STUDY GUIDE

UN Women

It's time to be UNique!

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Letters of Welcome

Greetings Delegates!

My name is Benevolence, and I will be one of your Chairs this conference. I am a Law student and Politics, and International Studies graduate, who is very much intrigued by the world of International Relations.

My journey with MUN began in Junior High school, and this will be my sixth time chairing. I have over 7 years of MUN experience, having first participated as a delegate and eventually serving as a Secretary-General for Rhodes University MUN and Chairperson in various national and international conferences. I enjoy MUN as it not only stimulates dialogue but creates a rich space for interaction and tackling pressing issues.

One of our topics this year is the "Fight against Violence as a tool to silence Women in Politics". I look forward to hearing the solutions and stances the nations you will represent have on this issue, which has become a deterrent for many women when it comes to anticipating in decision making at local and national levels. Please note, that this Study Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. It is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in depth and use the Annotated Bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics.

I hope by the end of this conference, you will all have gained valuable skills such as public speaking, debating, critical thinking and or dispute resolution. Most of all I am glad you will benefit from an experience in international relations which will enable you all to view important issues through a new perspective.

I am open to any questions from you before and even after the conference. You may contact me on mambano90@gmail.com.

Greetings Delegates!

My name is Racha Cherrat and I will be one of your chairs for this edition of PragueMUN. I am currently in my last year of bachelor's, where I am double majoring in law and in political science.

I started participating in Model United Nations when I was a sophomore in High School, and I fell in love with it ever since. I have participated in over 10 MUN's since then, and I am also the LyonMUN 2021's Secretary General.

This year, one of the topics you will be discussing is "Advancing Equality in Peace and Security processes". I look forward to hearing the solutions you will come up with. Regardless of your experience, we strongly recommend, that all of you read this Study Guide as carefully as you can and use it as a starting point to begin your research adventure. The first step to properly representing your assigned country is to have good research, as the quality of any MUN is determined primarily by those partake in it so please try your best to prepare!

We both hope that you will enjoy your time and have an amazing event and discover why MUN is such a unique and very addicting experience that very few activities can match. It is an opportunity to test your critical thinking, public speaking, and teamwork skills.

Please feel free to reach out before the conference for any inquiry you might have. You may contact me on racha.cherrat@lyonmun.com.

Kind regards,

Benevolence Mbano and Racha Cherrat

About the Committee

The United Nations Women is a division of the United Nations which was established for the purposes of highlighting the different plights women and girls face, whilst championing and accelerating progress on meeting their needs worldwide. This organ was established in July 2010 to counter gender inequality and promote the empowerment of women and girls.[1]

The main aim of the UN Women is to support member states in achieving gender equality, whilst calling for governments and society to design laws, programs and policies that ensure global standards which truly benefit women and girls (across the world) are implemented. The UN Women committee has made significant progress regarding highlighting gender inequality and fighting for human rights for women and girls. Some of the most notable resolutions that have been passed include the Resolution A/RES/67/146 (2012) calling for eradication of Female Genital Mutilation[2] and the Resolution A/RES/48/104 (1993) on the Elimination of Violence towards women.[3]

The four strategic priorities of the UN Women[4] committee are:

1) Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems;

2) Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy;

3) All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence;

4) Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action;

as it works to make the vision of the Sustainable Development goals a reality in line with the 2010 Agenda.

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[1] United Nations, About UN Women, https://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/about-un-women (Last Accessed: 28 December 2020).

[2] United Nations, Resolution 67/146. Intensifying global efforts for the elimination of female genital mutilations (2012) https://undocs.org/A/RES/67/146 (Last Accessed: 28 December 2020).

[3] The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against women, (1993) https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/ViolenceAgainstWomen.aspx (Last Accessed: 14 December 2020) .

[4] United Nations, About UN Women, https://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/about-un-women (Last Accessed: 14 December 2020).

Topic A: Fight against Violence as a tool to silence Women in Politics

Introduction

At least 1 in 3 women has experienced violence, be it sexual or physical[5]. With women participating in politics across the world, violence has been particularly used to silence them.

Women have always played a critical role in politics from joining the liberation war in Zimbabwe to marching and pushing for political leaders to sit and end the civil war in Liberia and to the Women's March in South Africa. Some of the prominent names of women in politics include Ellen Johnson Sirleef, Kamala Harris, Hillary Clinton, Joyce Banda, Fatou Bensouda and Catherine Samba Panza. Though having these women on the forefront is a steppingstone towards achieving true democracy and the values of the Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 10 to achieve **Gender Equality and Reduce Inequality**, this does not erase the fact that representation of women in politics is something that has not been openly welcomed.[6]

Despite legislation such as the Convention on the Political Rights of Women[7] being adopted in 1953, declaring that all people have the right to participate in the government of their country and access public service, rapid violence to deter women from participating in politics is very rampant. This violence has been in psychological, psychosocial, physical, cyber, and even sexual forms.[8]

The Convention is the first legislation to grant women equal status to exercise political rights; however, most women still have little or no access to the political administration in their countries. This is seen in the underrepresentation of women in politics and the violence female members of parliament face in comparison to their male counterparts.[9]

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[5]World Health Organization, (2017). Key Facts. https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women (Last Accessed: December 28, 2020).

[6] O'Connell, S., Ramshaw, G. (2018). Violence Against Women in Politics Global Perspectives of a Global Issue. https://www.wfd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Violence-Against-Women-in-Politics-Global-Perspectives-of-a-Global-Issue.pdf (Last Access: December 14th, 2020).

[7] United Nations, The Convention on the Political Rights of Women, (1953) https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%20193/v193.pdf (Last Accessed: 14 December 2020).

[8]UN Women Virtual Knowledge Center to End Violence against Women and girls (2017) Forms of Violence against women. https://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/296-forms-of-violence-against-women (Last Accessed December 28th, 2020).

[9]O'Connell, Violence Against Women, p7.

This study guide serves as outlook into the topic of violence towards women in politics. It highlights and delves into the challenges women, who choose to actively participate in politics, face in a bid to shed the light on an issue that affects many women, but has been focused on one dimensionally. It is important to recognise women now in the post-democracy era, especially considering that women make up over half the population in each country.

History of the Topic

Politics has always been considered a man's world. Despite women not being able to actively participate in the parliament or policy making, they have always been at the forefront of most prominent political moments such as the negotiations to end the civil war in Liberia[10] or the Women's March[11] to the Union buildings to protest the discriminatory pass laws against black women in the apartheid South Africa.

Women gained suffrage - the right to vote in the 19th century. New Zealand was the first to grant universal suffrage in 1893, though not extending this right to participation in parliament. In the following year of 1894, South Australia would allow women to vote and stand for election.[12] Over a century later, participation of women in politics is still a major factor which highlights the inequality between men and women.

Culture, customs and religion have been used to deter most women from actively participating in politics. This can be illustrated by the number of women, who still require permission form their spouses and family to vote or campaign for office. In countries such as Malawi, Zimbabwe[13], Sri Lanka and Peru, participation of women in politics is extremely dangerous. Most women have lost their lives, others have been threatened or experienced physical, sexual and psychological violence, whilst others have faced social exclusion.

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[10] Tavaana, Hpw the Women of Liberia fought for peace and won, https://tavaana.org/en/en/content/how-women-liberia-fought-peace-and-won (Last Accessed: 28 December 2020).
[11]South African History Online, (2014) The 1956 Women's March in Pretoria.
https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/1956-womens-march-pretoria (Last Accessed: 28 December 2020).
[12] Women and the vote, New Zealand History, https://nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/womens-suffrage (Last Accessed: 14 December 2020).
[13]Council on Foreign Relations (2014) Women Candidates Face Harassment and Threats of Violence in Zimbabwe. https://www.cfr.org/blog/women-candidates-face-harassment-and-threats-violence-zimbabwe (Last Accessed: 28 December 2020).

