded and unsafe conditions where women and girls face heightened risks of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). Girls and adolescents in Gaza also face [increased risk of child marriage](#) and [early pregnancy](#). Israeli laws [banning the operations of UNRWA](#) and [restricting operations](#) of international NGOs [further threaten](#) relief and civil society efforts. In the occupied West Bank, including [East Jerusalem](#), the Israeli government has undertaken measures to [expand illegal settlements](#) at an [unprecedented rate](#). [Violent attacks by Israeli settlers](#) have also increased, including the [use of SGBV to intimidate and forcibly displace Palestinians](#), often with the [complicity or support of Israeli security forces](#). Palestinian detainees, including women and girls, face [grave human rights violations](#), including [sexual violence](#), in detention. Women and girls also regularly face sexual harassment and abuse at Israeli checkpoints. [UN](#) and [international](#) experts have condemned Israel's recent adoption of a [law expanding use of the death penalty](#), which will effectively apply [only to Palestinians](#) and [violates Israel's obligations under international human rights law](#). Meanwhile, discussions on Gaza's future are being negotiated largely by outsiders, with the exclusion of diverse Palestinians from positions of authority and the [near-total exclusion of women](#); this approach risks [entrenching impunity](#) and undermining the right to Palestinian self-determination.

The Security Council should:

- Demand all parties fully comply with the ceasefire, including by immediately stopping all attacks on civilians, civilian infrastructure and humanitarian actors.
- Demand Israel's immediate compliance with [all provisional measures](#) ordered by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to prevent genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. All Member States must [uphold their obligations](#) to prevent and punish 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 OPT, including [immediate cessation](#) of Israeli settlement activities in the West Bank. Call on the Israeli government to hold settlers and those who enable them accountable for violence, including SGBV, perpetrated against Palestinians.
- Demand immediate, safe, unhindered and expanded humanitarian access into and throughout Gaza, in line with the ICJ's [November 2025 advisory opinion](#) and 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](#) and to lift restrictions on NGOs and civil society organizations.
- Call on Member States to support the [humanitarian response, including by](#) providing direct, flexible and consistent funding to those organizations best-placed to respond, including NGOs, local women's rights, women-led and feminist organizations; and prioritize women's participation and leadership in the humanitarian response.
- Condemn Israel's recent amendments to the death penalty law and call for their immediate repeal.
- Demand an [immediate halt](#) to [military assistance](#) and the [transfer of arms and other equipment or items, including jet fuel](#), to [Israel 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 arbitrarily detained individuals.
- Urge all parties to cooperate with independent, impartial investigations, including the [COI on the OPT](#), to monitor, collect and verify evidence, and report on human rights violations and abuses, including gender-based crimes, committed by all parties 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 immediate measures to [implement](#) the findings of the [July 2024 ICJ advisory opinion](#) on the legal consequences of Israel's unlawful occupation.
- Demand respect for the rights of diverse Palestinian women, and demand their full, equal, meaningful and safe participation in building peace and shaping post-conflict recovery. Ensure that all negotiations and discussions on the future of Gaza uphold the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and the right of return of Palestine refugees.

Lebanon

Renewed hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah since early March 2026 have triggered a humanitarian crisis in Lebanon, with unique impacts on women and girls. [Nearly 25%](#) of all women and girls in Lebanon ([over 620,000](#)) have been displaced. [Over 85% are sheltering in informal housing arrangements](#), where they face increased risks of exploitation and gender-based violence. Many shelters are [inaccessible for women and girls with disabilities](#) and lack inclusive water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities. Migrant women and girls, who [already faced discrimination and barriers to accessing essential services](#), risk being [marginalized](#) from the [humanitarian](#)

[response](#). Displacement has exacerbated pre-existing gender inequalities, including by [intensifying unpaid care burdens](#) for women. Displaced LGBTIQ individuals are also experiencing [protection challenges](#) including discrimination, harassment and violence in shelters. Transgender and gender non-conforming individuals may face particular barriers in accessing safe shelter, healthcare and identity documentation, increasing their risk of exclusion from aid. Israeli airstrikes targeting [bridges, roads](#) and other critical infrastructure have further limited civilians' ability to move safely and hindered providers' ability to deliver aid to those in need.

