

# Women, Peace and Security

## June 2023

### Afghanistan

For June, in which the United Arab Emirates has the presidency of the UN Security Council, the MAP provides recommendations on the situations in **Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Colombia and Mali.**

In the context of the situation in Afghanistan, the worst women's rights crisis in the world, protection of women's rights and the full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership of diverse Afghan women, including civil society and women's rights organizations, in all fora, at all levels and at all stages of decision-making must be a top priority in any deliberations by the Security Council. Since taking power in August 2021, the Taliban has continued to [undermine women's human rights](#) in both policy and practice by codifying [systematic gender-based discrimination](#) through the imposition of dozens of restrictions, including a [ban](#) on Afghan women working for the UN, expanding an earlier [ban](#) on women working for NGOs. As reinforced by [UN human rights experts](#), these violations potentially amount to [gender persecution](#), a [crime against humanity](#). As the Security Council discusses the situation, it is critical that gender equality, women's autonomy, agency and inclusion, and the full range of women's rights are prioritized and addressed as a fundamental means to achieve sustainable peace in the country. During forthcoming meetings, Council members should:

- Reiterate the [indispensable role](#) of Afghan women and 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; strongly condemn the implementation of regressive policies that undermine those rights and call for their immediate reversal; demand the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in all decision-making, and express unwavering support for the work of human rights defenders, peacebuilders, and civil society representatives.
- Condemn and call for the immediate reversal of the ban on Afghan women working for the United Nations, in violation of the UN Charter and CEDAW, and call for all UN agencies and other humanitarian actors to abide by the principles of non-discrimination to ensure principled humanitarian delivery to all Afghans in need, in all parts of the country, and to ensure women's participation and leadership in humanitarian action, free of restrictions or reprisals.
- Call for accountability for all human rights violations and support measures to investigate and prosecute those responsible for all violations of human rights, including gender persecution and attacks on diverse human rights defenders and journalists, including those advocating on behalf of marginalized ethnic and religious groups and LGBTIQ+ rights.
- 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, protestors, and all other civil society representatives.
- Call for UNAMA's mandate to be fully implemented, particularly those aspects related to: advocating for the protection and promotion of women's rights, including by calling for the Taliban to uphold their obligations under CEDAW; monitoring and reporting on human rights, including violations, abuses and reprisals against women, human rights defenders, journalists and humanitarian workers and all forms of gender-based violence; meaningful engagement with diverse Afghan women's organizations and networks; and ensuring the transparent, non-discriminatory and equitable distribution of humanitarian aid.
- Call for the independent assessment on Afghanistan mandated by Resolution 2679 (2023) to be carried out in close consultation with Afghan women and civil society, both inside and outside of the country, and for it to explicitly address and call for the protection and promotion of the human rights of diverse Afghan women and girls, as well as the critical importance of their full, equal, and meaningful participation in any decision-making regarding the future of Afghanistan.

### Central African Republic

In its forthcoming meeting on the situation in CAR, given the multi-faceted and complex crises facing the country, including militarization and the [unimpeded](#) flow of weapons, [armed violence targeting civilians](#), [human rights violations](#), including multiple forms of [gender-based violence](#), impacts of the climate crisis, [forced displacement](#), and [food insecurity](#), gender-sensitive conflict analysis of the drivers of conflict should inform the discussion. Gender-sensitive conflict analysis has been lacking in the information submitted to the Security Council in past reports of the Secretary-General and briefings delivered by senior UN officials. For example, in the February 2023 report of the Secretary-General, nearly 90% of all references to WPS were limited to numerical data points indicating either the number of women targeted for various forms of violence, or the number of women participants in activities carried out by the mission. Undoubtedly, the inclusion of sex disaggregated data is critical, however, this information is incomplete without complementary gender analysis regarding the outcomes of those activities, as well as analysis regarding the role of women in peace, political, security, and humanitarian efforts and barriers to their participation, with a particular focus on forthcoming elections. In past briefings delivered by senior UN officials to the Security Council, inclusion of the obligatory information and analysis on WPS has been woefully lacking; only 30% of briefings between 2020 and 2023 included any reference to WPS. Discussions within the Council should highlight the importance of reversing any and all efforts by the government to [restrict](#) civic space in