Women with the help of organizations such as the United Nations have fought and pushed for women to be given equal access to political participation and this can be seen through the work of the most prominent female politicians to date:

- **Madam Ellen Joseph Sirleaf** – first female president in Africa from Sierra Leone.

- **Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma** – first woman to lead as the Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

- **Hilary Clinton** – United States Secretary of State, former Senator and female Presidential Candidate.

- **Dilma Rousseff** – first female president of Brazil.

- **Catherine Samba Panza** – Interim President of the Central African Republic.

- **Julia Gillard** – first woman to hold the office as Prime Minister of Australia. She was elected unopposed.

- **Joyce Banda** – **First female President in Malawi**. She has always strived to push forth gender equality and women empowerment in Malawi. This is seen through her works as the founder of the Joyce Banda Foundation[14], which aims to assist Malawian children and orphans through education. The foundation further assists women and youth groups in rural areas by providing micro credits to encourage financial independence. Furthermore, Joyce Banda has established the Young Women's Leaders Network, National Association of Businesswomen[15], and the Hunger project, all aimed at eradicating poverty and hunger whilst helping women gain financial independence.

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[14] Joyce Banda Foundation, (2016)
https://web.archive.org/web/20130425052618/http://www.joycebandafoundation.org/ (Last Accessed: 28 December 2020).
[15] National Association of Businesswomen, (2019)
https://web.archive.org/web/20120304054222/http://www.hivos.nl/dut/community/partner/10003036 (Last Accessed: 28 December 2020).

- **Fatou Bensouda** – **Minister in Gambia and Chief Prosecutor in the International Criminal Court (ICC).** She has advanced the rule of law and contributed to world peace through speedy prosecution of offences against children and women.[16] Fatou Bensouda continues to advise the court to seek charges for human rights abuses committed in wars such as torture and rape against women.[17]

Discussion of the problem

Violence has been perceived as only physical; however, the definition of violence as per the World Health Organization is "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation".[18] Women have been the primary victims of violence in politics, particularly during elections. This is because elections and campaigning call for engagement with the public, speaking out, sharing ideas and manifestos – and are a platform many women have been deprived of for a while.

Violence against women in politics has been inflicted through different modes such as sexual, psychological, physical and deprivation and these will be broken down in the following sub-categories as follows:

(i) *Physical and Sexual violence* are the most common forms of violence women in politics face. In many countries, women have been subjected to physical beatings and rape (from fellow parliamentarians or the public[19]) as a measure of deterring them in participating in political campaign or policy outcomes. Many of such cases go unreported due to lack of comprehensive legal frameworks regarding violence against women. The few women, who report a violence, face victim blaming as they are blamed for participating in politics in the first place. Examples are Madam Frances Essiam of the National Democratic Congress in Ghana, who was

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[16] Perfect, D (2016). Historical Dictionary of The Gambia. pp. 59.
[17] Corder, M, ICC prosecutor requests investigation into U.S. military, CIA for alleged war crimes in Afghanistan. (2017) https://www.thestar.com/news/world/2017/11/20/icc-prosecutor-requests-investigation-into-us-military-cia-for-alleged-war-crimes-in-afghanistan.html (Last Accessed: 28 December 2020).
[18] World Health Organization (n.d.). Definition and typology of violence. https://www.who.int/violenceprevention/approach/definition/en/ (Last Access: January 7th, 2021).
[19] O'Connell, Violence Against Women, p10.

subjected to a beating with horse whips at party congress in 2005 and the three Zimbabwean female political activists, who went missing in 2020 whilst protesting, only to be rescued kilometres from their city of protest and to be arrested by the state for faking an abduction despite having notable injuries. The results of physical and sexual violence see many women discouraged and pulling away from participating in politics.

(ii)   *Psychosocial violence* encompasses behaviour or expectations towards women in society that have contributed to their lack of participation in politics. Patriarchy has been used to marginalise women in this field. In most parts of the world, competence and achievements of a woman can be taken as an insult to men. This results in women facing threats of social exclusion should they participate in elections, especially if they campaign against a party supported by their family.

To those, who participate in politics through voting, threats of violence for not voting for a specific party supported by the men in the community are also common. These threats, which can continue even after elections have been concluded, often include divorce or murder. In some cases, these threats are carried out.[20] Attacks on moral probity are also common towards women participating or engaging in politics. Male counterparts will use the "traditional" image of women as a (house)wife and mother in a bid to discredit or undermine the political career of a female candidate or elected official. This is done through pushing different narratives, such as the assumption that women with considerable achievements in politics have done so by "sleeping their way to the top", which creates a notion that women are incapable of attaining political leadership on their own merit. Once elected, women further face disrespectful or condescending comments from their male counterparts, e.g. fellow men perceived as weak in character or physic are referred to as a girl or woman, whilst female politicians are subjected to pet names such as "sweetheart, dear or darling", despite being in a professional setting.

Patriarchy in politics can be seen within parliament and legislation. Despite countries such as Ghana and Kenya having progressive gender equality policies and legislation, there is a wide gap when it comes to the policies and practice. For decades, men in politics have dictated the level of ranking women can be placed at and to what extent they can participate in parliament. In the 2016-2017 Ghanaian elections, only 21 out of 110 parliamentarians were women, and none of those

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[20] O'Connell, Violence Against Women, p12.

women were chosen as regional Ministers to head the 10 regions in the country.[21] Failures of other women in politics have also been used to indict women in politics and the assumption that "women cannot lead" is perpetuated.

(iii)   *Psychological violence* means women in politics are subjected to a conduct, which intends to harm their psychological wellbeing and integrity, and this is usually in the form of verbal abuse, coercion, and cyberbullying. Media is commonly used to perpetuate attacks on dignity. The way female politicians are presented in the press usually creates a negative impression of women in the public eyes. Female politicians are depicted in illustrations wearing clothes that reveal exaggerated body parts such as their backside and breasts. Such illustrations open an avenue for gendered and sexual abuse of women.

Platforms such as Twitter and Facebook have been used to harass women in a bid to hinder them from participating in politics. In countries where social media is popular, female politicians tend to face a disproportionate amount of abuse compared to their male counterparts.[22] They are criticised for lack of husbands or sometimes for their physical appearance. Female politicians are further cyberbullied in the form of threats of rape and physical violence, malicious messages and comments on their posts, objectification of their bodies, and online harassment telling them to step down.

(iv)   *Intimate violence* constitutes a phenomenon that women in politics are likely to experience intimate violence from their partner. For example, many women are not allowed to vote by their husbands or family, because they are likely to vote for a different party. Some women would like to participate in elections, etc., but fail to do so due to their homemaking duties, e.g. during elections voting polls might be so distant, that the woman will not be able to travel there and still come back to prepare food or carry out her expected duties in time. In other cases, women are expected to carry out their household duties, whilst striving to meet the needs of their political career. Failure to do so results in their motherhood being questioned unlike their male counterparts.

(v)   *Intra-party violence* – in some cases violence is within women's own political parties and from other women. How women hold the action of violence against

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[21] O'Connell, Violence Against Women, p10.
[22] O'Connell, Violence Against Women, p13.

other women in politics is very important. In some cases, women, who have been in office for longer period, tend to gatekeep the opportunity for other women to advance further, and for those who have male support, they tend to push forward the narrative that women ought to understand their position beneath the men in politics. Such women tend to allow gender barriers within their own parties, despite being aware of the struggle women within the field face. In other cases, women in higher leadership positions within the party also use intimidation and threats of physical violence against other women in order to safeguard their positions.

