

**SEEKING  
ACCOUNTABILITY  
AND PREVENTING  
REOCCURRENCE:  
ADDRESSING  
CONFLICT-  
RELATED SEXUAL  
SLAVERY  
THROUGH THE  
WOMEN, PEACE,  
AND SECURITY  
AGENDA**

**gnwp** Global Network  
of Women  
Peacebuilders



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**gnwp** Global Network  
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**KOICA**  
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# Executive Summary

Conflict-related sexual slavery is a widespread, systematic, institutionalized, and deliberate human rights abuse committed by militaries under government supervision, state-sponsored militia groups, non-state armed groups, violent extremist groups, and criminal networks alike. Causing tremendous and long-lasting harm to women, girls, and entire communities, sexual slavery is used as a weapon of war, a wartime strategy, or a tactic of terrorism to recruit and retain fighters, fund operations, instill fear, destroy communities, and promote ideology.

The context in which conflict-related sexual slavery is occurring has evolved since World War Two. The rise of violent extremist groups and criminal networks has contributed to the widespread use of the bodies of women and girls as a form of currency in the political economy of war. Forced displacement, refugee crises, and humanitarian emergencies as a result of armed conflict have further exacerbated insecurity for women and girls, increasing their vulnerability to sexual slavery.

Survivors of sexual slavery are not a homogenous group—each individual experience is unique and affected by geography, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, nationality, and religion, among other intersecting factors. Yet survivors across conflict contexts often face high levels of stigmatization and marginalization from their communities and families. In spite of this, many survivors have broken the barrier of silence and actively advocate for accountability and reparations from perpetrators, dispelling the narrative that survivors of conflict-related sexual slavery are passive victims without agency. In the absence of effective action taken by global and national policymakers to address conflict-related sexual slavery, survivors—with the support of women's civil society—call for accountability, justice, relief and recovery services, protection, and prevention of reoccurrence.

Although international human rights, humanitarian, and criminal laws and policies on preventing violent extremism and countering terrorism recognize and condemn conflict-related sexual slavery, significant gaps persist when it comes to consistent, coherent, and specific efforts at prevention, protection, accountability, and relief and recovery for survivors. The failure to address conflict-related sexual slavery through gender-responsive peace processes, post-conflict resolution, and transitional justice mechanisms contributes to a reoccurrence of the crime, along with continued impunity for perpetrators and inadequate redress for survivors.

**The Women, Peace, and Security resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council provide a critical framework to improve the global response to conflict-related sexual slavery.**

However, it is essential to strengthen specific policies, provisions, and programming on conflict-related sexual slavery for the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security resolutions, including National Action Plans. Localization of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 is an important instrument to ensure that the needs of survivors of sexual slavery are met and to prevent the reoccurrence of the crime, through context-specific, survivor-centered conflict resolution initiatives developed in partnership with women's civil society.

The coinciding 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325, and the 20th anniversary of the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal for the Trial of Japan's Military Sexual Slavery in 2020 present a critical opportunity to highlight the need to step up the response to sexual slavery, particularly justice and reparation for survivors as well as prevention efforts. It is a unique moment for survivors, women's rights organizations, and civil society groups worldwide to demand that the United Nations, Member States, regional organizations, the International Criminal Court, and the International Court of Justice take concerted action to end sexual slavery in collaboration with civil society, the media, academia, faith-based institutions and other key stakeholders.

The Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP), with support from the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), coordinated a global research to analyze historical and contemporary incidences of sexual slavery, from World War Two to the present geopolitical context. The overall goal of the research is to promote synergies in the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda, international humanitarian and human rights laws, and policies to prevent and counter violent extremism to improve the prevention of, protection from, accountability mechanisms for, and relief and recovery for survivors of sexual slavery. To ensure that this research reflects the voices of survivors of sexual slavery and women's civil society on the ground in conflict-affected communities, the research team produced three case studies: one on sexual slavery during World War Two in Asia and the Pacific, and two on more recent incidences of sexual slavery in Uganda and Iraq respectively. Key informant interviews and focus group discussions with survivors of conflict-related sexual slavery, women's rights activists, local and national government officials, human rights lawyers, and grassroots peacebuilders in Korea, Uganda, and Iraq, along with global policymakers were conducted.

This advocacy brief summarizes the key findings and recommendations of the global research and case studies. The full-length global research and case studies will also be made available. GNWP hopes that this research will inform and strengthen the global response to conflict-related sexual slavery and survivor-centered implementation of the WPS Agenda. Critically, this research will serve as a key advocacy tool for victims and survivors of sexual slavery and their families, and civil society activists.

# Key Findings

## KEY FINDING 1:

**Conflict-related sexual violence is not synonymous with rape. Sexual slavery is a distinct, systematic form of sexual violence directly or indirectly linked to a conflict with its own drivers and impact, which must be addressed in its gravity and prosecuted as such. Women and girls who experience sexual slavery are subjected to various types of sexual violence, including rape, trafficking, forced marriage, sexual torture, forced sterilization, and forced pregnancy. At times, they are also obligated to cook, clean, and fight.**

Conflict-related sexual violence is defined as: incidents or patterns of rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilization, forced marriage, trafficking in persons when committed in situations of conflict for the purpose of sexual violence/exploitation and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls, or boys that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict.[1] The mandate of the Office of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict has made note of the evolution of the definition of conflict-related sexual violence.[2]

Under international law, there is no clear definition of conflict-related sexual slavery, as a distinct form of sexual violence with specific impact, drivers, and execution.

Conflict-related sexual slavery is often recognized in international humanitarian, criminal, and human rights law under umbrella terms such as sexual violence, enslavement, exploitation, forced marriage, and trafficking, which

constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, acts of torture, or acts of genocide depending on the context in both international and non-international armed conflicts as per Article 7 and 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.[3]

Recently, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) in its concept note for the General Recommendation on Trafficking in Women and Girls in the Context of Global Migration specifically identifies sexual slavery as an emerging form of exploitation for which women and girls are being trafficked, particularly in the context of violent extremism conducive to terrorism.[4]

During a key informant interview, Special Representative to the UN Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten, emphasized that “women and girls who are held in sexual slavery are subjected to a range of forms of sexual violence including, rape, trafficking, forced marriage, sexual torture, forced sterilization, and forced pregnancy. They are also forced to cook, clean, and sometimes fight.”[5] As highlighted in the statutes and case laws of the International Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and the Elements of Crimes of the International Criminal Court, the disaggregation of sexual violence offences into specific categories permits a more focused approach to reporting, accountability, relief and recovery measures, prevention, and protection.[6]

[1] Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, “Our Mandate”. Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/our-work/our-mandate/>.

