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Security Council Committee Background Guide 2022

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NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS



Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2022 National Model United Nations Conference in Washington, DC (NMUN•DC)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the Security Council. This year's staff is Director Kaytlyn Marcotte and Assistant Director Mariana Marañón. The topics under discussion for the Security Council are:

1. Women, Peace, and Security
2. The Situation in Afghanistan

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to conduct additional research, explore your Member State's policies in-depth, and examine the policies of other Member States to improve your ability to negotiate and reach consensus. In preparation for the conference, each delegation will use their research to draft and submit a [position paper](#). Guidelines are available in the [NMUN Position Paper Guide](#).

The [NMUN website](#) has many additional resources, including two that are essential both in preparation for the conference and as a resource during the conference. They are:

1. The [NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide](#), which explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Please take note of the information on plagiarism, and the prohibition on pre-written working papers and resolutions. Delegates should not discuss the topics or agenda with other members of their committee until the first committee session.
2. The [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#), which includes the long and short form of the rules as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure.

In addition, please review the mandatory [NMUN Conduct Expectations](#) on the NMUN website. They include the conference dress code and other expectations of all attendees. We want to emphasize that any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the conference itself, please contact the Under-Secretary-General Zachary Parker at usgzack.dc@nmun.org or Secretary-General Adam Wolf at secgen.dc@nmun.org.

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the conference!

Sincerely,
Kaytlyn Marcotte, Director
Mariana Marañón, Assistant Director



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Committee Overview

Introduction

After the devastating effects of the two World Wars, the international community established the United Nations (UN) as an intergovernmental organization with the primary responsibilities of maintaining international peace and security, creating the conditions conducive to economic and social development, and advancing universal respect for human rights.¹ The Security Council became one of the six principal organs of the UN and was given the primary responsibility of preserving international peace and security.²

The Security Council held its first session on 17 January 1946 at Church House in London.³ After its first meeting, the Council relocated to its permanent residence at the UN Headquarters in New York City.⁴ At that time, five permanent members and six non-permanent members were part of the Council.⁵ In 1965, the number of non-permanent members increased to 10 and discussions regarding a change in configuration took place frequently.⁶ However, as the body's structure has remained largely unchanged, debate has continued over the Security Council's efficacy and authority as a mediator on issues of international security.⁷ Matters such as the Syrian Civil War, Russia's annexation of Crimea, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear weapons program have posed particular challenges to the Security Council.⁸

Traditionally, the Security Council discusses issues related to peacekeeping missions and political processes, as well as the protection of human rights, international security, and humanitarian crises.⁹ However, with the adoption of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* by the UN General Assembly in 2015, the Security Council has begun to increasingly focus on the intersection between sustainability, peace, and security.¹⁰ Some important crosscutting issues the Council is currently addressing include human rights and the protection of civilians for conflict prevention and sustainable development; the impacts of climate change on international security; the prevention of conflict and methods to sustain peace; and recently it held its first high-level debate on cybersecurity.¹¹ With the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council has also undertaken a strategic focus on the impact the global health crisis continues to have on international security.¹²

Governance, Structure, and Membership

The Security Council is the only UN body that has the power to adopt legally binding resolutions, which place an obligation on Member States to accept and carry out the Council's decisions under Article 25 of the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945).¹³ The Security Council also has a variety of other tools to address issues on its agenda.¹⁴ For example, the President of the Security Council may issue press

¹ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

² UN Security Council, *What is the Security Council?*, 2021.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ UN Security Council, *Voting System*, 2021.

⁶ Global Policy Forum, *Background on Security Council Reform*, 2020.

⁷ Council on Foreign Relations, *The UN Security Council*, 2021.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Council on Foreign Relations, *The UN Security Council*, 2021; Encyclopedia Britannica, *United Nations Security Council*, 2022.

¹⁰ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

¹¹ Security Council Report, *Status Update Since our June Forecast*, 2021.

¹² UN DGC, *Security Council Calls for Increased Global Cooperation to Facilitate COVID-19 Vaccine Access in Conflict Areas, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2565 (2021) (SC/14454)*, 2021.

¹³ UN Security Council, *What is the Security Council?*, 2021; *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

¹⁴ UN Security Council, *Functions and Powers*, 2021.

statements or presidential statements to communicate the Council's position.¹⁵ Although these are not legally binding, such statements are used to bring attention to important issues and to recommend solutions to ongoing conflicts.¹⁶

The five permanent members of the Security Council are China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America, often colloquially referred to as the "P5."¹⁷ Every year, the General Assembly elects five of the 10 non-permanent members for a two-year term.¹⁸ Non-permanent members are elected in June of each year, six months in advance of the January term to allow Member States sufficient time to prepare for their new role.¹⁹ Elections for non-permanent seats on the Council can be competitive, with states expressing interest and campaigning years in advance.²⁰ Member States elected to serve on the Security Council are expected to represent the interests of their region, and they usually have influence at the international level and demonstrate leadership in specific areas of interest to their foreign policy.²¹ The 10 non-permanent members represent countries from five groups: Africa, the Asia-Pacific Group, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Eastern European Group, and Western European and Other.²² Each member of the Security Council has the ability to be represented at all meetings.²³ In the Provisional Rules of Procedure, Rule 13 allows for Members to be represented by an "accredited representative," such as a Head of Government.²⁴ The ten non-permanent members through 2022 currently include: Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Norway, and the United Arab Emirates.²⁵

Every Member State of the Security Council has one vote.²⁶ Votes on all matters require affirmative votes of nine Member States.²⁷ However, if one of the five permanent members of the Security Council votes "no" on a matter of substance, such as a draft resolution, it does not pass.²⁸ This is known as "veto power."²⁹ In the 1950s, Security Council Member States made frequent use of their veto power, but its usage declined in the 1960s, rising again in the 1970s and 1980s.³⁰ In the last decades, the use of the veto power has been comparatively rare.³¹ In recent years, the Council has adopted many resolutions by consensus and has only been divided on a very limited number of issues.³²

Since 1993, the General Assembly has discussed several models to reform the Security Council.³³ The key challenges in the reform of the Security Council are its membership, transparency, and working

¹⁵ Security Council Report, *Monthly Forecast August 2021*, 2021; NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, *Mapping Women, Peace and Security in the UN Security Council: Report of the NGOWG Monthly Action Points, 2009-2010*, 2010, p. 11.

¹⁶ Ibid; Ibid, p. 15.

¹⁷ UN Security Council, *Current Members*, 2021.

¹⁸ UN Security Council, *Current Members*, 2021; UN DGC, *UN elects five new members to serve on the Security Council*, 2021.

¹⁹ UN DGC, *UN elects five new members to serve on the Security Council*, 2021; UN DGC, *Ahead of Security Council Elections, General Assembly President Explains how a Country can get a Non-permanent Seat*, 2016.

²⁰ UN DGC, *Ahead of Security Council Elections, General Assembly President Explains how a Country can get a Non-permanent Seat*, 2016.

²¹ Global Policy Forum, *Background on Security Council Reform*, 2020.

²² UN General Assembly, *Rules of Procedure*, 2017.

²³ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

²⁴ UN Security Council, *Highlights of Security Council Practice 2019*, 2019.

²⁵ UN Security Council, *Current Members*, 2022.

²⁶ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ UN Security Council, *Voting System*, 2021.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Security Council Report, *In Hindsight: The Veto*, 2013; Security Council Report, *The Permanent Members and the Use of the Veto: An Abridged History*, 2013.

³¹ Security Council Report, *The Permanent Members and the Use of the Veto: An Abridged History*, 2013.

³² Security Council Report, *In Hindsight: Consensus in the Security Council*, 2014; Security Council Report, *In Hindsight: The Veto*, 2013.