(vi)   *Economic violence* means finances being used as barrier of entry to women interested in participating in politics. Many women, especially those in third world countries, struggle with resources needed to campaign in elections. An example is how men in in African states can easily attain loans from banks due to having collateral, but women cannot, because they have no ownership of significant assets.[23] Lower levels of economic empowerment and financial instability for women have been exerted to minimise the participation of women in politics.

The 2016 Inter-Parliamentary Union[24] survey of women in legislatures around the world found that 41.8% of women report wide distribution of "extremely humiliating or sexually charged images"; 44.4% receive death, rape, beating and abduction threats; 32.7% are harassed through exposure to persistent unwanted and intimidating messages; and 61.5% believe that the primary objective of the harassment they face is to dissuade them from pursuing political leadership positions. Study further shows that 60% of women do not participate in politics due to the fear of violence.[25]

Violence towards women in politics has been normalised under the guise of "cost of doing politics". However, upholding this narrative has devastating consequences on the quality of democracy. Women, just like their male counterparts, have the right to actively participate in politics without fear, intimidation and harassment.

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[23] O'Connell, Violence Against Women, p. 13.
[24] Violence Against Women in Politics, (2019), International Knowledge Network of Women In Politics, https://www.iknowpolitics.org/sites/default/files/final_english_consolidated_reply_e-discussion_on_vawp_1.pdf (Last Access: December 14, 2020).
[25] Chemaly. S., What women politicians' online harassment tells us about degraded democracy, (2017) https://www.womensmediacenter.com/speech-project/what-women-politicians-online-harassment-tells-us-about-degraded-democracy (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

Previous UN Involvement

The section is arranged into a comprehensive list, which provides a coherent timeline of the previous involvement of the United Nations and its agencies on the discussed issues.

<u>2003</u> – The Resolution A/RES/58/142[26] on Women's Political Participation, which calls for member states to develop mechanisms and training programs that encourage women to participate in electoral process and improve women's capacity to cast informed votes in free and fair elections, is adopted by the General Assembly.

<u>2010</u> – The Resolution A/RES/64/137[27] on the Intensification of Efforts to Eliminate all Forms of Violence against Women.

<u>2011</u> – The Resolution A/RES/66/130[28] on Women's Political Participation is adopted by the General Assembly. The resolution called for and promoted recognition of the importance of women's participation in the political process, whilst encouraging a greater involvement of women in decision making on all levels.

<u>2013</u> – The Resolution A/RES/68/184[29] on Measures taken and Progress achieved in the Promotion of Women and Political Participation.

<u>2018</u> – The United Nations issued a Special Rapporteur (report) A/73/301[30] on Violence against Women in Politics, its causes and consequences. The report analysed the violence against women in politics including those in parliament and in elections. It further broke down manifestations of violence against women in politics and cited the international human rights and independent mechanisms on violence against women.

<u>UN Women Government Commitments</u>[31]– a list of member states pledging their alliance in the fight against violence against women in politics whilst offering solutions in the fight against violence towards women in politics.

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[26] United Nations. Women and political participation, (2003) https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/58/142 (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[27] United Nations. Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, (2010) https://undocs.org/A/RES/64/137. (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[28] United Nations. Women and political participation, (2011) https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/66/130, (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[29] United Nations, Measures taken, and progress achieved in the promotion of women and political participation, (2013), https://undocs.org/A/68/184 (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[30] United Nations, Violence against women in politics: Note by the Secretary-General (2018), https://undocs.org/en/A/73/301, (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[31] UN Women, Government commitments, https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/take-action/commit/government-commitments (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

Possible solutions

There are various solutions to the discussed topic. Although they may differ in the approach, core mechanism or intensity, their common characteristic is their complexity and long-term nature. Virtually all presented solutions require a strong, just and established institutional basis, which is absent in numerous places, where violence against women take place. Therefore, the approach of the committee needs to be both broad, to address the complexity, and detailed, to provide a concrete guidance for states to adopt.

The first presented solution is a *legal reform*, which would enable to address the impact of insufficient implementation of laws, lack of support from the police, judiciary and power structures. Moreover, such reform would uncover how such a lack further perpetuates violence against women in politics.

Making *justice apparatus accessible for survivors of violence in politics* is a core issue within the debate. Several states might not have a sufficient institutional capacity for such ambitious transition at their disposal; therefore, an international approach should be examined.

Despite commitments made in past, countries and governments should further *commit to address and combat domestic violence against women*, whilst considering how it outlines a path to the violence of women in politics.

As implied throughout this study guide, short-term solutions have to be complemented with long-term and indirect solutions in order to achieve sustainability of the progress made. *Raising awareness about violence against women*, including those in politics, but not limited to gender-based violence, could be an effective measure to follow.

Both national and international institutions could *offer training workshops, education programs and helplines* for survivors of violence against women who engage and participate in politics. The international community can support such efforts both financially and/or in manpower and expertise.

In order to be successful, global efforts, which might be interpreted as a forced top-down agenda should be complemented with bottom-up efforts, such as *encouraging political parties to address violence against women in their parties from within*. Furthermore, implementation of *parliamentary code of conducts*, which treat both women and men equally and with dignity can assist in the fight against violence. Additionally, women should be trusted with *leading portfolios of greater importance* or more serious responsibilities in a parliament.

Bloc positions

This section presents possible bloc positions with selected countries representing possible viewpoints within the international community. Although there is a consensus on the importance of the discussed issue, approaches vary greatly.

African States

Gender norms are generally still rigid in most African communities, in particular those affecting women when it comes to political participation. To provide an example, in Somalia, there are less than 5 female ministers out of 28 ministers in parliament, and there are less than 10 female members of parliament out of the 86, which form the Somalian legislation. [32] In Zimbabwe, women constituted 15% of those, who contested for parliament seats in the 2018 elections. Political parties also seemed to favour male candidates to represent them.[33]

Asia-Pacific States

Regional social and cultural barriers do not encourage women to lead. Violence or threats of violence are used as obstacles to women's political participation. In Iraq as of 2019, only 84 women served as members of the parliament in the 329-member body.[34] China has never had a female president or women serving on the Standing Committee since 1949. [35]

Eastern European States

Most women in these states face different types of violence, such as lack of economic, physical, and psychological support should they intend to pursue a career in politics.

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[32]UN Women, Somalia. https://africa.unwomen.org/en/where-we-are/eastern-and-southern-africa/somalia (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[33] Morna, C. (2018). Women the biggest losers in Zim election. https://mg.co.za/article/2018-07-06-00-women-the-biggest-losers-in-zim-election/ (Last Access: January 7th, 2021).

[34] Al-Rahim, R. (2019). Women MPs in the Iraqi Parliament. https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/women-mps-the-iraqi-parliament (Last Access: January 7th, 2021).

[35] CNN. Why China has so few female leaders, (2017), https://edition.cnn.com/2017/10/22/asia/china-female-leaders/index.html (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

Latin America and the Caribbean

For instance, in Brazil as of 2018, women comprised 52.5% of the population[36], but were the least represented. The main reason for the lack of representation is an insufficient access to resources and gaining voter support.