[2] United Nations. (2020, June). Conflict Related Sexual Violence (s/2020/487). The United Nations Secretary-General. <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/report/conflict-related-sexual-violence-report-of-the-united-nations-secretary-general/2019-SG-Report.pdf>

[3] International Criminal Court. (2002, January). Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (No. 92-9227-227-6). <https://www.scribbr.com/apa-citation-generator/new/report/>

[4] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2018, November). General Recommendation on Trafficking in Women and Girls in the Context of Global Migration. <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/Trafficking/ConceptNote.pdf>

[5] Key Informant Interview conducted by the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders with Special Representative Patten on September 25th, 2020

[6] SC/ RES/ 1820. 2008 Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/blog/document/security-council-resolution-1820-2008-on-women-and-peace-and-security/>.

## KEY FINDING 2:

**International humanitarian, criminal, and human rights law all recognize, condemn and prohibit conflict-related sexual slavery as a crime of war, a crime against humanity, genocide, slavery, or torture. However, they lack a consistent, coherent, specific normative framework for the prevention of, protection from, redress for survivors of, and prosecution of conflict-related sexual slavery. As a result, there have been a very limited number of successful prosecutions of conflict-related sexual slavery. Rigorous and consistent prosecution of sexual violence crimes in conflict is central to deterrence and prevention of reoccurrence.**

In international humanitarian, criminal, and human rights law, conflict-related sexual slavery is recognized, condemned, and prohibited as a crime of war, genocide, against humanity, slavery, or torture. Sexual slavery, as a form of sexual violence, can constitute war crimes when committed by occupying forces in the context of international conflict under Article 147 and 27 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.[7] Article Three of the Geneva Convention outlines acts prosecutable as war crimes in non-international armed conflict, including sexual violence (in particular, rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, enforced sterilization, and enforced pregnancy).[8] Under certain circumstances, conflict-related sexual slavery, amongst other forms of sexual violence, can be prosecuted as acts of the crime of genocide, as defined by Article Two of the Genocide Convention.[9] Conflict-related sexual slavery has also been considered under the scope of crimes against humanity, defined as widespread or systematic attacks against a civilian population based on racial, ethnic, religious, or political grounds. Additionally, conflict-related sexual slavery is recognized as a form of slavery under the 1926 Slavery Convention.

Finally, for conflict-related sexual slavery to be seen as a crime of torture, the intentional infliction of severe mental or physical pain or suffering, and a nexus to government inaction or action is required, as outlined in Article One of the UN Convention against Torture.[10]

Although it has been condemned as a crime, conflict-related sexual slavery has been inadequately and inconsistently addressed as a systematic violation of human rights within international law.[11] Following a jurisprudential review of facts that precede the commission of enslavement and sexual slavery, Patricia Sellers and Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum characterized prosecutions of conflict-related sexual slavery as inconsistent and unsatisfactory due to a hesitant acknowledgement of the conduct's criminality and an unfamiliarity with the responsive legal framework.[12] Inclusion under crimes of war, against humanity, genocide, slavery, and torture produces varied evidentiary requirements and judicial processes for the prosecution of conflict-related sexual slavery, which often are not understood or met by legal teams. These legal frameworks do very little to disentangle and distinguish concepts of sexual slavery, sexual violence, enslavement, torture, and trafficking, which often overlap. In addition, different bodies of law, including international humanitarian, human rights, and criminal law, along with domestic law on sexual violence, can be applied in different ways, but often, not concurrently. As a result, there have been a very limited number of successful prosecutions of the crime of conflict-related sexual slavery. The failure of international institutions to hold perpetrators accountable for crimes of conflict-related sexual slavery, amongst other international crimes, contributes to reoccurrence and rampant impunity.

[7] Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949. Retrieved from: [https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocity-crimes/Doc.33\\_GC-IV-EN.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocity-crimes/Doc.33_GC-IV-EN.pdf).

[8] Ibid.

[9] Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 9 1948. Retrieved from: <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%2078/volume-78-i-1021-english.pdf>

[10] Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Adopted and opened for signature, ratification, and accession by General Assembly resolution 39/46 of December 10 1984. Retrieved from: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cat.aspx>.

[11] Patricia Viseur Sellers and Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum, 18 *Journal of International Criminal Justice*, Cardozo Legal Studies Research Paper No.607, "Missing in Action: The International Crime of the Slave Trade", April 23rd, 2020. Retrieved from: [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3583564](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3583564)

[12] Ibid.



### KEY FINDING 3:

Even though the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda provides a crucial global policy framework with which to tackle conflict-related sexual slavery, the WPS resolutions do not refer to conflict-related sexual slavery as a distinct form of violence, nor do they specifically address its incidence or impact. Consequently, National Action Plans (NAPs) on WPS, the primary instrument for governments to localize and implement the WPS resolutions, fail to adequately address reparations, compensation, and restitution for victims of conflict-related sexual slavery.

Similar to international human rights, humanitarian, and criminal laws, the WPS resolutions lack adequate recognition of sexual slavery as a separate, systematic crime that should be addressed specifically in its gravity and specificity. Nevertheless, the WPS Agenda provides an important framework for prevention of, protection from, accountability for, monitoring and reporting of, and relief and recovery services for survivors of conflict-related sexual slavery. Recognizing the gendered impacts of conflict and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, the WPS Agenda calls for the all parties to armed conflict to take special measure to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict.[13]

Critically, the WPS Agenda emphasizes that efforts to end sexual violence in conflict (including sexual slavery) must promote women's meaningful political, social, and economic participation in decision-making at all levels on conflict prevention, ceasefire negotiations, peace processes, peace agreement implementation, conflict resolution, transitional justice mechanisms, preventing violent extremism and countering terrorism, and security sector reform. Through UNSCR 2467 (2019), the WPS Agenda champions the need for a survivor-centered approach in preventing and responding to sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict settings, and developing and delivering non-discriminatory redress which respects the rights, needs, and priorities of survivors.[14] The WPS Agenda underlines that rigorous and consistent prosecution of sexual violence crimes is central to

deterrence and prevention of reoccurrence. UNSCR 1888 (2009) reaffirms that "ending impunity is essential if a society in conflict or recovering from conflict is to come to terms with past abuses committed against civilians affected by armed conflict and to prevent future such abuses." [15] Thus, crimes of sexual violence and sexual slavery must be addressed from the outset of peace processes, mediation efforts, and post-conflict resolution.