The Security Council should:

- Demand an immediate and lasting ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah, including ceasing all attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure. Call on all parties to comply with the November 2024 and April 2026 ceasefire agreements, as well as [Resolution 1701](#) (2006), including an end to Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon.
- Call for independent, prompt and impartial investigations into all alleged violations of international law, including attacks on [civilians, journalists, humanitarian workers](#) and UN personnel including [UNIFIL personnel](#), and ensure accountability for perpetrators.
- Demand an immediate halt to military assistance and the transfer of arms and other equipment or items, including jet fuel, to Israel while there is risk that they are used to commit or facilitate serious violations of international law.
- Demand that all parties allow full and unhindered humanitarian access into and throughout Lebanon and lift any restrictions that impede access to essential goods and services including fuel, food and medical supplies.
- Call on donors to support Lebanon's humanitarian response, including funding the [2026 Flash Appeal](#); provide increased direct, flexible and consistent support to local women-led and LGBTIQ-led organizations at the forefront of crisis response; ensure that crisis response is inclusive, non-discriminatory and accessible to all affected populations; and prioritize women's meaningful participation and leadership in the humanitarian response.
- Call for the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of diverse women in all efforts to deescalate or resolve the conflict in Lebanon.

Syria

Many challenges remain to an inclusive and sustainable transition in Syria, including [accountability for serious abuses](#), perpetrated primarily by the Assad government, before December 2024. Violations have also been committed during the post-Assad transitional period, including [violence against ethnic and religious minorities](#). Syrian [women and girls](#), stateless communities, [LGBTIQ people](#) and other marginalized groups continue to face entrenched social and legal discrimination. [Women human rights defenders, journalists and civil society](#) frequently face threats and reprisals as a result of their work. There is [only one woman](#) in the transitional cabinet, and women won only [5% of seats](#) in parliamentary elections in 2025. Since December 2024, the UN has documented the return of [over 1.5 million](#) refugees from abroad and [1.9 million](#) IDPs within Syria, but an entrenched [humanitarian crisis](#) presents significant obstacles to safe, voluntary and dignified return, including: [damaged or destroyed infrastructure](#), including a [lack of adequate housing](#); [explosive remnants of war](#); lack of access to basic services including [GBV response](#); [poverty](#) and lack of livelihood opportunities, [particularly for women](#); continued [food insecurity](#); and [climate-related shocks](#). Women-led and women's rights organizations are [instrumental](#) in the humanitarian response, but they face chronic underfunding and [operating and registration restrictions](#). [Regional conflicts](#) further compound the situation: for example, [over 320,000](#) refugees and returnees have entered Syria from Lebanon since the escalation of that conflict in March 2026.

The Security Council should:

- Call on all parties to immediately cease hostilities, protect civilians and civilian infrastructure, and ensure full, safe and unhindered humanitarian access into and throughout Syria.
- Call for the full, equal, meaningful and safe [participation](#) of diverse women at all stages and levels of a [Syrian-owned and Syrian-led](#) political transition, including by instituting a [minimum 30% quota for women](#), moving toward parity. The Security Council, UN and Member States must not endorse, facilitate, participate in or otherwise support any process where women are excluded; further, any new UN presence in Syria should incorporate gender equality, human rights and WPS issues as cross-cutting themes throughout its mandate.
- Underscore the importance of creating an enabling environment for women's participation, including protection from reprisals, harassment and smear campaigns.
- Call on Member States to fully fund the [humanitarian response](#); provide direct, flexible and consistent funding to local women's rights, women-led and feminist organizations; and prioritize women's participation and leadership in the humanitarian response.
- [Continue](#) to call for independent, impartial and transparent investigations of all atrocity crimes regardless of victim or perpetrator, before and after December 2024, and for transitional authorities to cooperate with and facilitate access for international investigators and accountability mechanisms. The transitional authorities must prioritize human rights-based, non-discriminatory and gender-responsive [justice and accountability efforts](#), which should be designed and implemented in partnership with survivors and must adequately account for sexual and gender-based crimes.
- Call on transitional authorities to urgently step up SGBV prevention efforts and promptly, thoroughly and impartially investigate abductions of [Alawite](#), Druze and other women and girls of different diversities, and hold all perpetrators accountable.
- Demand respect by all parties for the human rights of all women and girls, and encourage the transitional authorities to align Syria's national legislation with international standards, including by reforming discriminatory laws and removing [Syria's reservations](#) to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).
- Call on Member States to [maintain temporary protection or refugee status](#) for Syrian refugees and [refrain from deportations or refoulement](#).