Western and European States

This bloc could be regarded as most advanced when it comes to participation of women in politics. However, a full participation in politics and violence against women, especially against those running for office, are still very rampant. Although in Canada the first woman was elected to office in 1921, the country has had one female prime minister to date.[37] As for the United States of America, participation of women in politics dates to 1845, when women were able to participate in conventions. Till the present day, the United States has never had a female president; however, 2021 will see the first black female vice president being inaugurated.[38]

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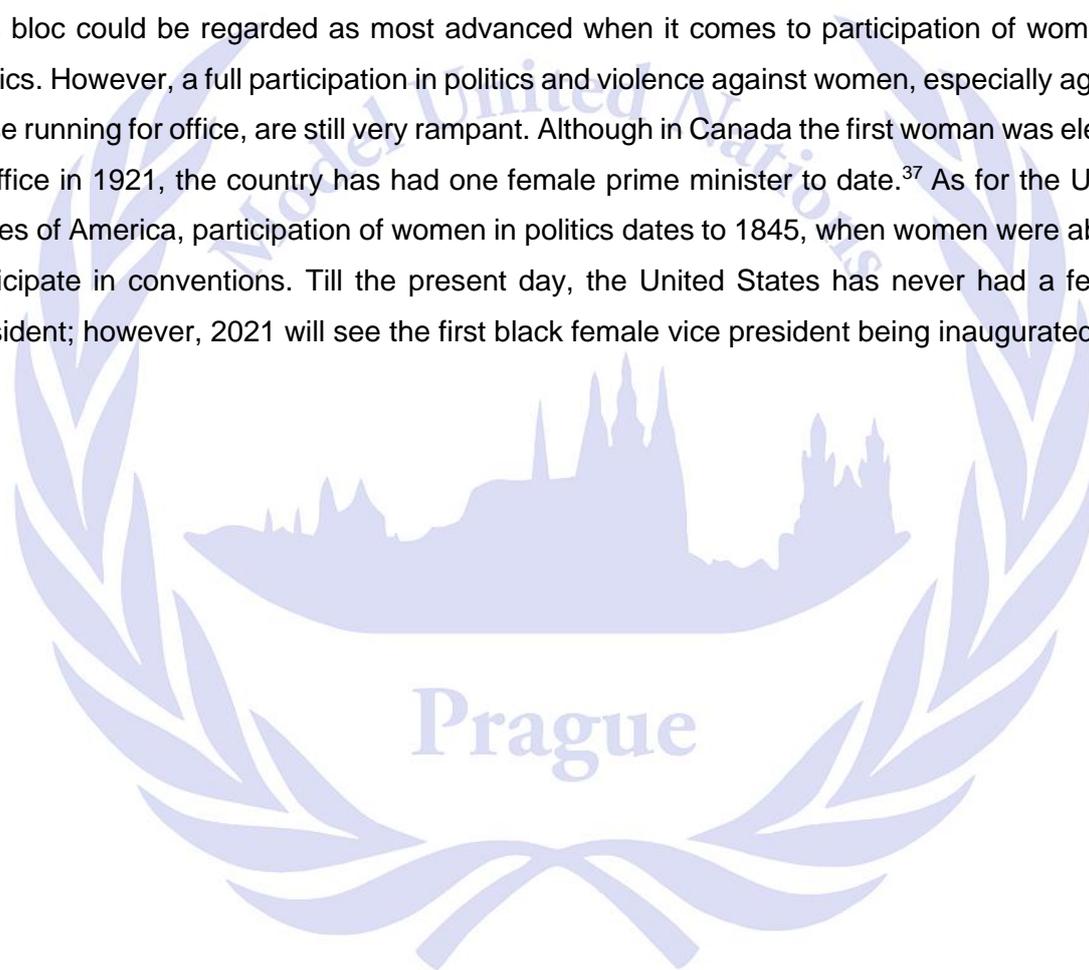
[36] Picanco, L., Brazilian Election Portal. 2018 Brazilian Election Results: Initial Takeaways on Political Renewal and the Role of Women, (20018), https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/2018-brazilian-election-results-initial-takeaways-political-renewal-and-the-role-women (Last Access: December 14, 2020).
[37] CBC (2018). Kim Campbell becomes Canada's first woman prime minister. https://www.cbc.ca/archives/kim-campbell-becomes-canada-s-first-woman-prime-minister-1.4674672 (Last Access: January 7th, 2021).
[38] BBC (2020). US election: Who is Kamala Harris, vice-president-elect?. https://www.bbc.com/news/av/election-us-2020-53745869 (Last Access: January 7th, 2021).

Relevant international documents and further reading

Relevant international documents

- <u>Convention on the Political Rights of Women</u> (1953)[39]
  - The first instrument of international law which protected and enshrined political rights of women. It further guarantees everyone the right to participation in politics and public life without distinction.

- <u>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women</u> (1979)[40]
  - Article 2 guarantees women the freedom of opinion and their expressions., and the right to peaceful assembly;
  - Article 3 guarantees the right to political participation, including the right to vote and to be elected and to have equal access to the public office;
  - Article 7 addresses the right to the equal participation of women in the political and public life.

- <u>Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against women</u> (1993)[41]
  - The Declaration gives women the equal protection to enjoy all human rights and the fundamental freedoms in the political field (Article 3). Article 7 of the Declaration urges states to adopt appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in politics and to ensure that women are equal to men; protects their right to vote and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies; and most of all to participation in the formulation of government policies.

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[39] United Nations, The Convention on the Political Rights of Women, (1953) <u>https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%20193/v193.pdf</u> (Last Accessed: 14 December 2020).
[40] Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, (1979) <u>https://www.ohchr.org/documents/professionalinterest/cedaw.pdf</u> (Last Accessed: 14 December 2020)
[41] The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against women, (1993) <u>https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/ViolenceAgainstWomen.aspx</u> (Last Accessed: 14 December 2020).

- [Resolution A/RES/64/137](#) on the Intensification of Efforts to eliminate all Forms of Violence against Women[42] (2010)

- [Resolution A/RES/66/130](#) on Women's Political Participation[43] (2011)
    - Called for and promoted recognition of the importance of women's participation in the political process, whilst encouraging the greater involvement of women in decision making at all levels.

- [Resolution A/RES/68/184](#) on Measures taken and Progress achieved in the Promotion of Women and Political Participation[44] (2013)

- [Special Rapporteur A/73/301](#) on Violence against Women in Politics, its Causes, and Consequences[45] (2018)
    - The report analysed the violence against women in politics including those in parliament and in elections. It further broke down manifestations of violence against women in politics and cited the international human rights and independent mechanisms on violence against women.

- [Sustainable Development Goal 5](#)[46]
    - The Sustainable Development Goal 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls, considering the eradication for all discriminatory laws and social norms which restrain women at all levels of political leadership.

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[42] United Nations. Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, (2010) https://undocs.org/A/RES/64/137. (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[43] United Nations. Women and political participation, (2011) https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/66/130, (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[44] United Nations, Measures taken, and progress achieved in the promotion of women and political participation, (2013), https://undocs.org/A/68/184 (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[45] United Nations, Violence against women in politics: Note by the Secretary-General (2018), https://undocs.org/en/A/73/301, (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[46] United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals. https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/ (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

Further reading

iKnow Politics (2019). Violence Against Women in Politics. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VcP5xWJ4Uco.

Women's Media Center (2017). Silencing Women in Politics: The Costs to Democracy of Gender-Based Online Harassment. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwpF-k36CWo.

Questions to consider

1) What measures have your country or regional committee implemented to combat violence against women in politics?

2) What are the effects of social norms in tour country on participation of women in politics?

3) What support is being offered to women in politics in your country?

4) Are the gender dynamics in your parliament equal? Are women adequately represented in top regional or legislator positions when compared to their male counterparts?