While the WPS resolutions address the distinct impact of armed conflict and the importance of women's meaningful participation in conflict prevention and resolution, there is a need to strengthen specific rhetoric on conflict-related sexual slavery. A close review of National Action Plans (NAPs) on UNSCR 1325 in countries where conflict-related sexual slavery has been reported revealed that there is no consistent, systematic inclusion of provisions related to the crime. This failure can be attributed to the inadequate recognition of conflict-related sexual slavery in WPS resolutions, and consequently, the NAPs adopted for their implementation. Despite evidence of high levels of conflict-related sexual slavery experienced by women and girls in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Central African Republic (CAR), and Mali, the governments' NAPs on UNSCR 1325 contain little to no mention of sexual slavery. In the case of Iraq, the NAP for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2014-2018) adopted in 2014 does commit to improving living conditions for women and ensuring that their rights and access to services are protected; ending impunity for perpetrators of sexual violence; and providing victims and survivors of violence with the means for their rehabilitation and reintegration into society during and after conflict.[16] However, the NAP fails to include specific provisions on sexual slavery for the countless Yazidi survivors who experienced the crime at the hands of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). On the other hand, the NAPs on UNSCR 1325 of Uganda, the Republic of Korea, and Timor-Leste do include specific provisions related to sexual slavery. When conflict-related sexual slavery is recognized as a specific crime, its impact and incidence can be more appropriately addressed through redress, compensation, or restitution for survivors.

[13] S/RES/1325. 2000. Retrieved from: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement>.

[14] S/RES/2467. 2019. Retrieved from: <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/2467>

[15] S/RES/1888. 2009. Retrieved from: <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1888>

[16] National Action Plan for Implementation of the United Nation Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. Iraq. 2014. Retrieved from: [https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/final\\_draft\\_Iraq\\_nap\\_1325\\_eng.pdf](https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/final_draft_Iraq_nap_1325_eng.pdf)

#### KEY FINDING 4:

**To improve the global response to conflict-related sexual slavery, it is urgent to strengthen specific provisions and language on conflict-related sexual slavery within the WPS Agenda and corresponding programs, policies, reports, NAPs, Regional Action Plans (RAPs), and Local Action Plans (LAPs). The Localization of UNSCR 1325 can lead to specific provisions and programs on conflict-related sexual slavery that actually meet the needs of survivors or prevent the reoccurrence of the crime, even if NAPs themselves do not contain explicit language.**

Conflict-related sexual slavery often poses a transnational challenge to peace and security which requires a regional response. Regional Action Plans (RAPs) on UNSCR 1325 have the potential to address cross-border issues such as trafficking for the purposes of sexual slavery. RAPs can also galvanize member states to adopt NAPs and serve as best practice examples for the translation of global policy frameworks on WPS to a regional context. However, similar to NAPs, RAPs that cover countries where the incidence of conflict-related sexual slavery has been documented do not consistently include provisions for relief, recovery, justice, accountability, prevention, and protection for survivors. The RAPs for the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region of Africa (ICGLR), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the International Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the East African Community (EAC) on UNSCR 1325 fail to include language on sexual slavery, despite the prevalence of the crime in Member States like Sierra Leone, DRC, CAR, South Sudan, Somalia, Uganda, Kenya, and Nigeria. Unlike RAPs on UNSCR 1325 in Africa, the League of Arab States' Executive Action Plan on the Protection of Arab Women: Peace and Security (2015 – 2030) explicitly acknowledges sexual slavery, forced marriage, and human trafficking as major threats to women in conflict in the region[17]. Critically, the RAP contains specific provisions for the comprehensive rehabilitation and reintegration of survivors of conflict related sexual slavery, who are referred to as former detainees of terrorist groups, and former combatants.

While a limited number of Member States of the League of Arab States (LAS) have adopted NAPs on UNSCR 1325, it is hoped that the effective implementation of the RAP can strengthen the regional response to conflict-related sexual slavery.

In order to bridge gaps between the growing body of progressive global, regional, and national policies on WPS, it is critical to support and invest in the localization of UNSCR 1325. Localization guarantees leadership, ownership, and participation of local communities in full and effective implementation, leading to context-specific, concrete actions that address the devastating impacts of violence conflicts and meet the needs of those most affected. Without effective and supportive local governance, achievements made at the national level in policymaking towards preventing and protecting women and girls from conflict-related sexual slavery may be overturned. Localization of UNSCR 1325 can lead to strengthened specific provisions and programs on conflict-related sexual slavery to meet the needs of survivors or prevent the reoccurrence of the crime, even if NAPs or RAPs themselves do not contain explicit language. That is because LAPs and other local initiatives are developed by local authorities, local women and local community members themselves—including survivors. LAPs include concrete action on the most urgent, pressing WPS issues affecting a particular community.

[17] League of Arab States, Executive Action Plan on the Protection of Arab Women: Peace and Security. 2015. Retrieved from: [https://violenceagainstchildren.un.org/sites/violenceagainstchildren.un.org/files/children\\_on\\_the\\_move/executive\\_action\\_plan\\_protection\\_of\\_arab\\_women\\_peace\\_and\\_security\\_g.pdf](https://violenceagainstchildren.un.org/sites/violenceagainstchildren.un.org/files/children_on_the_move/executive_action_plan_protection_of_arab_women_peace_and_security_g.pdf)





## KEY FINDING 5:

**Despite progress in global policy frameworks on addressing the gendered impact of terrorism, including sexual slavery, national legislation on countering terrorism (CT) and preventing violent extremism (PVE) often fails to recognize and respond to deliberate acts of sexual violence as a weapon of terrorism. As a result, victims of sexual slavery by terrorist groups are stigmatized, marginalized, and denied access to the redress and relief and recovery services they require. To improve the global response to the gendered nature of violent extremism conducive to terrorism and its impact, National Action Plans (NAPs) on PVE and WPS must be harmonized.**

Faced with the devastating impact of violent extremism and terrorism on women, states have the obligation to prioritize women's rights, gender equality, and protection from sexual and gender-based violence in efforts to prevent violent extremism (PVE) and counter terrorism (CT). Adopted in 2015, the UN Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism calls for the need to prioritize efforts to prevent armed conflict, atrocities, disasters, violence against women and children, and conflict related sexual violence, along with the empowerment of women in CT and PVE policies and programs. Significantly, the UN Plan of Action on PVE includes sexual slavery as one of the crimes against humanity, war crimes, and crimes of genocide committed by violent extremist groups.

Nevertheless, national legislation on countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism often does not recognize and respond to deliberate acts of sexual violence as a weapon of terrorism. The Secretary General's Report to the Security Council on Conflict Related Sexual Violence in 2020 highlighted that ongoing counter-terrorism trials in Iraq, Mali, and Nigeria are not considering sexual violence offences within their scope.[18] Due to a lack of legal precedent on prosecution of sexual and gender-based violence as a crime of terrorism, specialized legal investigators, prosecutors, and adequate competence are limited in most national judicial systems. Collecting admissible evidence to meet requirements of domestic criminal law proceedings is also exceptionally challenging for legal investigators. Trafficking and sexual violence often remain hidden crimes, since victims are often prevented from or experience significant barriers to reporting to authorities.