³³ Global Policy Forum, *Background on Security Council Reform*, 2020.

methods, and the veto power of the permanent five Member States.³⁴ Most recently, in a debate in November 2018, delegates of the UN General Assembly called for expanding the number of permanent members and abolishing the permanent member's use of veto power.³⁵

Each member of the Security Council holds the presidency of the Council for one month, rotating according to alphabetical order.³⁶ For example, within the current Security Council, the presidency rotates alphabetically from Albania, to Brazil, to China, to France, to Gabon, and so on through the rest of the member list.³⁷ Security Council meetings can be held at any time when convened by the President and by the request of any Member State.³⁸ Under Rule 3 of the Provisional Rules of Procedure of the Security Council, the President shall call a meeting if a dispute or situation requires the Council's attention.³⁹ Due to this, the Security Council typically meets throughout the year in the UN Conference Building, and has returned to in person meetings as COVID-19 concerns have been reduced.⁴⁰ Any Member State may attend the Council's sessions if the body decides to extend an invitation.⁴¹ Member States are often invited if the Security Council is discussing an issue that directly concerns the interests of the Member State.⁴² Invited Member States do not have the right to vote but are allowed to submit proposals and draft resolutions.⁴³ Furthermore, invited Member States can inform the Council about a current crisis in their region.⁴⁴ However, such proposals may only be put to a vote at the request of a member of the Council.⁴⁵

The Security Council oversees many subsidiary bodies established under Article 29 of the Charter, including sanctions committees and ad hoc committees.⁴⁶ The Security Council also works with the General Assembly to oversee the work of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).⁴⁷ Additionally, Security Council Member States participate in various working groups, which consist of some or all of the Security Council Member States and focus on regional issues, as well as improving the working methods of the Council itself.⁴⁸

Cooperation between the Security Council and other entities, such as the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is significant.⁴⁹ Partnerships with independent regional organizations, such as the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU) also promote a regional focus when addressing a broad range of issues such as terrorism, disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, and extreme violence from non-state actors.⁵⁰

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

The mandate of the Security Council is to maintain international peace and security and to take action whenever peace and security are threatened.⁵¹ The Council's authority is particularly relevant with respect to the UN's four primary purposes, as specified in the Charter: maintaining international peace and security; developing friendly relations among nations; cooperating in solving international problems;

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Nastranis, *UN Security Council Reform Back on the Table Again*, 2019.

³⁶ UN Security Council, *Provisional Rules of Procedure of the Security Council (S/96/Rev.7)*, 1982.

³⁷ UN Security Council, *Highlights of Security Council Practice 2021*, 2021.

³⁸ UN Security Council, *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*, 2021.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Security Council Report, *In Hindsight: The Security Council in 2021*, 2021.

⁴¹ Lynch, *U.N. Agencies Struggle to Carry on Remotely*, 2020.

⁴² *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

⁴³ UN Security Council, *Provisional Rules of Procedure of the Security Council (S/96/Rev.7)*, 1982.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ UN Security Council, *Committees, Working Groups and Ad Hoc Bodies*, 2021.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ UN Security Council, *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*, 2021.

⁴⁹ UN Security Council, *Committees, Working Groups and Ad Hoc Bodies*, 2021; UN Security Council, *The situation in the Middle East (S/RES/2349) (2013)*, 2013.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ UN Security Council, *What is the Security Council?*, 2021.

and promoting respect for human rights.⁵² The capabilities of the Security Council are highlighted in Chapters V–VIII.⁵³ Chapter V establishes the structure, membership, functions, and powers of the Security Council.⁵⁴ Chapters VI and VII of the Charter specifically concern the Security Council and the range of actions that can be taken when settling disputes.⁵⁵ Chapter VI of the Charter by itself aims to settle disputes through peaceful means, such as negotiation and judicial settlement.⁵⁶ Chapter VII explores further actions that can be taken in regard to threats to peace, breaches of peace, and acts of aggression.⁵⁷ This chapter also authorizes the Security Council to implement provisional measures aimed to de-escalate conflict situations.⁵⁸ Chapter VIII of the Charter allows the Security Council to call upon other regional agencies or arrangements to enforce appropriate operations and intervene if necessary.⁵⁹

Under Article 41 in the Charter, the Council may: call on members to apply economic sanctions and measures not involving use of force; call for arms embargoes, enforce disarmament, call upon international criminal mechanisms to become active; use diplomatic tools to investigate situations that might lead to aggression (between states, non-state groups, and within state territories); and take military action against states or entities that threaten international peace and security.⁶⁰ The Council may also decide upon the deployment of new UN peacekeeping operations to be led by the Department of Peace Operations (DPO).⁶¹ The Security Council creates a peacekeeping operation by adopting a resolution that outlines the mandate and size of a particular mission, and UN peacekeepers are assigned to appropriate regions to address conflicts.⁶² The Council also cooperates with a number of international and regional organizations as well as non-governmental organizations to implement its decisions.⁶³ The Security also has the powers to “recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of the Secretary-General and, together with the Assembly, to elect the Judges of the International Court of Justice.”⁶⁴

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

The Security Council focuses efforts to consider country and region-specific situations on its agenda, as well as cross-cutting and thematic issues, such as threats to international peace and security by non-state actors, financing of terrorism, and climate change, peace, and security.⁶⁵ Thematically, the Security Council has been increasing the number of briefings on climate change and how it impacts international security.⁶⁶ The Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) lead climate mitigation and adaptation measures, and contributions to such measures as outlined in the Paris Agreement.⁶⁷ However, discussions continue to unfold to determine the potential role of the Security Council and its existing tools such as the Informal Expert Group of Members of the Security Council on Climate and Security in future climate security matters, considering the Council’s UN Charter-given mandate to uphold international peace and security.⁶⁸ Additionally, the Security Council continues to work on preventing the involvement of children in armed conflict.⁶⁹ The June 2021 annual open debate on Children in Armed Conflict brought forth calls to re-focus on protecting children’s rights to

⁵² *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945; UN Security Council, *Functions and Powers*, 2021.

⁶¹ UN Peacekeeping, *Forming a New Operation*.

⁶² UN Peacekeeping, *Role of the Security Council*.

⁶³ UN Security Council, *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*, 2021.

⁶⁴ UN Security Council, *Functions and Powers*, 2021.

⁶⁵ UN DPPA, *Security Council Reporting and Mandate Cycles, 2022*; Security Council Report, *Thematic and General Issues*, 2018.

⁶⁶ Security Council Report, *Monthly Forecast March 2021*, 2021.

⁶⁷ COP 21, *Paris Agreement*, 2015.

⁶⁸ Security Council Report, *The UN Security Council and Climate Change*, 2021.

⁶⁹ Security Council Report, *Children and Armed Conflict*, 2021.

education, due in part to both the COVID-19 pandemic and, in many areas, protracted periods of conflict and insecurity.⁷⁰

As of December 2021, the Security Council covered a wide range of topics for the year, issuing 24 presidential statements, and adopting 57 resolutions.⁷¹ In 2021, amongst others, the Council has drafted resolutions to address complex situations in Afghanistan, the Middle East, and Africa, as well as UN peacekeeping operations.⁷² As of April 2022, 12 resolutions ranging from non-proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction, to the situations in Afghanistan, Cyprus, Libya, and Somalia, reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan, and the Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly on Ukraine, have been adopted in 2022.⁷³ The Security Council holds a quarterly open debate on the Situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question.⁷⁴ The ongoing conflict in Syria, for example, has led to over 5.6 million refugees and 6.1 million internally displaced people.⁷⁵

In January 2022, concerns of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine were discussed in the Security Council as tensions mounted within the international community over military forces from the Russian Federation stationed near their border with Ukraine.⁷⁶ On 24 February 2022 President Putin announced in Moscow that a 'special military operation' in Ukraine's eastern Donbas region had commenced.⁷⁷ A draft resolution submitted on 25 February 2022 by Albania and the United States calling for complete withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine gained the support of 11 Security Council members, but was vetoed by the Russian Federation.⁷⁸ The Russian Federation at the time of the veto served also as the President of the Security Council.⁷⁹ In response to the veto, on 27 February 2022, Security Council members adopted resolution 2623 (2022) on the "Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly on Ukraine," the 11th Emergency Session enacted since the foundation of the UN.⁸⁰ Working quickly, the General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted resolution 11/1 on "Aggression against Ukraine" with a vote of 141 in favor, 5 against, and 31 abstentions.⁸¹ The resolution demanded the Russian Federation immediately end its invasion of Ukraine and unconditionally withdraw all its military forces.⁸²

The Security Council expressed its concern for the unity and sovereignty of Yemen, adopting resolution 2624 (2022) in February 2022.⁸³ The resolution strongly condemns the ongoing military escalation and stated intention of the Houthis to launch additional cross-border terrorist attacks like those in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates on 17 January 2022.⁸⁴ Regarding peace and security in Africa, the Council has reacted to situations in the Central African Republic, Sudan, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, and the situation in Mali.⁸⁵ In response to the continuation of unlawful killings and violations of laws of war in Afghanistan, the Security Council adopted resolution 2626 in March 2022 on

⁷⁰ Security Council Report, *Children and Armed Conflict: VTC Open Debate*, 2021.