5) In which bloc does your country belong? Is your country considered progressive or traditional on the international scene?

6) Which of the presented solutions would be the most suitable for your country? Is country considered to be institutionally strong and established, or rather in transition and in need of assistance?

Topic B: Advancing equality in peace and security processes

Introduction

During Security Council's 4852nd Meeting, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations stated that: "*Women and girls suffered disproportionately during and after war, as existing inequalities were magnified, and social networks broke down, making them more vulnerable to sexual violence and exploitation*" [47].

One of the main purposes and principles of the United Nations is the prohibition of threat or use of force in international relations, its Charter reads in article 2(4): *"All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations."*[48] . Security and peace processes are therefore an inherent part of United Nations' prerogatives.

As women make up over half the population around the globe, their implication in these actions is more than essential and fundamental. United Nations Security Council Resolution S/RES/1325 (2000)[49] is the cornerstone of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) strategy. The United Nations' Security Council expressed its concern that women and children accounted for the majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict. It called on all parties to armed conflict to protect women and girls from gender-based violence. It emphasized the responsibility of all States to end impunity and to prosecute those responsible for crimes against humanity, genocide, and war crimes, including those relating to sexual violence against women and girls. The Council also pointed to the fact that all actors involved in peace negotiations, peacekeeping and peacebuilding need to adopt a gender perspective that included the special needs of women and girls during repatriation and rehabilitation, resettlement, reintegration, and post-conflict reconstruction.

Throughout this study guide, we hope to give all the tools that you will need to answer the thorny issue of **advancing equality in peace and security processes.**

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[47]United Nations, Press Release SC/7908 "Women suffer disproportionately during and after war, security council told during day-long debate on women, peace and security" Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/press/en/2003/sc7908.doc.htm (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[48] United Nations, Charter of the United Nations (1945), Retrieved from : https://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/ (Last Access : December 14, 2020)

[49] *United Nations Security Council S/RES/1325 (2000*) Retrieved from: https://undocs.org/S/RES/1325(2000) (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

History of the topic

The WPS Agenda is relatively new on the global policy scene, but as stated before women have always engaged in war and peace. As an example, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)[50] was formed in 1915, when 1200 women from diverse backgrounds, cultures and nations met at the Hague, the Netherlands to protest war and advocate for women's rights to make decisions in matters of peace and security.

From 1960 to 1990

Early efforts to address the situation of women in armed conflict include:

- the 1969 Commission on the Status of Women, which challenged whether women and children should be afforded special protection during conflict;
- the 1974 General Assembly's adoption of the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict.

The UN World Conferences on Women (1975-1995)[51] were also important landmarks in building upon the idea that women are indispensable participants and active agents of peace, and their interests, voices, and capabilities must be accounted for and taken into account. The first conference in Mexico in 1975 initiated an ongoing dialogue on the status of women in a new space and gave force to the drafting and passing of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)[52], which is an international treaty often referred to as the "women's international bill of rights". The second and third conferences in Copenhagen (1980) and Nairobi (1985) continued to raise the importance of these consultations. At the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, women mobilised to bring more attention to women and peace. WILPF women and thousands of others came together and advocated for Chapter E (Women and Armed Conflict) into the Platform for Action (PfA). The Beijing Platform recognised that civilian casualties outnumber military casualties, with women and children comprising a remarking number of the victims, and proposed

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[50] Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, History (2018), retrieved from: https://www.wilpf.org/history/ (Last Access: December 14,2020).

[51] UN WOMEN, A brief history of the Commission on the Status of Women (n.d) Retrieved from: https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/brief-history (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[52] United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) Retrieved from: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

strategic objectives including reducing military spending to redirect resources to peace; it also asserted that international humanitarian and human rights law need to be upheld and applied to offenses against women.

From the 2000's

The turn of the century brought rising focus on gender disparity, with civil society pressure continuing to push the United Nations to increasingly address gender and equality issues. In 2000, the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century"[53] repeated the commitments made in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The aftermath document called for the full cooperation and participation of women at all levels of decision-making in peace processes, peacebuilding, and peacekeeping.

The same year, UNSC issued a presidential statement[54] commemorating International Women's Day on March 8th. It recognised the connection between peace and women's rights. The Secretary-General created a team to review the UN peace and security activities, following in the Report of the Panel on the United Nations Peace Operations. The report established the call for equal gender representation in peacekeeping missions, especially in positions of authority. It eventually led to The Windhoek Declaration, which calls for gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations, equal access and representation of women in peace processes, and the hiring of women for leadership positions.

Soon after these developments, the Security Council passed historical Resolution 1325 (2000), the first Women, Peace and Security resolution. UNSC's S/RES/1325[55] is the culmination of several decades of advocacy and support, from within the United Nations system and from civil society organisations. It is the result of the growing recognition that women experience conflict differently than men, and such variation requires tailored expertise and attention. It also acknowledges that women have a critical role to play in the ending of wars and the sustainability of peace. Since 2000, eight more resolutions have passed, falling under the umbrella of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

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[53] UN WOMEN, Women 2000: Gender equality, development, and peace for the Twenty-First Century" (2000) Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/session/presskit/gasp.htm (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[54] United Nations, "Peace inextricably linked with equality between women and men says Security Council" (2000) Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/press/en/2000/20000308.sc6816.doc.html (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[55] *United Nations Security Council S/RES/1325 (2000*). Retrieved from: https://undocs.org/S/RES/1325(2000) (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

Discussion of the problem

Patriarchy and Inequalities

Patriarchy, inequalities, militarised masculinities and discriminatory power structures restrain inclusive peace and violate women's rights and participation. Masculinity becomes too often associated with violence and armed response. Women are reduced to victims or passive spectators of political and social decision making. In reality, however, violence is gendered in complex ways and violent masculinities shape both institutions and intimate lives. They reduce space for participation and support inequality and exclusion

Militarised masculinity, and the gendered inequality to which it is bound, is tightly connected to violence both in the home and the wider world. War, violence, and conflict are all rooted in and contribute to gender inequality. Yet policies continue to incorrectly assume a fair playing field and ignore gender power relations perpetuating inequality and violence. The gendered dimension of power and inequalities, and the use of violence to maintain these, must be considered.

Models of gender inequality and violations of human rights exist not only during conflict, but also before and afterward. In Bosnia, for example, women's effective participation in post-war economic and political decision making was excluded, which contributed to deepened gender inequalities and the continuation of violence.

The situation of women in conflict-affected settings is rooted in systemic gender inequality. Such inequality is facilitated by patriarchal structures that normalise gendered exploitation and violence. Other expressions of masculinities, such as nonviolent, conscientious objectors, sexual and other minorities, must be included. The perception of women only as victims and lacking agency must be challenged and replaced with recognition of women as active agents and leaders of change.