As a result, victims of terrorism are stigmatized, marginalized, and denied access to the redress and relief and recovery services they require. Continued impunity and a lack of accountability for crimes of sexual violence and sexual slavery contribute to their reoccurrence in areas affected by conflict and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. Ultimately, most counter-terrorism measures continue to fail to protect and prioritize women's rights and gender equality. There have also been limited efforts to integrate a survivor-centered approach and meaningfully involve local women in preventing and countering violent extremism, and addressing the gendered impacts of terrorism.

NAPs on PVE are important policy instruments in the prevention of and protection against violent extremism, which can be made gender and conflict-sensitive by integrating language from NAPs on WPS. Several countries, such as the United Kingdom, Lebanon, and Jordan, have ensured synergies between their NAPs on WPS and PVE, thereby ensuring that their counter terrorism policies are gender-responsive. The Jordanian NAP for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2018-2021), adopted in 2018, includes a pillar on preventing violent extremism and protection against gender-based violence.[19] The NAP explicitly recognizes sexual slavery, human trafficking, and forced prostitution used by extremist groups to generate resources and oppress women, specifically Syrian refugees in Jordan. The specific needs and priorities of Syrian refugee women, many of whom survived conflict-related sexual slavery at the hands of ISIS, are addressed in a pillar titled "Relief and recovery in response to the refugee crisis." Additionally, the Jordanian NAP commits to mainstreaming women's needs and gender perspectives as a comprehensive approach within all efforts to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism. To improve the global response to conflict-related sexual slavery, synergies in the implementation of the WPS resolutions and counter terrorism policies, including NAPs, must be promoted.

[18] Report of the United Nations Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence. July 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/report/conflict-related-sexual-violence-report-of-the-united-nations-secretary-general/2019-SG-Report.pdf>

[19] Jordanian National Action Plan (JONAP) for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. 2018. Retrieved from: <https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/Jordan%20NAP%202018.pdf>.

## KEY FINDING 6:

**Transitional justice mechanisms, when gender-sensitive, provide an opportunity to transform inadequate laws and harmful social norms, by ensuring that the gravity of sexual violence is officially recognized and addressed. The failure to address sexual violence in conflict—including sexual slavery—through gender-responsive peace processes, post-conflict resolution, and transitional justice mechanisms contributes to a recurrence of these crimes, along with continued impunity and inadequate redress for survivors. States must transform judicial systems to remove gender biases and address the countless, often interconnected, barriers survivors of sexual violence in conflict face in accessing justice.**

Transitional justice processes can provide platforms for survivors to seek accountability for widespread sexual violence used as weapon of warfare or tactic of terrorism. Truth and reconciliation commissions create safe spaces for survivors to articulate their experiences of sexual violence in conflict and enumerate the human rights violations they suffered, thereby creating a moral and legal basis for redress and reparations. When conflict related sexual violence is excluded from a country's official historical record and public memory due to gender-blind peace processes, post-conflict resolution, and transitional justice mechanisms, the reoccurrence of these crimes committed against women and girls in conflict becomes more likely. The provision of adequate redress and reparations for crimes of conflict-related sexual slavery helps dispel destructive attitudes and stigma survivors experience. As highlighted in the 2020 Report of the UN Secretary General on Conflict Related Sexual Violence, "reparations remain the justice intervention that survivors seek the most, but receive the least."<sup>[20]</sup> Sellers highlights that a criminal conviction does not necessarily give victims the right to reparations or damages; domestic civil proceedings are often required after a case has been prosecuted under international or national criminal law, during which victims

are forced to reveal their identities and face the risk of stigma.<sup>[21]</sup>

The Special Court for Sierra Leone is internationally recognized for its conviction of individuals for crimes against humanity and its examination of forced marriage or "conjugal slavery" during the country's Civil War.<sup>[22]</sup> However, this legal achievement did not result in appropriate redress, relief, and recovery for survivors of conflict-related sexual slavery. Due to funding constraints, the Special Court of Sierra Leone only tried a limited number of persons, thereby failing to adequately address the full extent of conflict-related sexual violence. <sup>[23]</sup> A 2003 Human Rights Watch report recorded the limited assistance programs that have been established for women and girls who survived conflict related sexual violence and sexual slavery.<sup>[24]</sup> As a result of the inadequate recognition, redress, justice, and reparations for survivors and enduring impunity for perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence, women and girls in post-conflict Sierra Leone continue to experience sexual and gender-based violence.

To strengthen accountability for crimes of sexual slavery, amongst other forms of sexual violence, and prevent reoccurrence, States must remove gender biases from judicial systems. In some legal systems, rape is not classified as a crime of violence against a person; men convicted of rape can avoid punishment if they marry the victims, and survivors are denied access to sexual and reproductive health services.<sup>[25]</sup> States should enact special legislation integrating international humanitarian and human rights law into their national legal systems, thereby specifically criminalizing sexual slavery, amongst other acts of sexual violence. The institutional, legal, and sociocultural barriers survivors face in accessing justice, compounded by gender inequalities, must also be addressed in line with General Recommendation No. 33 of CEDAW <sup>[26]</sup>.

[20] Report of the United Nations Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence. S/2020/487. June 3 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/report/conflict-related-sexual-violence-report-of-the-united-nations-secretary-general/2019-SG-Report.pdf>

[21] Key Informant Interview conducted by the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders with Patricia Sellers, former Special Advisor for Gender for the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, on September 25th, 2020

[22] Valerie Oosterveld, American University Journal of Gender, Social Policy, and the Law, 17, no. 2, "Lessons from the Special Court for Sierra Leone on the Prosecution of Gender-Based Crimes". Retrieved from: [https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1057%2F9781137468222\\_7.pdf](https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1057%2F9781137468222_7.pdf).

[23] Human Rights Watch, "We'll Kill You If You Cry: Sexual Violence in the Sierra Leone Conflict", January 16, 2003. Retrieved from: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2003/01/16/well-kill-you-if-you-cry/sexual-violence-sierra-leone-conflict>

[24] Ibid.

