

Women, Peace and Security

September 2021

For September, in which Ireland has the presidency of the UN Security Council, the MAP provides recommendations on the situations in **Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Yemen.**

Afghanistan

Member States must mobilize all available resources to directly support the urgent evacuation of Afghans who are at heightened risk of persecution from Taliban forces and wish to leave the country, including women human rights defenders, peacebuilders, leaders, and journalists, paying particular attention to individuals facing intersecting forms of discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, ethnicity, and disability. Based on internal analysis, an estimated 6-8% of identified women leaders, politicians, journalists, human rights defenders, activists, and judges have been evacuated, leaving several thousand at continued risk. Member States should prioritize the approval of visas and remove all bureaucratic impediments to ensure safe passage to points of departure and final destinations, including the provision of visas to all family members, broadly defined, of women at risk, and provision of relocation assistance. Support protection for those who are unable to leave the country through shelter and safe houses. In the expected renewal of the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the existing mandate should be maintained in order to preserve critical functions, including protection and promotion of human rights, notably women's rights. Any strategic review or assessment mission should mainstream gender-sensitive conflict analysis and prioritize monitoring and support for women's rights. Further, the Security Council should:

- Call for an immediate, permanent and comprehensive ceasefire, followed by an inclusive, negotiated peace process that prioritizes the full, equal and meaningful participation of diverse women, from across the country, at all stages of planning, negotiation and implementation.
- Call for all parties, including the Taliban, to uphold international human rights and humanitarian law in all circumstances, and as laid out in resolutions [2573 \(2021\)](#) and [2286 \(2016\)](#), including the protection of human rights defenders, peacebuilders and [journalists](#) and all civil society representatives, and hold all perpetrators accountable for any violations of international standards, including all forms of gender-based violence and any reprisals against women civil society leaders.
- Demand the safe, full and [unfettered](#) access of all humanitarian actors, including all women humanitarian workers, to affected communities in a manner that upholds core humanitarian principles and standards and ensures access to those most marginalized and hardest to reach, as per resolutions [1265 \(1999\)](#), [1296 \(2000\)](#), [1502 \(2003\)](#), [1674 \(2006\)](#), [1894 \(2009\)](#), [2175 \(2014\)](#) and [2286 \(2016\)](#).

Iraq

The establishment of an Investigative Team under resolution [2379 \(2017\)](#) is an essential step towards calling for accountability for crimes committed against civilians by ISIL. The Council should ensure that the Investigative Team has sufficient resources to thoroughly investigate crimes committed by all parties to the conflict. The Council should call for the expansion of current documentation and reporting requirements in the mandate to cover crimes committed by all parties to the conflict, including all gender-based crimes, such as crimes against women human rights defenders, ethnic and religious minorities, LGBTIQ+ persons, men and boys, and those persecuted for defying prescribed gender roles. In this regard, the Council should request an update on the implementation of the UN-Iraq Joint Communiqué on the prevention of and response to conflict-related sexual violence and the newly enacted Yazidi Female Survivors Law. The Council should also include language in the mandate calling on the Investigative Team to collaborate and consult with women's civil society organizations to ensure their meaningful access to justice and to [provide support to civil society organizations that are supporting survivors and their families](#). The Council should further call on the Investigative Team and the Government to work with women's civil society to ensure survivors have access to support services - including shelters and safehouses - and pass the draft Family Violence Protection law. In cooperation with its Sexual and Gender-Based Crimes and Crimes against Children Unit of the Office of Field Investigations, the [incoming Special Advisor](#) should ensure that gender considerations are included in all operations and investigations of UNITAD.

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 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 to 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 and human rights-based, including by ensuring human rights vetting for members of armed groups in the process of security sector reform,
- Include 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; 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.

Yemen

The Security Council's discussions on the situation in Yemen have historically failed to reflect critical gender dimensions, despite multiple meetings of the [IEG on WPS \(S/2019/253, S/2021/264\)](#) and [briefings by civil society \(2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021\)](#). It is urgent that the Security Council calls for an immediate end to hostilities, in line with resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#), that would support viable conditions for protecting civilians, including women, and lead to a resumption of peace negotiations. It is important for Council members to continue to emphasize the necessity of women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership in peace and political processes, ensuring a minimum 30% quota of women in all processes [as a matter of urgency](#). The Special Envoy should receive the full support of the Council and the broader international community to ensure the realization of an inclusive Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned political process with the full, equal and meaningful participation of diverse women, youth and civil society - of all political backgrounds from all regions of Yemen, in all diplomatic tracks and stages of the peace process. To inform their work, the Special Envoy should consult regularly and transparently with civil society, especially diverse women's groups, and ensure that diverse women representatives directly participate throughout the entire peace process - from shaping the agenda to drafting a ceasefire agreement and engaging in negotiations. It is necessary, therefore, for the international community to ensure women's civil society organizations are supported through the provision of core, flexible and long-term funding. Humanitarian assistance in Yemen has been undermined by ongoing and [escalating violence](#) in multiple Governorates earlier this year, [extreme constraints on humanitarian access](#) (particularly on access to services, restrictions on movement and interference with humanitarian activities), humanitarian diversion, donors' failure to meet aid obligations, and [ongoing blockages](#) of oil, food and other vital supplies. The war in Yemen has claimed more than 233,000 lives, and in Marib, June 2021, was the deadliest month of the conflict thus far. The [deteriorating security situation](#) and a new surge of COVID-19 cases amid a fragile health system also contribute to the challenging environment. The Security Council should demand all conflict parties allow for the full, unimpeded, sustained, and secure humanitarian access for the principled passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need, and further urge the international community to increase contributions to meet the UN humanitarian appeal for Yemen. Finally, a core driver of the conflict in Yemen is the proliferation of weapons. The Council should consider the recommendations made by civil society briefers, [the report of the Group of Eminent Experts \(GEE\)](#), and the [Panel of Experts](#), calling on states – including some Council members and their allies – to cease arms transfers and other support to the conflict parties and to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).