Militarisation

Militarisation continues to be used as a process for normalising armed conflict and armed violence. Militarism is built on the idea that the use of force or the threat thereof is the most appropriate response to conflicts. These ideas are fuelled in large part by profitability. The international arms trade in 2017 is estimated to be at least $95 billion by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Global military expenditure is estimated to have been $1917 billion in 2019, the highest level since 1988. The total was 3.6 per cent higher in real terms than in 2018 and 7.2 per cent higher than in 2010.[56]

Figure 1: World Military expenditure by region (1988-2019; 2018 USD billion)
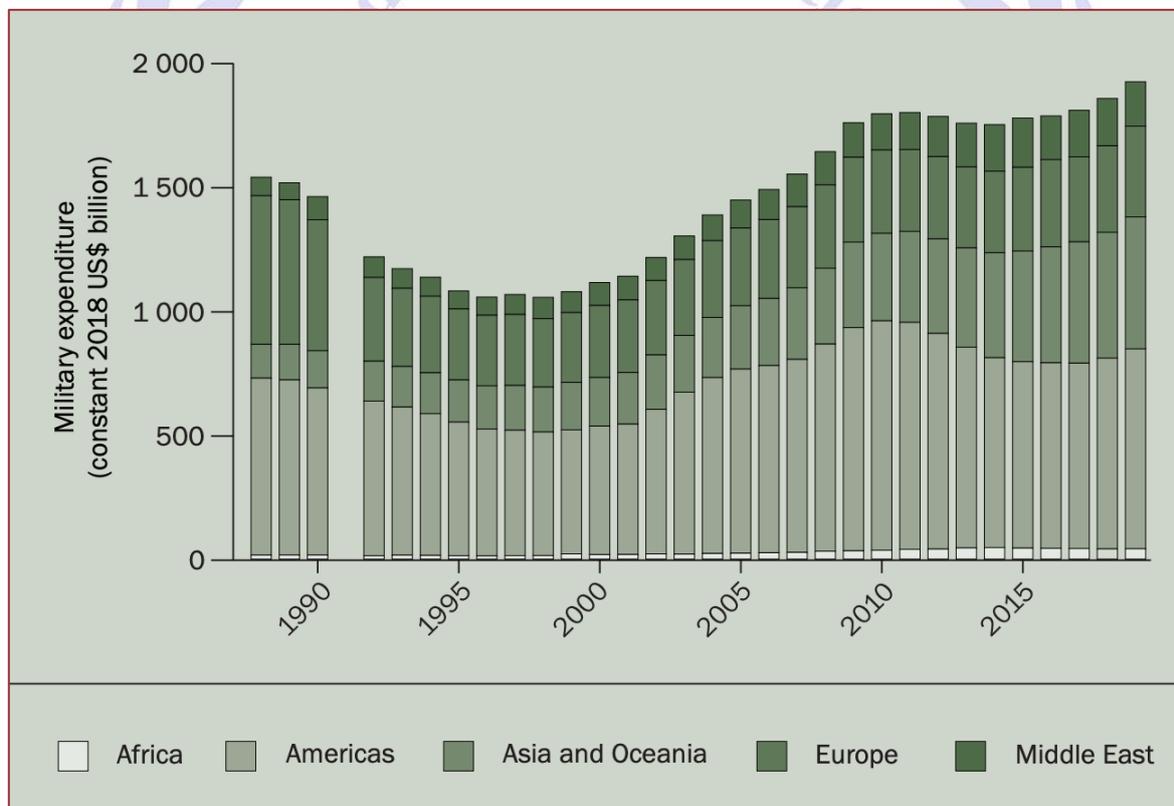
Source: SIPRI (2020).[57]

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[56] SIPRI (2020) Global military expenditure sees largest annual increase in a decade—says SIPRI—reaching $1917 billion in 2019 https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2020/global-military-expenditure-sees-largest-annual-increase-decade-says-sipri-reaching-1917-billion#:~:text=for%20the%20media-,Global%20military%20expenditure%20sees%20largest%20annual%20increase%20in%20a%20decade,reaching%20%241917%20billion%20in%202019&text=(Stockholm%2C%2027%20April%202020),Peace%20Research%20Institute%20(SIPRI). (Last Access: December 14, 2020).
[57] Ibid.

The profits from weapons production and sales provide economic incentive to governments, corporations, and individuals. International law has often been subordinated to the profits of war. Alternative approaches to conflict and tensions are typically painted as naive. Meanwhile investments continue to flow towards an arms race rather than social goods e.g. social welfare, renewable energy, gender equality, education, health and preventive mechanisms for conflict.

Violations of women's human rights, militarised security and violent masculinities are closely interconnected in the realities of violent extremism today. The response to violent extremism is based on the use of force and unequal power-relations. This in turn contributes to the rise of armed non-state actors such as ISIS/Daesh and Boko Haram. This results in an escalation of militarisation, violence and insecurity, which have serious impacts on women. Women's rights have been instrumentalised as a tool for countering violent extremism and even used as a justification for acts of war and violence.

Furthermore, armament can be fuelled by a pursuit to control natural resources. Human security is therefore intertwined with environmental sustainability. Threats of conflicts related to exploitation of natural resources need to be included within the traditional conception of security.

Social economic and ecological injustice

Uneven access to and distribution of social, economic and ecological resources produces injustice which in turn has direct and indirect links to the causes and consequences of violence and conflict, all of which are gendered. The realities play out differently in various contexts and are particularly severe for those facing discrimination on intersecting grounds such as gender, race, socioeconomic status and disability. Governments are struggling to meet human rights obligations including those derived from economic, social and cultural rights. They are also struggling to remove barriers to economic and political equality.

Economic injustices include various factors. Trends show how gender biased macroeconomic policies, labour markets, supply-chains, and political economic norms can negatively impact women and girls. Privatisation and private control over basic services have, in many countries, had a huge impact on affordability of services for women, especially with regard to health, jobs and education. Policies of international financial institutions, including the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, multilateral corporations and private finance institutions often adversely affect marginalised communities and individuals. These policies

can facilitate or contribute to increased violence, inequality and injustice. Furthermore, financial and development structures, policies and institutions are poorly connected and need a comprehensive conflict and gender perspective. Moreover, corporations can be complicit in human rights abuses in situations of instability or armed conflict. Corporations can benefit from increased militarisation of society that can repress protests against human rights violations or demands for due consultation of the people affected by corporate projects. They can also benefit from conflict when such conflicts cause internal displacement, thus facilitating land-grabbing schemes. Finally, many states are currently committing themselves to trade agreements that do not guarantee the prevention of human rights abuses.

Ecological injustices, linked to economic and social factors, show a growing trend of global instability caused by an unsustainable relationship with the environment. This pattern can be seen in many conflicts where access to natural resources such as oil, water, food and minerals is a fundamental cause of conflict. International dependence on production, research and development of weapons and other military requirements exacerbates war and inequality worldwide.

Absence of women's voices

Around the globe, there is a steady deficit of gender expertise: Women are excluded from peace negotiations and decision-making.

According to the 2017 UN Secretary-General report on Women, Peace and Security, in 2016, there was a minor decrease in women's overall participation among delegations to peace processes led or co-led by the United Nations compared with the previous year. Of the 9 processes tracked, senior women were represented in 11 delegations, compared with in 8 processes and 12 delegations in 2015 and 9 processes and 17 delegations in 2014[58]. In 2015, the UN provided gender expertise to four of seven (57 per cent) relevant mediation processes, a decrease from 89 per cent in 2015, 67 per cent in 2014 and 88 per cent in 2013[59].

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[58] United Nations Security Council S/2017/861(2017) Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2017_861.pdf (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[59] United Nations Security Council S/2015/716 (2015)Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2015_716.pdf (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

Of 6 peace agreements signed in 2016, 3 (50 per cent) contained gender-specific provisions, as compared with 70 per cent in 2015[60].

In Yemen and Libya, the security situation has now degraded to the point where military territories have left a very limited space for women to participate in peacebuilding, reconciliation and peace processes, despite them constituting forces for effective change. In Colombia, gender expertise was not included in disarmament work.

Excluding women from peace processes, peace agreements, and post-conflict reconstruction efforts has severe consequences. The figures and facts above indicate that holistic action the Women, Peace and Security Agenda are needed to facilitate women's increased and meaningful inclusion in peace work across the conflict cycle. Changing the failed *status quo* requires that women and women-led civil society have the opportunity to actively contribute to peace processes as independent leaders on women's rights and peace.