[25] UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, Systematic rape, sexual slavery and slavery-like practices during armed conflict: final report / submitted by Gay J. McDougall, Special Rapporteur, 22 June 1998, E/CN.4/Sub.2/1998/13, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f44114.html>

[26] UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General recommendation No. 33 on women's access to justice. CEDAW/C/GC/33. July 23 2015. Retrieved from: [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/1\\_Global/CEDAW\\_C\\_GC\\_33\\_7767\\_E.pdf](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/CEDAW_C_GC_33_7767_E.pdf)

## KEY FINDING 7:

Throughout history, militaries under government supervision, state-sponsored militia groups, non-state armed groups, violent extremist groups, and criminal networks alike have used sexual slavery as a weapon of warfare or tactic of terrorism during armed conflict. For example, during World War Two, the Japanese Army employed sexual slavery as a wartime strategy in Asia and the Pacific to meet their strategic objectives. Since then, different warring parties across the world have continued to use sexual slavery to recruit and retain fighters, raise funds for their activities, spread fear, control populations, and as a form of genocide.

Conflict-related sexual slavery is a widespread, systematic, institutionalized, and deliberate human rights abuse and weapon of warfare used by militaries under government supervision, state-sponsored militia groups, non-state armed groups, violent extremist groups, and criminal networks. The system of sexual slavery during World War Two was established and operated to meet the needs and whims of the powerful Japanese military. Under this system, “comfort women”—a euphemism for sex slaves—were forced to provide sexual services for soldiers. The rationale for the Japanese sexual slavery system was threefold. First, it was thought that it would prevent rapes against local women, as had happened in the “Rape of Nanjing,” which jeopardized Japan’s international reputation.[27] The prevention of rape against local women and girls would help to avoid resentment or hostility from the local population under Japanese occupation, as well as from the international community at large.[28] Second, regulated sexual slavery would prevent sexually transmitted diseases in the military. Healthy soldiers free from venereal diseases meant that the army’s fighting power would not be weakened.[29] To protect soldiers from sexually transmitted diseases, virgin girls and young women, who were regularly tested by military doctors for venereal diseases, were provided in “comfort stations”, managed or controlled by the military.

Third, the system of sexual slavery was expected to boost morale for troops by appeasing the sexual desires of soldiers.[30] The Japanese military thought that “sexual comfort” was needed to keep soldiers at the battlefield, for long periods of time without providing vacation.[31]

In a contemporary geopolitical context, conflict-related sexual slavery is increasingly committed by violent extremists as a tactic of terrorism. Extremist groups use sexual slavery as a strategy to boost recruitment and retain members and fighters.[32] Women and girls are exploited to attract new fighters, often through forced marriages. For example, ISIS attracted hundreds of male recruits by offering them kidnapped women and girls as “wives”—a highly attractive offer for deeply conservative Muslim men raised to believe that casual sex is taboo and dating is forbidden. Violent extremist groups, such as ISIS, al-Shabaab and Boko Haram, have also justified sexual slavery as a way to promote their ideology. Since 2010, al-Shabaab has imposed forced and early marriage as part of the group’s efforts to impose its harsh version of Sharia—religious law—on every aspect of the personal lives of women and girls in south-central Somalia.[33] Extremist groups also use sexual slavery and trafficking to generate revenue. The trading of women and girls through trafficking and prostitution would bring Boko Haram between USD 100,000 to 200,000 per month between 2014 and 2016.[34] ISIS, Boko Haram, and al-Shabaab, amongst other extremist groups, used sexual slavery to instill fear and exert control over communities. For example, ISIS widely publicized videos, photos, and statements showcasing the violence committed by combatants on captured soldiers and civilians on social media to establish a reputation for brutality and intimidate its enemies.[35]

[27] Argibay, Carmen M. “Sexual Slavery and the ‘Comfort Women’ of World War II.” (Stefan A. Riesenfeld Symposium 2002: Crimes against Women under International Law). *Berkeley Journal of International Law* 21, no. 2 (2003): 377.

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] Yoshimi, Yoshiaki. “Historical Understandings on the ‘Military Comfort Women’ Issue,” speech to the 1992 International Public Hearing Concerning the Post-War Compensation of Japan, reprinted in Executive Committee International Public Hearing, *War Victimization and Japan*. (Tokyo: Toho Shuppansha, 1993), 86.

[30] Ji Kim, M. (2019). reparatlons for “Comfort women”: femlnst GeopolltlCs and ChanGlnG Gender IdeoloGles In south Korea. In reparatlons for “Comfort women”: femlnst GeopolltlCs and ChanGlnG Gender IdeoloGles In south Korea (pp. 5–43). [https://journals.library.cornell.edu/tmpfiles/CIAR\\_12\\_2\\_3.pdf](https://journals.library.cornell.edu/tmpfiles/CIAR_12_2_3.pdf).

[31] Yoshimi, Yoshiaki. “Historical Understandings on the ‘Military Comfort Women’ Issue,” speech to the 1992 International Public Hearing Concerning the Post-War Compensation of Japan, reprinted in Executive Committee International Public Hearing, *War Victimization and Japan*. (Tokyo: Toho Shuppansha, 1993), 86.

[32] Jamille Bigio, The Hill, “How violent extremist groups profit from the trafficking of girls”, 10/11/19, Retrieved from: <https://thehill.com/opinion/international/465408-how-violent-extremist-groups-profit-from-the-trafficking-of-girls>

[33] Human Rights Watch, 2012. “No Place for Children: Child Recruitment, Forced Marriage, and Attacks on Schools in Somalia”. Retrieved from: [https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/somalia0212ForUpload\\_0.pdf](https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/somalia0212ForUpload_0.pdf).

[34] Foundation Scelles, Charpenel Y. “Prostitution: Exploitation, Persecution, Repression”, *Ed Economica*, Paris, 2016, Retrieved from: [https://www.fondationscelles.org/pdf/RM4/Terrorism\\_and\\_Sexual\\_Exploitation\\_eng.pdf](https://www.fondationscelles.org/pdf/RM4/Terrorism_and_Sexual_Exploitation_eng.pdf).

[35] Amnesty International, “Escape from Hell: Torture and Sexual Slavery in Islamic State Captivity in Iraq”. 2014. Retrieved from: <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/MDE140212014ENGLISH.pdf>.

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In response to ISIS's campaign of terror, Iraqi and Kurdish forces retreated quickly, facilitating ISIS's capture of unprotected communities. As noted by UNSCR 1820, women and girls are particular targets of sexual violence, including as a tactic of war to humiliate, dominate, instill fear in, disperse and/or forcibly relocate civilian members of a community or ethnic group.

After World War Two, state-sponsored militias, armed groups, or armed forces continued to commit sexual slavery as a weapon of warfare, including as a part of systematic campaigns to commit genocide. The horrifying cases of massive and systematic rape in Bosnia and Rwanda shone light on the use of sexual violence, including sexual slavery, as a deliberate strategy of genocide. Similarly, during the Guatemalan Civil War, sexual slavery was used by the Guatemalan Army to commit genocide against local indigenous populations. The logic of conflict-related sexual violence and sexual slavery as a form of genocide is deeply rooted in the concept of a gendered national identity in patriarchal societies. In communities where women are thought to symbolize assets of the nation, an attack against women and girls is perceived as a conquest of that group's identity, honor, and existence.