⁷¹ UN Security Council, *Resolutions Adopted by the Security Council in 2021*, 2021.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ UN Security Council, *Resolutions Adopted by the Security Council in 2022*, 2022.

⁷⁴ Security Council Report, *The Situation in the Middle East, Including the Palestinian Question: Quarterly Open Debate*, 2021.

⁷⁵ UN DGC, *Syria*, 2020.

⁷⁶ UN DGC, Situation along Russian Federation-Ukraine Border Can Only Be Resolved through Diplomacy, Political Affairs Chief Tells Security Council, *Meetings Coverage and Press Releases*, 2022.

⁷⁷ UN News, *As Security Council meets on Ukraine crisis, Russia announces start of 'special military operation'*, 2022.

⁷⁸ UN Security Council, *Security Council Fails to Adopt Draft Resolution on Ending Ukraine Crisis, as Russian Federation Wields Veto*, 2022.

⁷⁹ UN Security Council, *Security Council Presidency*, 2022.

⁸⁰ UN Security Council, *Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly on Ukraine (S/RES/2623)*, 2022.

⁸¹ UN General Assembly, *General Assembly Overwhelmingly Adopts Resolution Demanding Russian Federation Immediately End Illegal Use of Force in Ukraine, Withdraw All Troops*, 2022.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ UN Security Council, *The situation in the Middle East (Yemen) (S/RES/2624 (2022))*, 2022.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ UN Security Council, *Resolutions Adopted by the Security Council in 2021*, 2021; UN General Assembly, *Report of the Security Council for 2020 (A/75/2)*, 2021.

“The situation in Afghanistan,” which called upon all parties to maintain respect for humanitarian relief activities, reaffirmed demands for all actors to not aid, abet, train, or finance terrorism following the Taliban’s seizure of power.⁸⁶

Conclusion

The Security Council is one of the main bodies of the UN that ensures international peace and security.⁸⁷ As the Council is the only UN body that has the ability to create legally binding decisions, it has a unique and impactful mandate to set norms and govern state actions, as all Member States are required to comply under Chapter VII of the Charter.⁸⁸ The adoption of the 2030 Agenda signaled the increasing need for the Security Council to also discuss the linkages between peace & security and issues of human security and development, often with a specific focus on the role of women in international peace and security.⁸⁹ The Council is also beginning to look at the intersection between international peace and security and climate change.⁹⁰ The Security Council will continue to address regional and country issues such as those in Ukraine, Afghanistan, the Middle East, and Africa, as well as complex thematic issues, such as new forms of terrorism, cyber threats, and gender-related concerns.⁹¹

Annotated Bibliography

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The Charter of the United Nations provides a thorough explanation on the powers, and functions authorized to the Security Council. For instance, the Charter outlines where the use of force is acceptable and how the council is structured to combat threats to international peace and security. As the fundamental principles of the Security Council are written down in the Charter, this document should be the first resource for delegates to consider. Articles 27-32 of the Charter outlines the voting procedures of the committee and structure of how the committee conducts its business. Article 23, which sets the membership structure, and Articles 23–26, which discuss its basic functions and powers, are important for understanding both the structure and function of the Security Council. In addition, Articles 27–32 explain the Council’s voting procedure and its overall structure. The Charter can also be particularly helpful for delegates in understanding the powers and limitations of the body. Delegates will find Chapters VI and VII particularly helpful when researching the mandate of the Security Council and proposing actions and solutions.

Security Council Report. (2021). *Monthly Forecast March 2021.* Retrieved 28 April 2022 from: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/2021_03_forecast.pdf

Each month, Security Council Report publishes a monthly forecast detailing the objectives of the Council’s presidency and key issues at hand for the Council in the next month. For example, March 2021 is linked here for reference. In addition to timely background analysis and quick links to the most recently adopted resolutions, delegates will find the Status Update section particularly useful as it provides after-action reports for all debates and context about the adoption and negotiations of all resolutions, Presidential Statements, Press Statements, and actions taken by the Council in the

⁸⁶ UN Security Council, *The situation in Afghanistan (S/RES/2626 (2022))*, 2022.

⁸⁷ UN Security Council, *What is the Security Council?*, 2019.

⁸⁸ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

⁸⁹ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

⁹⁰ Mead, *UN Security Council Addresses Climate Change as a Security Risk*, 2019.

⁹¹ UN DGC, *Fragile Countries Risk Being ‘Stuck in a Cycle of Conflict and Climate Disaster,’ Security Council Told*, 2018.

preceding month. Reading this source over time will keep delegates well-informed of the dynamic decision-making trends and crisis response capacities of the Security Council.

United Nations, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. (2022). *Security Council Reporting and Mandate Cycles*. Retrieved 28 April 2022 from:

https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/sites/www.un.org.securitycouncil/files/reporting_and_mandate_cycles.pdf

Published by the UN Department of Political Affairs, this document provides information on the work and decisions of the Security Council, including resolutions and presidential statements. The document primarily consists of tables on items that have been discussed by the Security Council, various requests by the Security Council, and mandates of different entities and operations that report to the Council. This report will help delegates by providing succinct and clear information on the recent actions taken by the Security Council on its various thematic issues. Additionally, delegates may find the tables providing the actual clauses of different Security Council resolutions particularly helpful to their research.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-Fifth Session. (2021). *Report of the Security Council for 2020 (A/75/2)*. Retrieved 28 April 2022 from: <https://undocs.org/en/A/75/2>

Each year, the Security Council compiles a report to the UN General Assembly that assesses ongoing threats and the progress made on the global and regional issues at hand. It summarizes debate, resolutions, and all actions taken by the Council throughout the preceding year. Delegates will find this report a useful one-stop-shop to review the most recent actions of the Security Council. They will also find a concise overview of matters brought to the attention of the Security Council but not discussed at meetings, which could shed light upon ongoing matters that the Council might soon address.

United Nations, Security Council. (2021). *Highlights of Security Council Practice 2021*. Retrieved 1 May 2022 from: <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/highlights-2021>

This article reviews the activities and resolutions adopted by the Security Council during the last year. This is a useful recap of all the issues that the Security Council has addressed or currently still needs to resolve. The Security Council highlights for the previous years are also available. For a more detailed report, the Security Council also reports monthly updates. There are useful charts and graphics depicting the activity of the Council within 2021, detailing number of meetings, regional focuses, and decisions by geographical regions.

United Nations, Security Council. (2022). *Functions and Powers*. Retrieved 28 April 2022 from: <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/functions-and-powers>

This resource provides delegates with a comprehensive overview of the mandate and functions of the Security Council. Created by the Security Council itself, it provides official guidance on the powers of the Security Council and actions that can be taken through resolutions and statements. Delegates will find this resource useful when determining options available to respond to international issues or crisis at hand.