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[60] UN Women, Women highlights the voices of women building sustainable peace and mobilizing for justice and equality https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/10/media-advisory-un-women-at-open-debate-on-security-council-resolution-1325 (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

Previous UN involvement

In response to persistent pressure from civil society, the United Nations Security Council has adopted ten resolutions on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. These resolutions are: S/RES/1325[61] (2000); S/RES/1820[62] (2008); S/RES/1888[63] (2009); S/RES/1889[64] (2010); S/RES/1960[65] (2010); S/RES/2106[66] (2013); S/RES/2122[67] (2013); S/RES2242[68] (2015), S/RES2467[69] (2019), and S/RES/2493[70] (2019). These resolutions make up the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. They guide work to promote gender equality and strengthen women's participation, protection, and rights across the conflict cycle, from conflict prevention to post-conflict reconstruction.

The first one, and surely the most remarkable is Resolution S/RES/1325/[71] adopted on 31 October 2000. This was the first time that UNSC addressed the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women, it recognised the under-valued and under-utilised contributions that women make to conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding. Finally, it stresses the importance of women's full and equal participation as active agents in the security and peace processes.

Resolution S/RES/1820 adopted on June 19th, 2008, recognises sexual violence as a weapon and tactic of war, notes that rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute a war crime, crime against humanity, or a constitutive act with respect to genocide. It calls for

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[61] United Nations Security Council S/RES/1325 (2000) https://undocs.org/S/RES/1325(2000) (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[62] United Nations Security Council S/RES/1820 (2008) https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1820(2008) (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[63] United Nations Security Council S/RES/1888 (2009) https://undocs.org/S/RES/1888(2009) (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[64] United Nations Security Council S/RES/1889 (2009) https://undocs.org/S/RES/1889(2009) (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[65] United Nations Security Council S/RES/1960 (2010) https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1960(2010) (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[66] United Nations Security Council S/RES/2106 (2013) https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2106(2013) (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[67] United Nations Security Council S/RES/2122 (2013) https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2122(2013) (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[68] United Nations Security Council S/RES/2242 (2015) https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2242(2015) (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[69] United Nations Security Council S/RES/2467 (2019) https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2467(2019) (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[70] United Nations Security Council S/RES/2493 (2019) https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2493(2019) (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

[71] United Nations Security Council S/RES/1325 (2000) https://undocs.org/S/RES/1325(2000) (Last Access: December 14, 2020).

training of troops on preventing and responding to sexual violence and for more deployment of women in peace operations.

On September 30th, 2009, Resolution S/RES1888 was adopted. It reiterates that sexual violence is indeed exacerbating armed conflicts and impedes international peace and security. The resolution calls for leadership to address conflict-related sexual violence and the deployment of Team of Experts where cases of sexual violence occur.

Resolution 1889 was adopted a few days later October 5th, it focuses mainly on post-conflict peacebuilding and on women's participation in all stages of peace processes. It also calls for the development of indicators to measure the implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2000).

UNSC S/RES1960 (2010) was adopted on June 24th, 2013 and aims attention on operationalising obligations rather than creating new structures.

Adopted on 18 October 2013, Resolution S/RES/2122 (2013), explicitly affirms an "integrated approach to sustainable peace, recognises the need to address root causes of armed conflict and security risks faced by women, sets out concrete methods for combating women's participation deficit and links disarmament and gender equality by mentioning the Arms and Trade Treaty twice.

A few years later, Resolution S/RES/2242 (2015) encouraged the assessment of strategies and resources with regards to the implementation of the WPS Agenda, highlights the importance of collaboration with and within civil society and recognises the prominence of integrating WPS across all country situations.

Finally, UNSC S/RES/2467 adopted on April 23rd, 2019 recognises that sexual violence in conflict occurs on a continuance of violence against women and girls. It also acknowledges national ownership and responsibility in addressing root causes of sexual violence, and names structural gender inequality and discrimination as a root cause and the need for a survivor-centred approach; it further encourages member states to ensure that prevention and response are non-discriminatory and specific and respect the rights and prioritize the needs of survivors, including vulnerable or targeted groups. The resolution affirms that services have to include provisions for women with children born as a result of sexual violence in conflict as well as men and boys, and urges member states to strengthen policies that offer appropriate responses and challenge cultural assumptions about male invulnerability. Finally, it urges member states to make access to justice easier for victims thanks to reparations and a strengthened criminal law and system.

Possible solutions

There are several ways how to approach the discussed issue, and national approaches and preferences vary greatly among the international community. Nevertheless, the international community may attempt to encourage the implementation of the following (but not limited to) suggestions:

1) Support women's full and equal representation in all levels of peace processes and security efforts;

2) Recognize young women's agency and works to enhance their inclusion, participation, protection in research and advocacy;

3) Support and engage women in building and sustaining peace;

4) Facilitate the participation of women from civil society in thematic and country-specific meetings of the Security Council;

5) Develop nation action plans to respond to their particular situation;

6) Fully implement previous UNSC resolutions.

Bloc positions

Ghana

Ghana's first Nation Action Plan (NAP)[72] was developed in 2010 but launched in 2012 for the period 2012-2014. The development of the NAP was led by the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs with broad-based participation from civil society. The plan is unique in that it has a separate action plan for coordinating the implementation of the NAP. Although Ghana has not experienced armed conflicts of grave humanitarian consequences, there have been several violent ethnic conflicts with adverse impacts on especially women and girls which make it absolutely appropriate for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Ghana. This is coupled with the fact that Ghana is involved in the maintenance of international Peace and Security by contributing troops to different peace support and peacekeeping operations. The relevance of a Ghana National Action Plan is ultimately for the maintenance of both National and International Peace and Security in general, and is therefore guided by the experience of localised pockets of intra-state conflicts which are mainly characterized by chieftaincy and land disputes as well as its multilateral co-operation and active participation in several international peacekeeping operations within the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU) as well as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Iraq

Iraq's National Action Plan[73] was launched in February 2014 for the period 2014-2018, making it the first Middle Eastern country to adopt a NAP. It is unique in that it offers an extensive introduction and analysis of women in Iraqi society, and points out specific ways in legal, political, and economic arenas where women are discriminated against or marginalized. The substantive portion of the NAP is small relative to the introductory narrative, but the material that is provided is specific. Iraqi society and Iraqi women in particular have suffered difficult conditions and catastrophes after several wars and economic sanctions that had a strong impact on women and denied them – or at least partly led to denying them – access to their fundamental rights. Iraqi women have played an important part during times of armed conflicts

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[72] Peace Women, "Ghana Nation Action Plan" (2010) Retrieved from:
http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/ghana_nap_oct2010.pdf (Last access December 24, 2020).
[73] Peace Women, Iraq National Action Plan (2014) Retrieved from:
https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/final_draft_Iraq-_nap_1325_eng.pdf (Last Access: December 24, 2020).

and deterioration of social conditions. They have long struggled to maintain social order and ensure its sustainability. However, despite their early involvement in the process of construction and development and the role they play in shaping the future of Iraq and preserving its identity and unity, women are struggling on all levels to preserve their country, society, and family. Meanwhile, women face challenges that question their right to equal access to leadership positions and consider national issues to be exclusively masculine.