## KEY FINDING 8:

The evolution of conflict since World War Two—particularly the rise of violent extremist groups and the number of forcibly displaced people as a result of armed conflict—has contributed to greater insecurity for women and girls. New tactics of warfare, the absence of clear battlefields, the deliberate targeting of education and health care facilities, the use of child soldiers, and the increasing number and diversification of parties to conflict are all trends that make women and girls more vulnerable to conflict-related sexual slavery.

The evolving nature of conflict has contributed to the widespread use of the bodies of women and girls as a form of currency in the political economy of war. Traditional inter-state conflicts have largely been replaced by complex, asymmetric conflicts involving armed clashes between non-state armed groups and governments, or between different armed groups. Although conflict-related deaths have decreased overall, insecurity for women and girls endures—and in some cases, has worsened.

As recognized in UNSCR 2286 (2016), new tactics of both state and non-state actors in recent and current conflicts increasingly and purposefully target civilians and the destruction of civilian facilities and property such as hospitals, homes, and schools.[36] Developments in communications, cyber techniques, bio-warfare, robotics, laser and nanotechnology, and nuclear weapons and increased global military expenditure contribute to ever-advancing tactics to cause irreparable damage to communities. Critically, there is growing tacit acceptance of the increased civilian casualties as a result of remote bombing. This is evidenced by the 400 civilians who were killed in al-Almirriya bomb shelter in Iraq in 1991 by laser-guided missiles and the bridal party of 47 slaughtered in Haska Meyna in Afghanistan in 2008.[37] Additionally, the use of child soldiers and the resulting attack on the rights of children have emerged as a trend in the evolution of modern conflict from Sri Lanka to Syria to the Uganda from the 1990s onwards. Since 2016, child soldiers have been used in at least 18 conflicts around the world.[38] Thus, the outlined trends in modern conflict create an environment of increased impunity for violations of human rights, including sexual slavery.

One of the defining trends in the contemporary geopolitical context is the rise of violent extremist groups. Notorious violent extremist groups like ISIS, al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, the Taliban, and al-Qaida have committed a laundry list of war crimes and crimes against humanity. These include mass killings, abduction, trafficking, rape, sexual slavery, and torture, and the destruction of civilian infrastructure, in addition to inciting religious, cultural, and social intolerance in communities. Violent extremist groups have also undermined state authority and destabilized regions, aggravating unprecedented humanitarian crises and forced displacement. The rise of violent extremist groups and hybrid criminal-terrorist networks has resulted in the systematic use of sexual violence, including slavery and trafficking, against women and girls as a tactic of terrorism.

With a dramatic rise in the average number of refugees due to persecution, armed conflict, and human rights violations, it is evident that forced displacement has become a deliberate and widespread tactic of contemporary warfare. The total number of people forcibly displaced by conflict reached 70.8 million in 2019, with women and girls making up over 50 percent of this number.[39] Forced displacement of communities affected by conflict is frequently orchestrated, directed, and sustained by warring parties. Conflict and displacement make women and girls particularly susceptible to gender-based violence, including sexual slavery; gender-based violence is estimated to affect over 70 percent of women in the context of crises.[40] Therefore, refugee crises, and humanitarian emergencies as a result of armed conflict have further increased the vulnerability of many displaced women and girls to sexual slavery.

[36] Nations, U. (2017). Life in War Zones Remains Grim, with Cities Turned into Death Traps, Civilian Suffering 'Pushed to the Limits', Secretary-General Tells Security Council. New York: Security Council. Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sc12841.doc.htm>

[37] Darren Anderson, The Atlantic, "The Grim Future of Urban Warfare", December 11th 2018. Retrieved from: <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2018/12/technology-will-make-war-even-worse/577723/>

[38] Edward Siddons, Apolitical, "Child soldiers have fought in 18 conflicts since 2016—now the UN is acting", April 2018. Retrieved from: [https://apolitical.co/en/solution\\_article/child-soldiers-have-fought-in-18-conflicts-since-2016-now-the-un-is-acting](https://apolitical.co/en/solution_article/child-soldiers-have-fought-in-18-conflicts-since-2016-now-the-un-is-acting)

[39] Doctors of the World, World Refugee Day, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/world-refugee-day-2019>

[40] Violence, T. I.-B. (2016). Women, War and Displacement: A review of the impact of conflict and displacement on gender-based violence. Dublin: The Irish Consortium on Gender-Based Violence. Retrieved from: [https://www.gbv.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/GBV-Report\\_FINAL\\_LOW.pdf](https://www.gbv.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/GBV-Report_FINAL_LOW.pdf)



## KEY FINDING 9:

**Survivors of conflict-related sexual slavery are not a homogenous group, but suffer differentiated harms based on intersecting inequalities, which can compound over time in the absence of a tailored response. Despite the stigmatization and marginalization they face in their own communities and families, many survivors break the barrier of silence and actively advocate for accountability and reparations. Women's civil society organizations have been instrumental in supporting survivors, and in insisting that concrete steps be taken to address conflict-related sexual slavery.**

Survivors of conflict-related sexual slavery often face high levels of stigmatization and marginalization from their communities and families, particularly when they do not receive adequate redress, recognition, justice, and relief and recovery services through peace processes, transitional justice mechanisms, and post conflict resolution and peace agreement implementation. Each individual survivor's story is different and shaped by factors such as nationality, geography, socioeconomic status, religion, ethnicity, and race, among others. Therefore, it is not appropriate to generalize a person's unique experience of sexual slavery into a homogenous category of sexual violence. Instead, it is crucial to adopt a contextualized approach to understanding survivors' experiences.

Survivors have taken it upon themselves to advocate for their right to justice and adequate redress, despite the ineffective action to prevent the occurrence of, protect women and girls from, strengthen accountability for, and provide relief and recovery services for survivors of conflict-related sexual slavery taken by global and national policymakers. An important form of civil society-led advocacy for accountability and justice for those who have suffered sexual slavery are "Women's courts," most famously the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery,<sup>[41]</sup> which convened in Tokyo from 8-12 December 2000. This inspired women civil society activists in Guatemala, Colombia and Tunisia, to create a space for survivors to testify about conflict-related sexual violence, and to bring forward recommendations and ultimately, justice.

In response to sexual slavery committed by ISIS, civil society organizations, primarily based in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, work with the Yazidi survivors to document crimes committed, collect evidence, lead advocacy for the protection of women and girls, provide reparations for survivors, and facilitate survivors' access to justice. In Uganda, survivors of sexual slavery committed by the Lord's Resistance Army lead peacebuilding efforts to promote reconciliation and reintegration through community mediation and reception centers for former combatants.