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1. Women, Peace, and Security

Introduction

Article I of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discriminations against Women* (CEDAW) (1979) defines discrimination against women as “any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.”⁹²

Adopted by the Security Council in 2000, resolution 1325 titled “Women, Peace, and Security” (WPS) outlines the importance of how women and girls are affected by armed conflict and details the ways in which women play a pivotal role in conflict resolution and conflict prevention.⁹³ As described in resolution 1325, “women and children account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements.”⁹⁴ Women and children are those most affected in times of conflict as they are often left behind as men of military age are conscripted to military efforts.⁹⁵ Historically women have been the caregiver and during times of conflict make the rapid transition to the sole provider in addition to remaining the caretaker.⁹⁶

Twenty-two years after the adoption of resolution 1325, women are still the minority on the international stage when discussing peace and conflict resolution.⁹⁷ In 2021 the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), reported that out of 133 Member States, women comprised 36% of national governments.⁹⁸ UN Women also reported that the number of women being elected into executive government positions is significantly lower than anticipated and is calculated to take 130 years to achieve the markers set forth by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).⁹⁹ For women who are in peace, security, and political fields, nearly 82% of “women parliamentarians reported having experienced some form of psychological violence while serving their terms.”¹⁰⁰

Since 2002, the Secretary-General publishes annual reports regarding the work and progress made on WPS.¹⁰¹ The first report published outlined the effects that conflict zones place on women and girls.¹⁰² The annual reports outline ongoing efforts made by UN bodies and identifies challenges that women face in situations of conflict and in areas of social and economic development.¹⁰³ In 2021, the Security Council published two reports regarding the topic.¹⁰⁴ The March report, entitled “Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-related sexual violence (S/2021/312),” addressed conflict-related sexual violence and the September report, entitled “Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2021/827),” was an annual report on the progress of women in peace and conflict resolution roles in addition to situations of conflict and discrimination against women with regards to WPS.¹⁰⁵ Notably, the September report acknowledges how the situation in Afghanistan and the COVID-19 pandemic have

⁹² UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (A/RES/34/180), 1979.

⁹³ UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1325 (2000))*, 2000.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁹⁵ United States Agency for International Development, *Women & Conflict*, 2007.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2021/827)*, 2021.

⁹⁸ UN-Women, *Facts and Figures: Women’s leadership and political participation*, 2021.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ UN-Women, *Facts and figures: Ending violence against women*, 2022.

¹⁰¹ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2002/1154)*, 2002.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2021/827)*, 2021.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-related sexual violence (S/2021/312)*, 2021; UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2021/827)*, 2021.

caused serious setbacks in the fiscal contributions to the agenda.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, the September report highlighted the decline in efforts for the WPS Agenda as most women were not able to seek crisis prevention roles or assist in pandemic efforts as they were in the majority to withdraw from the workforce during the start of the pandemic.¹⁰⁷

WPS has been at the forefront of discussions on conflict resolution, such as with the current situation in Afghanistan and the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁰⁸ Women in conflict-zones are repeatedly found to be the victims of sexual and gender-based violence, often at the hands of personnel who are providing safe refuge.¹⁰⁹ Due to shortcomings in these situations including a lack of personnel training, as identified by United Nations organizations, including UN Women and the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR) as well as external non-governmental organizations (NGOs), personnel and victims often lack the education and training on how to handle or report sexual and gender-based violence.¹¹⁰

Additionally, women in conflict-zones have reduced access to educational and economic opportunities.¹¹¹ In 2020, UN Women published reports on the general challenges that the WPS agenda is facing 20 years after the adoption of resolution 1325, which included the increase of violence against women and the limited access to programs women face around the world.¹¹² As the international community continues to experience the effects of COVID-19, such as the steady increase of violence against women at the hands of intimate partners, limited access to healthcare, and decreased access to the work opportunities due to lockdowns within Member States, the expansion and discussions on WPS are at the forefront of discussions within the UN System and the Security Council.¹¹³ The work of the WPS agenda has been continuously implemented in recent times especially in current peacekeeping operations such as the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).¹¹⁴

International and Regional Framework

Prior to Security Council resolution 1325, in 1974 the General Assembly adopted resolution 3318, “Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict.”¹¹⁵ Resolution 3318 details how the international community should protect women and children during times of conflict and in accordance with the *Fourth Geneva Convention* (1949).¹¹⁶ In 1979 the General Assembly adopted resolution 34/180, formally acknowledging CEDAW, which set forth much of the groundwork for the resolution 1325 and has been an influential document in the WPS Agenda.¹¹⁷ CEDAW called upon the international community to work together to ensure the protection of women from all forms of discrimination and harm.¹¹⁸

¹⁰⁶ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2021/827)*, 2021.

¹⁰⁷ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-related sexual violence (S/2021/312)*, 2021.

¹⁰⁸ Bousquet & Grown, Gender inequality exacerbates the COVID-19 crisis in fragile and conflict-affected settings, *The World Bank Group*, 2020.

¹⁰⁹ Elks, Haitians say underaged girls were abused by U.N. peacekeepers, *Reuters*, 2019.

¹¹⁰ United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, *Women Peace and Security in Peacekeeping*, 2022.

¹¹¹ UN-Women, *Women, peace, and security in the work of the UN Security Council*, 2022.

¹¹² UN-Women, *Facts and figures: Ending violence against women*, 2022.

¹¹³ Bousquet & Grown, Gender inequality exacerbates the COVID-19 crisis in fragile and conflict-affected settings, *The World Bank Group*, 2020.

¹¹⁴ United Nations Peacekeeping, *Where We Operate*.

¹¹⁵ UN General Assembly, *Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict (A/RES/3318 (XXIX))*, 1974.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*, 1979.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

Adopted in 1995, the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* identified that women and child often makeup many of the casualties in conflicts and outlined 12 objectives, which included Member States reducing spending on military expenses.¹¹⁹ The *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* also calls upon the international community and UN bodies to ensure that women and children have access to the same economic, social, and civic opportunities as men.¹²⁰

WPS has been at the forefront of discussions for the Security Council since 2000 and on the agendas for multiple UN bodies such as UN Women and the OHCHR.¹²¹ Since the adoption of resolution 1325, there have been nine subsequent resolutions adopted by the Security Council.¹²² Each of these subsequent resolutions builds upon and calls for the collaboration and participation from Member States.¹²³ Most notably resolutions, 1820, 1888, and 1889, which expand upon resolution 1325, acknowledge that sexual and gender-based violence have been used as a common tactic of war, and call for the increased participation of women in peace building and peacekeeping missions.¹²⁴

Role of the International System

Security Council resolution 1325 lays out four pillars which serve as the basis for discussions and advancements of the WPS Agenda.¹²⁵ The four pillars of WPS are: participation, protection, prevention, and relief & recovery.¹²⁶ Each of these pillars outline specific calls to action which Member States, NGOs, and UN bodies can use in order to achieve the agenda.¹²⁷ The pillar on participation refers to increasing the number of women participating in decision making roles at all levels of the international community.¹²⁸ The protection pillar calls for increased safeguarding against sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) during times of both conflict and peace.¹²⁹ Prevention includes strengthening both international and local laws on violence against women and children, in addition to calling upon the international community to encourage and adopt women-led peace and conflict resolution initiatives.¹³⁰ The last pillar of the WPS agenda, relief & recovery, calls for the advancement relief measures and international conflict resolution through a qualitative approach with a gender-based lens instead of using strictly data driven approaches.¹³¹

In 2016, the Security Council adopted resolution 2272 which addressed the ongoing cases of SGBV in peacekeeping operations.¹³² The resolution addressed the number of under-reported cases in certain peacekeeping missions and endorsed the Secretary-General's decision to repatriate certain units back to their Member States due to numerous accounts against them.¹³³ Under-reported cases in this instance are due to the fear of further abuse if women seek to report sexual violence to other UN or local authorities.¹³⁴

In 2019, the Security Council adopted two resolutions on WPS with the first being resolution 2467, regarding sexual violence against women.¹³⁵ Resolution 2467 details how the use of sexual violence in

¹¹⁹ UN Fourth World Conference on Women, *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, 1995.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ NGO Working Group on Women, Peace, and Security, *Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda*, 2020.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ UN Security Council Report, Women, Peace and Security, 2019; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1325 (2000))*, 2000.