Brazil

The Government of Brazil launched its first National Action Plan (NAP)[74] in March 2017 for a period of two years (2017-2019). Brazil has no recent history of armed conflict and does not face any external threats. The impeachment of Dilma Rousseff in 2016, ended 13 years of rule by the Workers' Party in Brazil and brought to power President Michel Temer for the remaining two years of Rousseff's term. Temer eliminated the ministry of women, racial equality, and human rights, which he rolled into the ministry of justice, that is in charge of the NAP implementation. Even though the Brazilian Constitution guarantees women the same rights as men, women lag behind men in both political and economic status throughout the country. As of 2016, it is reported that every two minutes in Brazil, five women are beaten, while 13 Brazilian women are murdered every day. By adopting the NAP, the Brazilian Government reaffirms its commitment to the promotion of international peace and security, as well as to the defense of gender equity and the empowerment of all women and girls. However, Brazilian NAP clearly showcases the intention of the Government to re-frame women's role in society and position them as key participants in the country's defense sector.

United States of America

In June 2019, the United States adopted a national strategy on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS)[75], with the Trump administration calling it the first of its kind. In previous years, the US developed a National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and the WPS agenda with the first NAP[76] adopted in December 2011 and

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[74] Peace Women, Brazil National Action Plan (2017), Unofficial translation, funded by ARC DP160100212 (CI Shepherd) Retrieved from : http://peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/Brazil%20NAP%202017%20(English).pdf (Last Access : December 24, 2020)

[75] Peace Women, United States Strategy on Women, Peace and Security (2019), Retrieved from : https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/WPS-Strategy-FINAL-PDF-6.11.19.pdf (Last Access December 24, 2020)

[76] Peace Women, United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2011), Retrieved from : https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/us_nationalactionplan_2011.pdf (Last access December 14,2020)

the second NAP[77] adopted in June 2016 for the periods of 2011-2015 and 2016-2018, respectively. The United States has considerable influence in global security as a permanent member of the UNSC, and an influential economic, political and military power. While in 2013 the US signed the Arms Trade Treaty, which regulates the flow of weapons across international borders, the US government in 2019 informed the UN Secretary-General that the US has no intention to become a party to the treaty. The United States is presently engaged in military operations in several locations around the world, such as Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq, in addition to having numerous permanent bases, and joint training operations in places such as Poland, Ukraine, Kuwait, South Korea, Japan, Yemen, and Somalia as well as being a major troop contributor to NATO. The US is also a large aid contributor and holds considerable influence in world banking institutions.

Figure 2: Action Plans for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on WPS
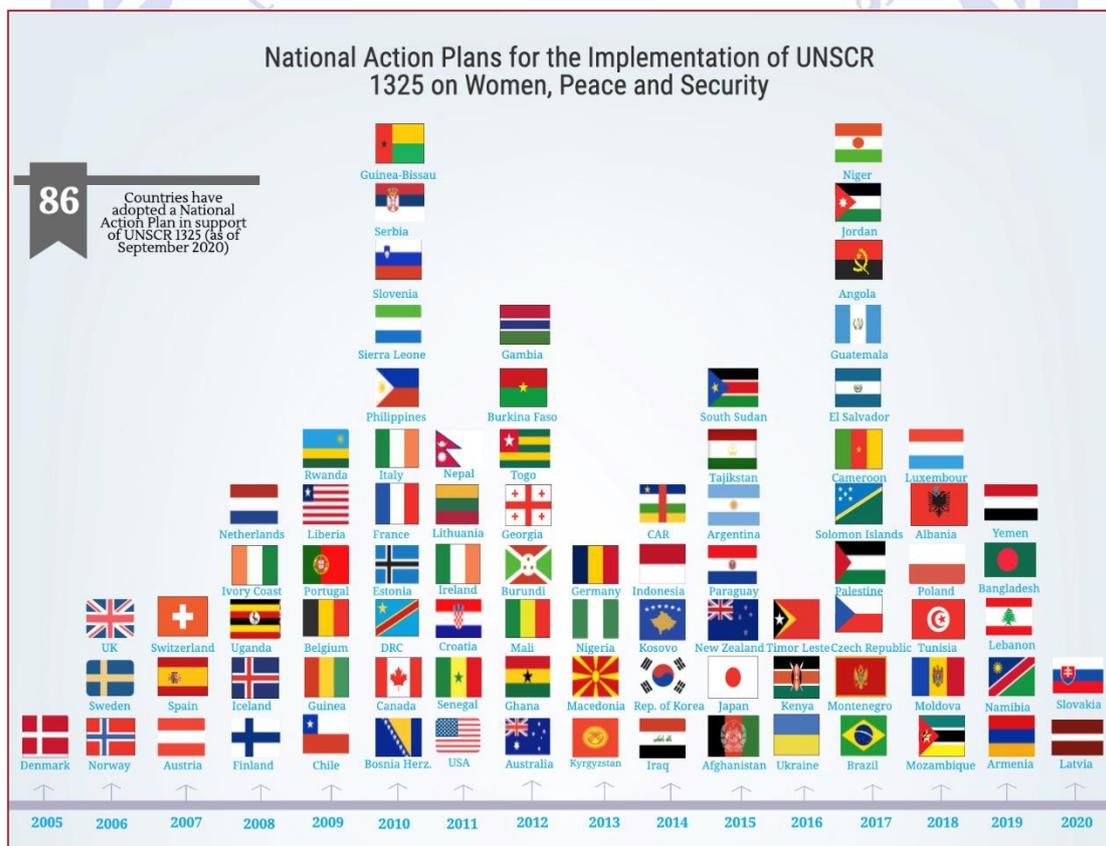
Source: Peace Women (2020).[78]

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[77] Peace Women, The United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2016), Retrieved from: https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/women-national-action-plan.pdf (last access, December 24,2020).

[78] Peace Women (2020). WPS - National-level Implementation. Retrieved from: https://www.peacewomen.org/member-states (Last Access: January 15th, 2021).

Relevant international documents and further reading

Relevant international documents

- [Secretary-General's 2010 report on women's participation in peacebuilding](#) (2010)

  - provided the foundation for the "Secretary-General's seven-point action plan on gender-responsive peacebuilding", which seeks to enhance the United Nations' responses to women's needs and priorities in the aftermath of conflict, and support women as equal participants in shaping their communities and societies. It sets out commitments across the following areas: conflict resolution, post-conflict planning and financing, civilian capacity, governance, rule of law, and women's economic recovery.

- [Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control](#) (A/RES/71/56) (2016)

- [Strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution](#) (A/RES/70/304) (2016)

- [United Nations action on sexual exploitation and abuse](#) (A/RES/72/312) (2018)

- [Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse: Report of the Secretary-General](#) (A/72/751) (2018)

- [Report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence](#) (S/2020/487)

- [Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (2020)](#) (S/2020/946) (2020)

- [Women, Peace and Security Annual report](#) (2019-2020)

  - demonstrates the possibilities, showcasing the breadth of UN Women's work on women, peace, and security in 2019, and the growing capacity to bridge immediate crises with interventions and strategies for prevention and peacebuilding that last for

the long term. With comprehensive partnerships across the United Nations, Member States, and civil society, UN Women is well-positioned to respond, both during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, emerging from the current crisis on a path to lasting peace, justice, equality, and inclusion for all.

Further reading

- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action – The Beijing Platform for Action recognized that peace is inextricably linked with equality between women and men and development.

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the women, peace and security agenda are mutually supportive across all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Goal 5 relates to gender equality and Goal 16 to stable and peaceful societies.

Questions to consider

1) What programs did you country put in place to assure women inclusion in peace and security processes?

2) What could your country do to strengthen the insertion of women in security and peace processes?

3) How is civil society involved in the Women, Peace and Security Agenda?

4) How to better implement the Women, Peace and Security Agenda?

5) Is action on Women, Peace and Security integrated in other UN priority areas?

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