As some survivors come into old age and—in the case of "comfort women"—perish one by one, their testimonies of such painful and traumatic experiences have been emphasized as a way of remembering history and publicizing the importance of the issue of sexual violence during war and in conflict situations. Such a painful story of survivors, however, should not be interpreted or consumed only as a victimized voice. Breaking the silence and speaking about their suffering in front of the world requires tremendous courage. For some survivors, it was a significant milestone to identify themselves as an active "survivor," and transform themselves into a "human rights activist," a "testifier of history" who developed agency beyond being a passive victim.

[41] Judgement on the Common Indictment and the Application for Restitution and Reparation [2001] PT-2000-1-T (The Women's International War Crimes Tribunal for the Trial of Japan's Military Sexual Slavery, Japan).

## KEY FINDING 10:

The global response to conflict-related sexual slavery must prioritize the needs and respect the rights of survivors, in order to challenge the perception that sexual slavery in armed conflict is a cultural phenomenon, an inevitable consequence of war, or a lesser crime. Ensuring that survivors and women's civil society organizations meaningfully participate in the development and implementation of policies, programs, initiatives and action plans on WPS, CT and PVE at the regional, national and local levels is not only essential, it is urgent.

The WPS Agenda urges Member States to adopt a survivor-centered approach in preventing and responding to sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict settings, and developing and delivering non-discriminatory redress which respects the rights, needs, and priorities of survivors. [42] A survivor-centered approach requires the full and meaningful participation of survivors of sexual and gender-based violence at all stages of transitional justice processes, peace negotiations, peace agreement implementation, post conflict resolution, and programs to prevent violent extremism and counter terrorism, including in decision-making roles. Women's leadership and participation "increases the likelihood that transitional justice outcomes will constitute effective redress as defined by victims and will respond to important contextual factors." [43] UNSCR 2467 also emphasizes the need for women formerly associated with armed groups, as well as ex-combatants, are able to access trauma services, resocialization, and reintegration initiatives. [44] This is critically important for survivors of sexual slavery who were forced to marry combatants and support operations of extremist groups like Boko Haram. Thus, a survivor-centered approach requires recognition that survivors are not a homogenous group, but suffer differentiated harms based on intersecting inequalities, which can compound over time in the absence of a tailored response.

Governments, traditional, and religious leaders at local and national levels must play active roles in raising awareness of the need to prevent sexual violence in order to eliminate the marginalization and stigmatization survivors experience, as well as to facilitate their reintegration (and that of their children), and to address impunity for these crimes. The global response to conflict-related sexual slavery must prioritize the needs and respect the rights of survivors in order to challenge the perception that sexual violence in armed conflict is a cultural phenomenon, an inevitable consequence of war, or a lesser crime.

[42] S/RES/2467. 2019. Retrieved from: <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/2467>

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid.

# Recommendations

The following recommendations to the United Nations, Member States, regional organizations, civil society organizations, the International Criminal Court, the International Court of Justice and traditional and religious leaders at national and local levels were developed by survivors of conflict-related sexual slavery, women's rights activists, and civil society from Uganda, Iraq, and South Korea who took part in this research.

## On the full and effective implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda:

### To the UN:

- strengthen provisions and language on sexual slavery, as a distinct form of conflict-related sexual violence, with specific corresponding drivers and impact and measures, within global programs, policies, reports, and related implementation mechanisms corresponding to the WPS Agenda
- improve monitoring and reporting mechanisms, such as the UN Secretary-General's Reports to the Security Council on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, on the incidence of sexual slavery by gathering disaggregated data on the different forms of conflict-related sexual violence
- improve sustained coordination and collaboration between UN Women, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, the UN Office of Drugs and Crime, and the UN Counter-Terrorism Directorate to better address the links between trafficking in persons, sexual slavery, and sexual violence committed by extremist groups in conflict and post-conflict settings
- hold Member States accountable for the implementation of the WPS resolutions, as a critical tool to strengthen the global response to conflict-related sexual slavery

### To the UN, Regional Organizations, and Member States:

- systematize the inclusion of provisions on conflict-related sexual slavery within Regional Action Plans (RAPs), National Action Plans (NAPs), and Local Action Plans (LAPs) on WPS to improve delivery of justice, redress, compensation, and restitution to survivors, and prevent reoccurrence of the crime
- ensure that survivors of conflict-related sexual slavery and women's civil society groups meaningfully participate at all levels in the design and implementation of Regional Action Plans (RAPs), National Action Plans (NAPs), and Local Action Plans (LAPs) on WPS
- provide reliable, sustainable, timely, long-term, and flexible funding to women's civil society groups and survivor networks responding to the drivers and impacts of conflict-related sexual slavery

### To the UN and Member States:

- recognize conflict-related sexual slavery as a widespread, systematic, institutionalized, and deliberate human rights abuse and wartime strategy or weapon of warfare used by militaries under government supervision, state-sponsored militia groups, non-state armed groups, violent extremist groups, and criminal networks alike
- promote synergies in the implementation of the WPS resolutions, international human rights and humanitarian laws, and policies and programs to prevent violent extremism and counter terrorism
- integrate key provisions and principles of the WPS resolutions into counter-terrorism measures to ensure women's meaningful participation, leadership, and empowerment in the design and implementation of policies on preventing violent extremism (PVE), countering terrorism (CT), and countering violent extremism (CVE)
- institutionalize Localization as an implementation strategy for the WPS resolutions to bring change in conflict-affected communities

### To Member States:

- prioritize full and effective implementation of the WPS resolutions and NAPs on UNSCR 1325 with corresponding budgets and monitoring and evaluation frameworks
- submit reports on the progress in the implementation of the WPS resolutions, including efforts to prevent, protect, and provide relief and recovery from conflict-related sexual slavery, and General Recommendation 30 (2013) on women in conflict prevention and post-conflict situations in its reports to the CEDAW Committee
- harmonize NAPs on WPS and Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) to improve the global response to the gendered nature of violent extremism conducive to terrorism and its impacts, including sexual violence, sexual slavery, and human trafficking, amongst other human rights violations

- strengthen the integration of WPS priorities, women's rights, gender equality, and sustainable peace into programs on international development and humanitarian action
- require that all programs funded by bilateral aid on peace, security, and humanitarian action for fragile and conflict-affected states have robust, holistic, and comprehensive mandates to address WPS priorities in line with obligations under NAPs on UNSCR 1325
- increase bilateral funding for implementation of the WPS agenda, women's rights, and gender equality within programs on international development and humanitarian action for fragile and conflict-affected states