¹²⁶ United States Institute for Peace, *What is UNSCR 1325? An Explanation of the Landmark Resolution on Women, Peace and Security*.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² UN Security Council, *United Nations peacekeeping operations (S/RES/2272 (2016))*, 2016.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security: Sexual Violence in conflict (S/RES/2467 (2019))*, 2019.

times of conflict is unacceptable and hinders the peacebuilding process and discourages women from being part of the processes as they are the victims of such crimes.¹³⁶ The most recent resolution to be adopted by the Security Council was resolution 2493 in 2019.¹³⁷ This resolution was adopted unanimously by the body and set out to acknowledge the current setbacks of the WPS agenda as well as provide additional recommendations for new and continuing challenges.¹³⁸ The recommendations included the addition and increase of women in adviser roles within the UN and for Member States to further facilitate the advancement of women in government roles.¹³⁹ Resolution 2493 also addressed the current progress made for the WPS agenda and urges Member States to continue their individual and regional work on the matter.¹⁴⁰ This resolution also called for the continual increase of women in national roles for conflict resolution and peacebuilding.¹⁴¹

In 2010, following the decade long work on the WPS Agenda throughout the UN System, the General Assembly created a new UN body, UN Women.¹⁴² UN Women serves as a platform for the advancement of gender equality and empowering women, allowing for coordination and providing support and guidance.¹⁴³ It allows for the discussion and pursuit of gender equality within the UN system in order to better incorporate the WPS agenda in addition to encouraging the participation and advancement of female collaboration and gender equality on an international level.¹⁴⁴ While UN Women focuses on a variety of different projects and facets of gender equality, the body has committed to the work regarding peace and security since their inception.¹⁴⁵ Guided by the ten resolutions on WPS, UN Women has worked closely with the Security Council on various projects including: preparation of the Secretary-General's annual report on WPS, briefing the Security Council throughout the year, and providing assistance from the informal expert group at the request of the Security Council regarding urgent conflict situations.¹⁴⁶

The adoption of General Assembly resolution 70/1, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* in 2015, was a monumental step to ensure progress towards gender equality within the international community.¹⁴⁷ SDG 5 (gender equality), incorporated the WPS agenda into its targets.¹⁴⁸ These targets included SDG 5.2 to “eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation” and SDG 5.3 to “eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation,” which are crucial to ensure that all women and girls are afforded gender equality.¹⁴⁹ SDG 5.c calls for the “adoption and strengthening of sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.”¹⁵⁰

Prior to the establishment of UN Women, the Commission on the Status of Women served as a fundamental body in the discussions regarding gender equity.¹⁵¹ CSW was established in 1946 and holds annual meetings to discuss the progress and gaps in the implementation of a multitude of frameworks including, the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/2493 (2019))*, 2019.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² UN-Women, *About UN Women*, 2022.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid..

¹⁴⁵ UN-Women, *Facts and figures: Women, peace and security*, 2021.

¹⁴⁶ UN-Women, *Women, peace, and security in the work of the UN Security Council*, 2022.

¹⁴⁷ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 14.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 18.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 18.

¹⁵¹ UN-Women, *Commission on the Status of Women*, 2022.

(2015), and the WPS agenda.¹⁵² The 2020 annual meeting of CSW coincided with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of *The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* and reiterated the importance of empowering and incorporating women and girls in all aspects of decision making within the international community.¹⁵³ The 2022 session of CSW concluded with a series of recommendations which included: ensuring women are involved in UN peace talks, encouraging regional efforts to further the participation of women in development roles, and encouraging Member States to strive for the promotion and encouragement of women in peace-building roles.¹⁵⁴ In addition, the 2022 session urged Member States to promote and encourage women in all forms of participation regarding peace building and conflict resolution roles on the national and international level.¹⁵⁵

Conflict-Related Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Peacekeeping Operations

Sexual violence, as defined by UN Women, is comprised of a variety of different acts which include and are not limited to, rape, sexual abuse, forced abortion, sexual enslavement, forced prostitution, and forced pregnancy.¹⁵⁶ UN Women also defines gender-based violence as any act against a specific gender and can include sexual violence in addition to forced marriage, trafficking, and domestic violence.¹⁵⁷ There have been several reports of such acts in recent years related to UN peacekeeping missions.¹⁵⁸ These peacekeeping missions have seen an uptick in conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) in Member States with ongoing conflict situations in the last decade.¹⁵⁹ As outlined in the Secretary-General's 2021 report on WPS, a survey of over 800 refugee camps across 15 Member States in Africa reported a 73% increase of domestic violence reports within the camps.¹⁶⁰ The cause of the uptick has been a continuous rise in cases of CRSV in areas of displaced persons camps and areas with large numbers of peacekeepers.¹⁶¹

As of 2017, The Democratic Republic of the Congo had approximately 700 reported cases of sexual violence carried out by UN peacekeepers.¹⁶² These cases of CRSV often result in unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections, and women being shunned by their families for having “mixed-race children.”¹⁶³ With the continued rise of conflict situations around the world, women are still experiencing the effects of SGBV in these situations.¹⁶⁴ Since 2017, the Secretary-General has worked closely with numerous peacekeeping missions in order to combat the rise of these situations.¹⁶⁵ Currently there are four peacekeeping missions; MINUSCA, MONUSCO, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) which have dedicated Security Council mandates to address CRSV.¹⁶⁶ Notably MONUSCO has worked closely with regional actors and organizations to prevent and respond to these situations.¹⁶⁷ MONUSCO has instituted trainings with mission personnel to ensure the safety of all citizens.¹⁶⁸ In 2021, reports of SGBV surfaced from the UN Stabilisation Mission in Haiti and included reports of 29 victims, resulting in 32 children being fathered by UN peacekeepers or personnel.¹⁶⁹ Haitians involved in interviews for this study noted a significant number of UN personnel and peacekeepers giving money to their victims in

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/2493 (2019))*, 2019.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ UN-Women, *Facts and Figures: Ending Violence Against Women*, 2022.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2021/827)*, 2021.

¹⁵⁹ United Nations Peacekeeping, *Conflict-related sexual violence*, 2017.

¹⁶⁰ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2021/827)*, 2021.

¹⁶¹ Larson & Dodds, UN peacekeepers in Congo hold record for rape, sex abuse. *The Associate Press*, 2017.

¹⁶² Larson & Dodds, UN peacekeepers in Congo hold record for rape, sex abuse. *The Associate Press*, 2017.

¹⁶³ Larson & Dodds, UN peacekeepers in Congo hold record for rape, sex abuse. *The Associate Press*, 2017.

¹⁶⁴ UN-Women, *Facts and Figures: Ending Violence Against Women*, 2022.

¹⁶⁵ United Nations Peacekeeping, *Conflict-related sexual violence*, 2017.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, *Women Peace and Security in Peacekeeping*, 2022.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Elks, Haitians say underaged girls were abused by U.N. peacekeepers, *Reuters*, 2019.

exchange for sex.¹⁷⁰ One man noted “they put a few coins in your hand to drop a baby in you,” while another women noted that UN peacekeepers “left them in misery with babies in their hands,” especially when victims were under the age of 15.¹⁷¹ UN peacekeeping missions and NGOs have been working in tandem to provide training and education to women and peacekeepers on sexual violence in hopes to lower and prevent these acts from occurring.¹⁷²

The Effects of COVID-19 on Women, Peace, and Security

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed a unique challenge for the international community regarding WPS.¹⁷³ Prior to the pandemic, nearly 30% of women fifteen and older around the world have experienced some type of physical and/or sexual violence at the hand of an intimate partner.¹⁷⁴ Oxfam International published the report “The Ignored Pandemic: The Dual Crises of Gender-Based Violence, and COVID-19,” in 2021 which detailed extensive data surrounding the effects the COVID-19 pandemic had on women around the world.¹⁷⁵ The report indicated that at the start of the pandemic, many Member States reported a dramatic increase in the number of requests for services to assist women in these situations between “25 to 111%,” in some Member States.¹⁷⁶ The increase of service requests to assist women in these situations were due to the lengthy lockdowns around the world and the number of women who were forced to stay home in abusive environments.¹⁷⁷

