





PEACEKEEPING ADDRESSING CONFLICT-RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE


Background: Sexual violence in conflict has been used strategically throughout the ages to threaten, dominate, humiliate, settle scores, intimidate and amongst other aims, change the religious and ethnic make-up of populations. This tactical approach coupled with unaddressed inequalities, and the glaring absence of the rule of law all contribute towards the perpetuation of this heinous crime. The United Nations Security Council recognises sexual violence to be a fundamental threat to global peace and security, an international crime and through adopting seven *Women, Peace and Security* resolutions [of which four are devoted to addressing conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV)], the Council has elevated sexual violence in conflict to the highest political level.


Today, peacekeeping missions are well positioned to implement the CRSV resolutions given: their mandates derived from the Security Council; extensive geographic presence and reach on the ground; and their political engagement at the highest levels in the host countries and Security Council. Currently, military, police and civilian peacekeepers are deployed to all peacekeeping operations which face CRSV - MONUSCO (Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)), UNAMID (Sudan), UNMISS (South Sudan), UNOCI (Cote d'Ivoire), MINUSMA (Mali) and MINUSCA (Central African Republic (CAR)).

Peacekeeping Activities to address CRSV:


 **Policies and Guidance:** Related Security Council resolutions on CRSV have been translated into policies, operational guidance and training within the framework of the protection of civilians, gender, human rights and justice.


 **Training:** DPKO/DFS develop training packages to be used by peacekeeping training centres and are responsible for setting training standards. However, Member States deploying Police and Military to peacekeeping missions are responsible for delivering these training materials. Intensive orientation courses are organised for Senior Mission Leadership at Headquarters and include CRSV. Training packages for UN Police and Military to address CRSV and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) are being finalised. In mission, CRSV is included in trainings on gender, protection of civilians and human rights and integrated training materials for all mission personnel is under development.


 **Deployment of Women's Protection Advisers (WPA):** To guarantee that sexual violence issues are incorporated into all mission functions (justice, security and defence sector reform, military, police, child protection, protection of civilians etc.) WPAs are deployed into the offices of mission leadership, the human rights and gender components. Currently, WPAs are deployed to UNMISS and MINUSMA and additional WPAs are being deployed to UNOCI, MONUSCO, MINUSCA and UNAMID. [WPAs should not be confused with Gender Advisers who advise, address and integrate gender issues throughout the work of mission components].


 **Promotion of Gender Equality:** Since gender inequality is a root cause of CRSV, a gender sensitive approach must be integrated throughout the work of all mission components. Activities such as establishing women's protection networks in IDP sites and sensitising religious leaders about the use of sexual violence in Darfur, supporting the

development of national legislation to reflect the principles of international law with regards to SGBV, as well as supporting uniformed personnel to work in a gender sensitive manner, supports the development of a holistic approach towards addressing CRSV.


 **Monitoring and Reporting on CRSV:** To better prevent incidents from occurring, and to strengthen accountability at the local, national and international levels, monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements are established by WPAs, with mission personnel and members of the UN Country team.


 **Strengthening Prevention Activities:** Each mission has a protection of civilian strategy throughout which CRSV is integrated. Furthermore, military, police and civilian cooperation, the use of gender sensitive early warning indicators on CRSV and liaising with women and local communities enable community protection mechanisms to be strengthened, and military peacekeepers to effectively target their patrols to deter incidents from taking place. This is carried out, for example through accompanying women and girls to wells, markets and fields (MONUSCO, UNMISS, UNAMID). Results have proven that Joint Protection Teams (civilian, police and military) such as those used by MONUSCO identify risks and vulnerabilities, and support the development of local protection plans which are implemented by the military component.

 **Engaging with Parties to the Conflict:** High level political engagement with governmental partners and armed groups is carried out to enable them to prevent and respond to sexual violence incidents through for example, including the prohibition of CRSV in codes of conduct and training, and ensuring accountability for incidents of CRSV. This takes place through gender sensitive security, defence and justice sector reform, as well as disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programming by peacekeeping missions with key partners and for example is being addressed by the Government of the DRC. MONUSCO has also established Prosecution Support Cells since March 2012 to enable Congolese military justice to investigate sexual violence incidents committed by elements of the national military and police.

 **Strengthening the National Security Sector:** All police components in missions have specialised UN Police (UNPOL) gender focal points who specifically mentor and strengthen the host police to assume their responsibilities vis-a-vis SGBV/CRSV. A number have supported the creation of specialised police units in the host State police such as in the DRC, Liberia, Sudan, South Sudan, and Timor-Leste. A specialised SGBV UNPOL team has been deployed to Haiti.

Challenges and Partnerships:

 **Key Challenges:** Although peacekeeping has for some time addressed SGBV, the mandated requirements on CRSV are relatively recent. Challenges to fully implement the mandate include: i) ensuring that troop and police contributing countries systematically carry out pre-deployment training on Gender, Protection of Civilians, Human Rights and CRSV in line with UN standards; and ii) in a period of fiscal pressure, including WPA posts in mission budgets as well as for CRSV capacity at DPKO/DFS headquarters.

 **Partnerships:** DPKO/DFS works closely with: the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, the Department of Political Affairs, the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights, UN Women, and is a core member of *UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict (UN Action)*, as well as the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law (established to assist national authorities to strengthen the rule of law with respect to sexual violence in armed conflict).

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