## On the prevention of the incidence or reoccurrence of, and protection from conflict-related sexual slavery:

### To the UN:

- gather and analyze evidence of the ways in which sexual slavery is used as a weapon of warfare, wartime strategy, and tactic of terrorism by state and non-state actors, so that appropriate prevention and protection mechanisms, including early warning systems to monitor risk of sexual enslavement, can be developed
- the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Women, and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in particular should develop programs to increase displaced women and girls' resilience to trafficking, and access to employment, education, and relief and recovery services

### To the UN and Regional Organizations:

- strengthen international protection mechanisms for refugees and internally displaced persons and safe channels for migration to reduce vulnerabilities to trafficking and sexual slavery amongst displaced women and girls
- provide technical assistance to Member States for the full and effective implementation of the WPS resolutions and international human rights law to prevent armed conflict and sexual slavery

### To the UN and Member States:

- raise awareness of the gendered impacts of conflict, including the incidence of sexual slavery, genocide, and violent extremism, to facilitate a national healing process and due recognition to survivors of sexual violence and slavery
- systematize training of security sector forces on the prevention of, and protection from human and sex trafficking, sexual and gender-based violence, and sexual slavery

### To Member States:

- include issues related to sexual violence in conflict in all decision-making on peace and security, including ceasefire talks, peace negotiations, peace agreement implementation, post conflict resolution processes, transitional justice mechanisms, and preventing violent extremism and countering terrorism, in order to prevent the reoccurrence of such crimes and further outbreaks of violence
- disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate combatants, including child soldiers, by ensuring their access to age-appropriate education and trauma counselling
- transform and address harmful gender stereotypes of masculinity and femininity through awareness raising programs in partnership with traditional and religious leaders to counter the exploitation of these norms by extremist groups
- establish mechanisms for dialogue between women's civil society and security forces to build trust between the two groups, hire women police officers and military personnel, and closely monitor the activities of security sector forces to ensure compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law

## On the participation of survivors and women's civil society in global and national peace and security processes:

To the UN:

- encourage and support grassroots survivor-led networks working to address the drivers and impacts of conflict-related sexual slavery in their communities, through the provision of technical assistance, reliable funding, and regular global and regional coordination mechanisms

To the UN and Member States:

- recognize and invest in the efforts of women's civil society to strengthen accountability mechanisms and improve relief and recovery services for survivors of conflict-related sexual slavery
- promote women's meaningful political, social, and economic participation in decision-making at all levels on conflict prevention, ceasefire negotiations, peace processes, peace agreement implementation, conflict resolution, transitional justice mechanisms, preventing violent extremism and countering terrorism, and security sector reform
- ensure that peace processes, post conflict resolution, or negotiations hosted or funded by international aid ensure and facilitate women's full, equal, and meaningful participation in decision-making roles in line with UNSCR 2242
- consult with, and include survivors of sexual slavery in the design and implementation of post-conflict resolution processes, particularly related to relief and recovery services and transitional justice mechanisms

To Civil Society Organizations:

- hire and work directly with survivors on programs addressing the drivers and impacts of conflict-related sexual slavery

## On accountability and justice for crimes of conflict-related sexual slavery:

To the UN:

- hold Member States accountable to their obligations under international law to investigate, prosecute, and provide judicial redress for crimes of war, genocide, slavery, against humanity, and torture, including conflict-related sexual slavery
- develop a clear understanding of the differing health, social, and criminal justice needs of survivors of conflict-related sexual slavery, in order to effectively address the gravity and nuances of the crime

To the UN, International Criminal Court, and International Court of Justice:

- develop consistent, coherent, and specific normative frameworks or guidelines for the prosecution of conflict-related sexual slavery, and provide technical guidance and expertise to Member States for national prosecutions

To the International Criminal Court, International Court of Justice, International Tribunals, and Special Courts:

- prioritize survivor-centered, context-specific approaches that are designed and implemented in coordination with women's civil society organizations
- uphold and follow the legal analysis of the final judgement of the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal (2001) which held perpetrators accountable for sexual slavery committed during World War Two in Asia and the Pacific as a crime against humanity and required the provision of adequate redress and reparations to survivors

To Member States:

- recognize survivors of sexual slavery as victims of armed conflict or terrorism, and provide appropriate recognition and redress, thereby reducing societal stigma
- transform judicial systems to remove gender biases, including by: enacting special legislation integrating international humanitarian and human rights law into national and municipal legal systems; training justice and security professionals on prosecutions on sexual slavery; addressing the specific needs of survivors of sexual violence and their family members; reforming discriminatory laws against women and girls; and adopting laws criminalizing all forms violence against women, including sexual slavery, marital rape, domestic violence, and forced marriage
- increase the accessibility of reporting mechanisms for crimes of sexual slavery (especially for displaced women and girls) and provide adequate protection for survivors, such as witness protection programs
- implement the CEDAW Committee's General Recommendation 33 (2015) on women's access to justice to effectively address all barriers to justice that survivors of conflict-related sexual slavery face
- implement the Guidance Note of the Secretary General on Reparations for Conflict-Related Sexual Violence to provide survivor-centered, timely, and accessible reparations

## On the provision of adequate redress, relief, and recovery services for survivors of conflict-related sexual slavery:

To the International Criminal Court, International Tribunals, Special Courts, and Member States:

- do not limit the type of sexual and gender-based violence eligible for reparations, redress, recognition, and relief and recovery services to rape, thereby ensuring that survivors of conflict-related sexual slavery receive adequate recognition, redress, and relief and recovery services

To the UN, Member States, and Civil Society Organizations:

- coordinate and strengthen collaboration to avoid duplication and re-traumatization of survivors in efforts to record experiences of conflict-related sexual slavery
- develop and implement training to provide ethical trauma counselling, free of prejudice against ethnic and religious minorities

To the UN and Member States:

- recognize and develop relief and recovery programs which reflect that survivors of conflict-related sexual violence are not a homogenous group, and suffer from differentiated harms based on intersecting inequalities

To Member States:

- provide comprehensive redress, rehabilitation, and reintegration programs for all survivors of conflict-related sexual slavery, including former combatants, such as: housing for survivors and their families; age-appropriate, gender-sensitive education; employment opportunities and economic empowerment programs; sexual and reproductive health services; medical care (for sexually transmitted diseases and/or HIV/AIDS); land ownership, and psychosocial counselling including in remote and conflict-affected communities and refugee camps
- allocate a significant percentage of national budgets for post-conflict resolution to provide comprehensive relief and recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration programs for survivors of sexual slavery

To traditional and religious leaders at national and local levels:

- raise awareness of the need to prevent sexual violence in conflict in order to eliminate the marginalization and stigmatization survivors experience, as well as to facilitate their reintegration (and that of their children)

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