As the pandemic continues to affect the international community, the challenge to ensure the safety of women during times of conflict has become increasingly difficult as women are more likely to remain at home in caretaking positions.¹⁷⁸ During the start of the pandemic, women throughout the international community took on a vast majority of the work both in and out of their home environments.¹⁷⁹ As noted by the World Bank in 2020, women living in conflict zones experienced more barriers to education, healthcare, and job opportunities due to the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁸⁰ This has further hampered the work of the international community, UN peacekeeping missions, and progress on the WPS agenda as Member States have been focused on COVID-19 recovery.¹⁸¹ COVID-19 realities and recovery efforts has caused funding and WPS programs to diminish significantly.¹⁸²

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization published a report in 2020 which documented the challenges which many women faced at the start of the pandemic.¹⁸³ At the onset of the pandemic women around the world, particularly those in caregiving roles, were faced with the difficult decision to stay home to take care of immediate family or continue working in vital healthcare roles during the pandemic.¹⁸⁴ As the pandemic continues, the international community has been faced with continuous difficulty in reaching the targets set forth by SDG 5.¹⁸⁵ Although resolution 1325 outlines the necessary measures needed to achieve the progress markers for WPS, as detailed in the four pillars, there has been a consistent lack of

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, *Women Peace and Security in Peacekeeping*, 2022.

¹⁷³ UN-Women, *Facts and figures: Women, peace and security*, 2021.

¹⁷⁴ UN-Women, *The Shadow Pandemic: Violence Against Women During COVID-19*.

¹⁷⁵ Oxfam International, *The Ignored Pandemic: The Dual Crisis of Gender-Based Violence and COVID-19*, 2020.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 7.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, pp. 7-9.

¹⁷⁸ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2021/827)*, 2021.

¹⁷⁹ North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *COVID-19: at the Heart of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda*, 2020.

¹⁸⁰ Bousquet & Grown, Gender inequality exacerbates the COVID-19 crisis in fragile and conflict-affected settings, *The World Bank Group*, 2020.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *COVID-19: at the Heart of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda*, 2020.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 14.

funding since the adoption of the resolution.¹⁸⁶ Although many Member States have committed to funding and have made local and regional efforts to meet the goals of the agenda, it has not been enough to achieve the level necessary to complete the four pillars of the agenda.¹⁸⁷

Conclusion

The adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 has served as the foundation for discussion on the topic of women, peace, and security over the last twenty-two years.¹⁸⁸ Through the Security Council, UN Women, and countless other UN bodies, the work of the WPS Agenda has been at the forefront of discussion and programs.¹⁸⁹ However, there is still a lack of implementation amongst Member States, NGOs, and other international bodies.¹⁹⁰ With the increase in conflict zones around the world, the question has been raised on how to best achieve the pillars of the WPS Agenda while ensuring the safety and protection of women and children.¹⁹¹ Additionally the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has posed unique threats and challenges to the work of WPS including: an increase in SGBV, a decrease in opportunities for women to be involved in all aspects of conflict resolution, and a decline in funding for programs which promote and encourage women to be involved in all levels of conflict resolution.¹⁹² Acknowledging the challenges currently facing the WPS Agenda, the Security Council, in collaboration with partners at all levels of the international community must collaborate on efforts to ensure further action and implementation of women, peace, and security.¹⁹³

Further Research

To further the discussion of this topic, delegates are recommended to consider the following questions in their further research: How can barriers be removed to encourage more women to enter the field of peacebuilding and conflict resolution? How can the political participation of women be encouraged and advanced during the ongoing pandemic? What efforts can be taken by the Security Council and Member States to decrease sexual and gender-based violence at the hands of Peacekeepers?

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Compiled by UN Women, this webpage provides current facts and figures on Women, Peace, and Security. This website provides data and updates on work for the WPS agenda. For example, the website provides information on how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected women. The data also provides great insight into different gaps that the agenda faces such as funding, difficulties reaching goals, and regional issues. Delegates should find this source as an insightful start to their research in addition to a better understanding of the current work on the topic.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2022). *Facts and figures: Ending violence against women*. Retrieved 16 February 2022 from: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures>

This webpage provides vital information on the types of violence women are subjected to both during times of conflicts but also in developed Member States through facts and figures. The data provided depicts how violence against women has specifically

¹⁸⁶ United States Institute for Peace, *What is UNSCR 1325? An Explanation of the Landmark Resolution on Women, Peace and Security*.

¹⁸⁷ NGO Working Group on Women, Peace, and Security, *Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda, 2020*; UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2021/827)*, 2021.

¹⁸⁸ UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1325 (2000))*, 2000.

¹⁸⁹ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2021/827)*, 2021.

¹⁹⁰ UN-Women, *Facts and figures: Women, peace and security*, 2021.

¹⁹¹ UN-Women, *Facts and Figures: Ending Violence Against Women*, 2022.

¹⁹² UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2021/827)*, 2021.

¹⁹³ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2021/827)*, 2021.

increased during the COVID-19 pandemic and how this poses a challenge for the international community and efforts made towards the WPS Agenda. Delegates should use this webpage as a starting point in their research to better understand the types of violence that women are subjected to.

United Nations, Fourth World Conference on Women. (1995). *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. Retrieved 15 February 2022 from:

https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/PFA_E_Final_WEB.pdf

Delegates should use this document to gain a better understanding of the types of recommendations that have been proposed for this topic in addition to gaining an understanding of how UN bodies have addressed this topic. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action provides a detailed overview of how the discussion on Women, Peace, and Security has expanded. Additionally, this document details the types of discrimination that women face in all aspects of life during times of peace and conflict, while providing recommendations that UN bodies and Member States can take in order to best address the topic.

United Nations, Security Council, 4213th Meeting. (2000). *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1325 (2000))*. Retrieved 10 February 2022 from: [http://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1325\(2000\)](http://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1325(2000))

This resolution serves as the first to be adopted by the Security Council in 2000 on the topic of Women, Peace, and Security. The resolution details the definition of Women, Peace, and Security in addition to outlining the four pillars for the future agenda. This is a foundational document for delegates to read and understand for this topic.

United Nations, Security Council, 8514th meeting. (2019). *Women and Peace and Security: Sexual Violence in conflict (S/RES/2467 (2019))*. Retrieved 20 March 2022 from:

[https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2467\(2019\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2467(2019))

Resolution 2467 provides information on how the Security Council has further implemented the topic of Women, Peace, and Security within its mandate. The document details how women have been affected during times of conflict and how the Security Council has acted in accordance with their mandate to ensure the safety of women. Delegates should use this source to better understand the challenges that the Security Council and international community has regarding achieving progress in maintaining safety for women in conflict situations.

United Nations, Security Council. (2021). *Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2021/827)*. Retrieved 16 February 2022 from: <https://undocs.org/en/S/2021/827>

This annual report provides information on how ongoing situations have continued to affect the work on the WPS agenda. The document details how COVID-19 and conflict situations are affecting women around the world and the challenges that Member States have going forward with the work on the agenda. Delegates should use this source to better understand the challenges that the international community faces regarding progress on the topic of Women, Peace, and Security.