advance of forthcoming elections. In light of the recent attempts by the government to restrict civic space, Council members should explicitly call for cessation of all efforts to intimidate and prevent women human rights defenders, peacebuilders, and women's civil society groups from continuing their work, and call for accountability, through gender-sensitive transitional justice processes, for all violations committed. Further, in all discussion regarding efforts to promote access to and develop institutions to deliver, [justice](#), the rule of law, and security sector reform, Council members should reinforce that the only way forward is by adopting a rights-based, survivor-centered, gender-responsive, and disability-sensitive approach.

## Colombia

As the Security Council discusses the situation in Colombia, it's important to acknowledge the positive developments, notably the [historic](#) number of women elected to the legislature and increased representation of women in the executive branch, including the [cabinet](#), while also continuing to focus on the insecurity that exists for a large portion of the population. Civilians in many areas of Colombia, [rural](#) and [urban](#) areas, are experiencing increasing levels of violence at the hands of armed actors, including [killings](#), abductions, [disappearances](#), [sexual violence](#), and displacement, particularly within Afro-descendant and [Indigenous](#) communities with profound impacts on women human rights defenders, signaling an urgent need to [prioritize civilian protection](#) in state responses to violence and shift away from strategies, including those involving increased presence of security forces, that perpetuate and exacerbate the harm that has been experienced by rural communities for decades. In line with the [Report of the Truth Commission](#), the Security Council should call for cessation of the [use of violence](#), often targeting [Afro-descendant](#), Indigenous, and LGBTIQ+ individuals, including [excessive force](#), killings, beatings, [sexual and gender-based violence](#), and arbitrary detention, by members of the Colombian police and military forces against protestors, [human rights defenders](#), and bystanders, including those who advocate in opposition to certain [corporate](#) activity especially the large-scale exploitation of natural resources. The Council should reiterate the need for a negotiated solution to conflicts with all the various illegal armed actors and adopt a human security approach, in line with the intentions of "total peace" discussions and ensure that gender and women's rights are central to any conversations, including women's and young women's meaningful participation in any dialogue with the ELN. Further, the Council should underline the importance of ensuring "total peace" discussions are participatory and inclusive of civil society, particularly with women in all their diversity, youth, LGBTIQ+, Afro-descendant, Indigenous, and rural authorities and communities. Further, Council members should call for any briefings and updates by senior UN leaders to integrate gender-sensitive conflict analysis and data disaggregated by gender, sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity, and disability, including in the context of information related to violence against former combatants, social leaders, and Indigenous, Afro-descendant, rural and LGBTIQ+ communities, who receive additional threats of gender-based violence, including domestic.

## Mali

In its forthcoming renewal of the mandate of MINUSMA, the Security Council should maintain all existing WPS-related provisions and further, reflecting the dire human rights and humanitarian situation:

- Call on MINUSMA and other relevant actors to promote and protect women's human rights 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 prevention of conflict in gender-responsive conflict analysis, accounting for community-identified root causes of conflict and violence, and request that future reports mainstream gender-responsive conflict analysis.
- Adopt a survivor-centered, rights-based, and trauma-informed approach to preventing and responding to gender-based violence, in particular by facilitating access to quality health care and comprehensive support, accessible and delivered without discrimination, including sexual and reproductive healthcare, psychosocial support, legal services, access to justice, as well as support for livelihoods.
- Call on the mission, in its efforts to support the implementation of the reconciliation and justice measures of the Agreement, to ensure that such implementation is rights-based and gender-responsive, and further that all effort will be made to consult with diverse women and women's groups at all stages.
- Add a provision which requires the mission to regularly and meaningfully consult with diverse women's civil society groups in all aspects of its work.

NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security members are: Amnesty International; CARE International; Center for Reproductive Rights; Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights; Cordaid; Global Justice Center; Global Network of Women Peacebuilders; Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict; Human Rights Watch; International Alert; MADRE; Nobel Women's Initiative; OutRight Action International; Oxfam; Refugees International; Women Enabled International; Women for Women International; Women's Refugee Commission; and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security is a project of Tides Center.