

# Women, Peace and Security

## June 2022

For June, in which the Albania has the presidency of the UN Security Council, the MAP provides recommendations on the situations in **Afghanistan**, **Syria**, and **Ukraine**.

### Afghanistan

As the Security Council discusses the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), it is critical that gender equality and women's rights are prioritized, and the Council proactively responds to threats to undermine these critical elements of sustainable peace. In this context, the [press statement](#) adopted by the Security Council on 24 May in response to the recent directive on women's rights issued by the Taliban is a positive example of employing one of its tools to unite to condemn concerning developments and call for reversal of harmful policies; in the future, the Security Council should continue to respond swiftly to any violations of women's rights in order to send a clear political message that such actions will not be tolerated. In the forthcoming meeting:

- Senior UN leadership and Security Council members should state their unequivocal support for the protection and promotion of the full range of women's human rights in accordance with international human rights law; swiftly and publicly condemn the adoption of regressive policies that undermine those rights whenever they occur; and express unwavering solidarity and support for the work of human rights defenders, peacebuilders, journalists, and civil society representatives, and hold perpetrators accountable.
- Senior UN leadership and Security Council members must call for all parties, including the Taliban and other armed groups, to respect international human rights and humanitarian law and immediately end the continued targeting, threats, and killings of human rights defenders, peacebuilders, journalists, all civil society representatives, as well as individuals affiliated with the previous government, including prosecutors and judges, former military and police and other security sector, and civil servants.
- Senior UN leadership should provide a clear and factual assessment of the operationalization of UNAMA's mandate that reflects the realities on the ground and the outcomes of consultations with women's civil society representatives, as well as any challenges to fully carrying out its mandate, including to protect and promote women's human rights and advance an inclusive political process.
- Senior UN leadership should ground their briefings in gender-sensitive conflict analysis by providing details on the current situation for women and girls, including women and girls with disabilities, displaced women, women from ethnic minorities, and women of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, in order to highlight the gender dimensions of challenges in access to essential services such as housing and sexual and reproductive health care; access to humanitarian assistance; actively participating and leading in peace, political, and humanitarian response efforts; and the effects of climate change, ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and economic crisis.

### Syria

The Security Council must reauthorize the cross-border mechanism for at least 12 months as it remains a lifeline for millions of people in northwest Syria, the majority of whom are women and children. Its renewal, and expansion, is necessary so that aid can keep pace with humanitarian needs that continue to intensify with the combined effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, winterization, drought, skyrocketing food prices, and ongoing conflict that targets civilians and civilian infrastructure. Security Council members must call for rights-based, survivor-centered humanitarian action that is age and gender-responsive, disability-inclusive, and provides immediate and non-discriminatory aid and quality healthcare, including sexual and reproductive health services and gender-based violence (GBV) prevention, mitigation, and response services. To minimize the continuing spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in the context of an already [weakened healthcare system](#), testing equipment and vaccines must be adequately [available to civilians](#) without discrimination. Women are [particularly affected](#) by the weakened healthcare system and the resulting reduction of access to sexual and reproductive health services, including maternity care, which continues to be exacerbated by considerable funding shortfalls ([MSF](#), [AI](#)).

The Council should also call on its members and parties in Syria to uphold the ceasefire in the north-west and call for a complete and nationwide ceasefire, in line with resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#), to allow the country to address its ongoing health and humanitarian crises, including growing food insecurity, which has affected at least [60% of the population](#). Further, past briefings have been inconsistent in providing a clear picture of the gender dimensions of the situation; in line with expectations, briefings should include gender, age and disability-sensitive conflict analysis regarding the situation for diverse women, including [women in public life](#), displaced women, women and girls with disabilities, and the way in which women and girls' rights are at the center of development ([WILPF](#)) and peacebuilding efforts ([CEDAW/C/SYR/CO/2](#), [OCHA](#), [UNFPA](#), [HNAP](#)).

Finally, accountability, justice, including reparations, and equal rights must be the foundation of any political solution. However, this foundation is undermined by the [ongoing impunity](#) for past, and current violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, including the recent enactment of a new anti-torture law that fails to address the crimes carried out over the past decade ([AI](#), [HRW](#)). In this context, gender equality and international human rights law must be priorities in the outcome of any process ([CEDAW/C/SYR/CO/2](#)), including a gender-sensitive constitution, and women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership should be a norm at every stage.

## Ukraine

In its discussions on the situation in Ukraine, the Security Council should:

- Demand an immediate cessation of hostilities, end to civilian harm, respect for international humanitarian and human rights law, and ensure that all investigations of violations, including alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity, fully encompass and address the gendered and intersectional elements of these crimes.
- Support measures to promote the inclusive and meaningful participation and leadership of women from diverse communities at all levels of peace and political processes and humanitarian response, including in-country coordination mechanisms, and further liaise, partner, and consult with diverse women leaders, women's rights and peacebuilding groups, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ people, stateless people, and members of the Roma community and other minority groups.
- Reinforce the importance of ensuring that sex, age, gender, and disability-sensitive data and intersectional gender-sensitive analysis informs all facets of the humanitarian response, including at border crossings and reception centers, to ensure that individuals fleeing violence do not face additional gender-specific risks, such as sexual exploitation and abuse and trafficking, and accelerate efforts to support local organizations including diverse women's rights, humanitarian, peacebuilding and LGBTIQ+ groups, in their efforts to provide necessary, frontline support to displaced populations.
- Emphasize the importance of addressing the conditions and factors that heighten the risk of trafficking and exploitation by ensuring all aspects of the response are inclusive, non-discriminatory, and transparent, including by ensuring access to appropriate, adapted and accessible information through various channels, especially on the protection risks they face, how to seek help and report complaints; civil status documentation, accessibility of services to those without documentation, prioritizing the distribution of cash and social support to groups already marginalized and without resources, equal application of temporary protection for all people wishing to cross a border, provision of opportunities for livelihoods for displaced people that include social support, such as child care, and access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, including maternal, newborn and child health and GBV response services, and early medical abortion for displaced populations, safe abortion and post-abortion care, and a range of contraceptive options including emergency contraceptive and long-acting methods for displaced populations, and mental health and psychosocial support for adults and children.
- Promote and protect civil society space and ensure a safe and enabling environment for civil society, journalists, peacebuilders and all human rights defenders, including diverse women and LGBTIQ+ people, in both Ukraine and Russia, in order to fulfill obligations under international human rights law, and actively push back against disinformation, stigmatization and persecution of civil society actors engaged in criticizing warring parties, providing and disseminating information, defending human rights, providing basic services, promoting dialogue, and peacebuilding.