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2. The Situation in Afghanistan

Introduction

Afghanistan is a country located in southern Asia, bounded to the east and south by Pakistan, to the west by Iran, and to the north by Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, as well as a small portion of China.¹⁹⁴ Ahmad Shah Durrani founded the modern state of Afghanistan in 1747.¹⁹⁵ Throughout the 19th century, it served as a buffer between the British and Russian Empires.¹⁹⁶ In 1919, Afghanistan became a sovereign and fully independent state from the United Kingdom through the *Treaty of Rawalpindi*.¹⁹⁷ Afghanistan's independence meant the recognition of their government and paved the way for democracy as well as for the establishment of international relations.¹⁹⁸ During the 1920s, Afghanistan established diplomatic relations with numerous countries and even gained their first king, Amanullah, from 1923 to 1929, after which he abdicated as the Afghan Civil War escalated.¹⁹⁹ In October 1929, rebel troops captured Kabul and in 1932 Afghanistan approved a new constitution that provided for a bicameral parliament (National Assembly) and a council of state.²⁰⁰ In 1933, Zahir Shah became king, and the following year, the United States (U.S.) formally recognized Afghanistan for the first time.²⁰¹ The United Kingdom withdrew from India in 1947, creating the modern states of India and Pakistan, thus creating the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan.²⁰² The pro-Soviet Mohammed Daoud Khan became the Prime Minister of Afghanistan in 1953 and looked to the Soviet Union for economic and military assistance, establishing strong relations between Afghans and Soviets.²⁰³ After a brief experiment with democracy, Afghanistan underwent a coup in 1973 and a counter coup in 1978 that brought the Afghan Communist Party to power.²⁰⁴ That same year, Afghan communists proclaimed their independence from Soviet influence, and declared their policies to be based on Islamic principles, Afghan nationalism, and socioeconomic justice.²⁰⁵

The Soviets took over Afghanistan between 1979 and 1989 in a period known as the Soviet-Afghan War, during which conservative Islamic and ethnic leaders began an armed revolt in the countryside and guerilla movements formed, most notably the Mujahadeen, who united against Soviet invaders and the Soviet-backed Afghan Army.²⁰⁶ This conflict resulted in famine, paucity, and the displacement of 4.3 million Afghans to Pakistan and Iran.²⁰⁷ It was during this same period that numerous rebel groups formed in Afghanistan with the support of turncoat government troops.²⁰⁸ However, it was not until 1994 that the Taliban rose to power on the promises of peace and prosperity.²⁰⁹ A large portion of the Afghan population supported the Taliban as they claimed to not only uphold traditional Islamic values, but also promised an improvement from the situation that Afghanistan had been experiencing with the Soviet-Afghan War.²¹⁰ Their government has, however, been characterized by the oppression of women and the

¹⁹⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook: Afghanistan, 2022*; Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook: Afghanistan – Details, 2022*.

¹⁹⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook: Afghanistan, 2022*.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ Akram, *Respecting Afghanistan's Sovereignty, Middle East Institute, 2012*; Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook: Afghanistan, 2022*.

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¹⁹⁹ U.S. Library of Congress, *The Reign of King Amanullah*.

²⁰⁰ University of Central Arkansas, *Afghanistan (1919-present)*, n.d.

²⁰¹ NewsHour Productions LLC News Desk, *A Historical Timeline of Afghanistan, Public Broadcasting Service News Hour, 2021*.

²⁰² *Ibid.*

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

enforcement of Islamic law through public corporeal punishments and executions.²¹¹ In 1996, Kabul fell to the Taliban and by 1998, the Taliban controlled 90% of Afghanistan.²¹²

After former U.S. President George W. Bush enacted Operation Enduring Freedom, in which the Taliban government was toppled in Afghanistan, the 2001 UN-sponsored Bonn Conference established a new constitution, an independent judiciary, democratic elections, a centralized security sector, and the protection of rights of women and minorities.²¹³ The Taliban conducted a two-decade insurgency against the Afghan Government and international forces from the United States and other countries.²¹⁴

After the August 2021 withdrawal of the United States from Afghanistan and the swift subsequent takeover of the Afghan government by the Taliban, the country has become, according to the World Food Program, “among the world’s worst humanitarian crises - if not the worst.”²¹⁵ Almost half of the Afghan population was in need of humanitarian assistance in 2021 due to conflict, drought and food insecurity, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic.²¹⁶ 22.8 million Afghans are estimated to be suffering from “crisis” or “emergency” food insecurity.²¹⁷ Additionally, Human Rights Council (HRC) experts have identified that the fundamentalist Taliban government aims to erase women from society by destroying educational access, job opportunities, and basic rights of movement and autonomy.²¹⁸

The result of four decades of sustained conflict has the country with a GDP per capita of only \$516, ranking as the 8th lowest in the world.²¹⁹ It is worth noting that the period of US occupation saw some favorable trends, particularly in education for children and youth as Afghanistan developed programs to encourage the development of skills and competencies that can be used to improve financial security by making Afghan youth competitive in the labor market.²²⁰ Nevertheless, these gains are at risk of being erased due to a lack of resources and explicit Taliban policy against the education of girls.²²¹

Although the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) noted a decrease in the number of civilian casualties and conflict-related security issues in the country as of February 2022, armed conflict within Afghanistan still poses several challenges for the international community, especially for the delivery of humanitarian aid as the Taliban has inefficiently distributed the aid Afghanistan receives from different countries.²²² Between 19 August and 31 December 2021, there were 985 United Nations (UN) recorded security incidents in Afghanistan, a 91% decrease over the same period in 2020.²²³ The provinces of Kabul, Kunar, and Kandahar experienced the most conflict during this period.²²⁴ Much of this conflict is attributed to clashes between the Taliban and resistance forces led by the former government.²²⁵

The Taliban poses a threat to regional and international security as the group is likely to infringe upon the rights of Afghans, particularly of women and minorities.²²⁶ Furthermore, concerns exist regarding the Taliban’s ability to provide Afghans with much needed humanitarian aid, thus compromising their safety,

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook: Afghanistan*, 2022.

²¹³ CNN, *US War in Afghanistan*, 2022; Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook: Afghanistan*, 2022.

²¹⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook: Afghanistan*, 2022.

²¹⁵ World Food Programme, *Half of Afghanistan’s population face acute hunger as humanitarian needs grow to record levels*, 2021.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ HRC, *Human Rights Council intersessional panel discussion on the responsibility to protect*, 2021.

²¹⁹ The World Bank, *GDP per capita (current US\$) – Afghanistan*, 2021.

²²⁰ Abazov, Education in Afghanistan: Decades of Progress Provide Hope for the Future, *UN Chronicle*, 2021.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Khaliq, Afghanistan sees improvement in security situation: UN, *Anadolu Agency*, 2022.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Maizland, Backgrounder: The Taliban in Afghanistan, *Council on Foreign Relations*, 2021.

health, and financial security.²²⁷ Failure to guarantee dignified living conditions for Afghans could result in the increased displacement of hundreds of thousands of people, adding to the millions of Afghans who are already internally displaced peoples (IDPs), deepening the grave humanitarian crisis.²²⁸

International and Regional Framework

Between 5 January and 9 January 1980, the Security Council met to discuss the occupation of Afghanistan by Soviet forces and its implications for world security.²²⁹ During this meeting, the Soviet Union vetoed a draft resolution that would have resulted in the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghan land.²³⁰ This led to the adoption of Security Council resolution 462 (1980), which called for an emergency session of the General Assembly.²³¹ General Assembly resolution 377(V), also known as the “Uniting for Peace” resolution, states that if the Security Council, due to lack of unanimity of the permanent members, fails to exercise its primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, it shall prompt the General Assembly to consider the matter immediately with the view to making recommendations to Member States to restore international peace and security.²³² If not in session, the General Assembly may call for an emergency special session.²³³

Eight years later, the Security Council adopted resolution 622 (1988), which established the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP).²³⁴ UNGOMAP, as a peacekeeping mission, lasted until 1990 and had the purpose of assisting Afghanistan in the implementation of the *Geneva Accords* (1988).²³⁵ The *Geneva Accords*, “known formally as the Agreements on the Settlement of the Situation Relating to Afghanistan,” were signed by Pakistan and Afghanistan and essentially encouraged non-interference and non-intervention between both parties.²³⁶ Additionally, Security Council resolution 1076 (1996) called on all parties in Afghanistan to cease fighting, and engage in political dialogue, as well as condemned the poor treatment of women and girls in the country.²³⁷ Security Council resolution 1076 was crucial in the adoption of Security Council resolution 1401 (2002), which established the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan in substitution of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan.²³⁸ The Security Council and other UN organs took an active role in establishing a new transitional broad-based multi-ethnic government after the toppling of the Taliban in 2001 with Security Council resolution 1378 (2001) by fashioning several binding resolutions addressing the most pressing issues pertaining to the reconstruction of Afghanistan and by sponsoring talks on the subject.²³⁹ Security Council resolution 1383 (2001) endorsed the *Bonn Agreement* (2001), which formed the Islamic State of Afghanistan and asked that the UN assist in the formation of a national army.²⁴⁰ The *Bonn Agreement* is of particular significance to the study of the situation in Afghanistan as it allowed for an unprecedented peaceful leadership change after the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001.²⁴¹

On March 28, 2002, the Security Council adopted resolution 1401, giving rise to UNAMA, a Special Political Mission aimed at assisting Afghans with peace and development.²⁴² Although the original

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ UN General Assembly, *Record of Meeting held of 14 Jan. 1980 (closing) (A/ES-6/PV.7)*, 1980.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ UN General Assembly, *Uniting for Peace (A/RES/377 (V))*; UN Security Council, *International Peace and Security (S/RES/462 (1980))*, 1980.

²³² Dag Hammarskjöld Library, *What is the Uniting for Peace Resolution?*, 2022.

²³³ UN General Assembly, *Uniting for Peace (A/RES/377 (V))*, p. 1.

²³⁴ UNGOMAP, *Afghanistan / Pakistan - UNGOMAP – Background*, 2002.

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Security Council Report, *UN Documents for Afghanistan: Security Council Resolutions*, 2022.

²³⁸ UN Security Council, *Security Council Endorses Establishment of UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan for Initial 12-Month Period*, 2002.

²³⁹ Bosi, *Post-conflict Reconstruction: The United Nations’ Involvement in Afghanistan*, 2003; Security Council Report, *UN Documents for Afghanistan: Security Council Resolutions*, 2022.

²⁴⁰ UNAMA, *Mandate*, 2022.

²⁴¹ Byrd, *The Bonn Legacy*, *Foreign Policy*, 2013.

²⁴² UNAMA, *Mandate*, 2022.

mandate of UNAMA was to support the implementation of the 2001 *Bonn Agreement*, the mandate is reviewed annually and is altered according to the priorities of the country.²⁴³ The current mandate includes supporting the organization of elections, protecting and promoting human rights, such as the right against child recruitment into conflict and supporting gender equality and the empowerment of women.²⁴⁴ The UN Security Council extended the mandate until March 2023 through Security Council resolution 2626 (2022) to include the following priorities: the provision of good offices; preventive diplomacy or conflict prevention techniques that support Afghanistan in their mission to engage with the region, improve regional cooperation, and delivery of humanitarian assistance; the prevention of recruitment of children as soldiers; women and girls' empowerment; and transition to a just and corruption free government, among others.²⁴⁵

Role of the International System

Upon the Taliban takeover, most Member States cut off diplomatic relations with Kabul, but in recent months have begun to re-open contact.²⁴⁶ Delegations from the United States, the European Union, Germany, and the Netherlands have met with the Taliban in Kabul and Doha to address the dire humanitarian situation of the Afghan people.²⁴⁷ Other Member States in the region have repeatedly called for increased humanitarian assistance, protection for the rights of women and minorities, and the formation of an inclusive government in an attempt to reflect the ethnic, political, and geographic diversity of Afghanistan and incorporate women.²⁴⁸ Officials from Qatar, Russia, China, Uzbekistan, Turkey, and Kazakhstan met with the Taliban government in Kabul in October 2021.²⁴⁹ The outcome of these meetings was overall successful, with parties involved having discussed matters ranging from the delivery of humanitarian and financial assistance for Afghanistan to the implementation of strategies to combat terrorism.²⁵⁰

The Taliban is among the 15 entities and groups officially sanctioned by the Security Council.²⁵¹ In Security Council resolution 2255 (2015), Member States were required to freeze Taliban assets, prevent the entry of members into their borders, and stop the direct or indirect supply/ sale of arms or other military equipment to the group.²⁵² After the Taliban assumed de facto control over the Afghan government in the summer of 2021, these sanctions began to pose serious issues for diplomatic engagement with the country, mainly the provision of humanitarian assistance.²⁵³ After the Taliban seized power, the United States froze nearly \$9.5bn in Afghan central bank assets, and the World Bank suspended aid to the country.²⁵⁴

On 22 December 2021, the Security Council addressed matters pertaining to the provision of humanitarian assistance by adopting resolution 2615 (2021), which stated that for the following year humanitarian aid to Afghanistan does not violate existing UN sanctions against the Taliban enshrined in Security Council resolution 2255.²⁵⁵ Resolution 2615 also calls upon the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, to provide a brief "on the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan" and to other

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ UNAMA, *Mandate, 2022*; UNAMA, *Good Offices*.

²⁴⁶ Government of the Netherlands, *Statement on talks held in Afghanistan, 2021*.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ UN General Assembly and Security Council, *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (A/76/667–S/2022/64)*, 2022, p. 6.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ UN Security Council, *Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts (S/RES/2255 (2015))*, 2015.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ *UNSC adopts resolution to provide aid to Afghanistan*, Aljazeera, 2021.

²⁵⁵ UN Security Council, *Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Attacks (S/RES/2615 (2021))*, 2021.

places where it is needed, on diversion of funds to individuals or entities designated as terrorists, and on existing policies for the prevention of said diversion.²⁵⁶

Additionally, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) has established a special trust fund for managing donor funds focusing on delivering essential services and improving community resilience.²⁵⁷ Furthermore, the UNDP launched targeted programs for providing work opportunities for Afghans, with a focus on services related to agriculture and other areas crucial for food security.²⁵⁸ The UNDP, in collaboration with the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization created the Sehatmandi project, which entrusts non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with public health services.²⁵⁹ By the end of January 2022, the project had helped support more than 2,300 health centers in all 34 Afghan provinces, providing health services to more than 3.1 million people, including 782,000 women and 1.1 million children.²⁶⁰ However, arguably, the largest entity in the international system applied to Afghanistan is the UNAMA, with the mission of supporting efforts to achieve peace and stability in Afghanistan²⁶¹

Women’s Rights in Afghanistan

Prior to the Taliban’s takeover, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, an associated fund of UNDP, had been working since 2002 alongside the Ministry of Women’s Affairs to provide financial and technical assistance to programmes and strategies aimed at empowering women in Afghanistan.²⁶² Their joint efforts for many years resulted in the creation of Women’s Development Centers where women could access health, educational, and vocational training, which helped Afghan women learn about their rights and be able to participate in society.²⁶³ Grassroots civil society organizations such as Women for Afghan Women, have been key in the provision of women’s empowerment efforts through the delivery of workshops that aim to enhance women’s independence in Afghanistan despite the ongoing situation.²⁶⁴

When in power in 1996, the Taliban expressly banned women from receiving education or working outside of the home.²⁶⁵ The US occupation greatly improved the state of women’s rights in Afghanistan, as women were able to achieve positions within government and receive formal education.²⁶⁶ The Afghan Ministry of Women’s Affairs launched a National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan in 2007, and a 2017 reflection on the progress of the plan indicated 23 of its 31 targets were either fully or partially achieved.²⁶⁷

However, the return of Taliban rule has resulted in a regression of women’s rights.²⁶⁸ The Ministry of Women’s Affairs was shut down, replaced by the Ministry of the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice.²⁶⁹ The Ministry of the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice had existed during the previous Afghan rule, and strictly enforced Islamic law, particularly against women.²⁷⁰ Alongside this shuttering of the Women’s Affairs Ministry came the expulsion of staff for the World Bank’s \$100m Women’s Economic

²⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 2.

²⁵⁷ UN General Assembly and Security Council, *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security, (A/76/667–S/2022/64)*, 2022, p. 9.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ UNAMA, *Mission Statement*, 2022.

²⁶² UN-Women, *Women’s Centers in Afghanistan*, 2021.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Women for Afghan Women, *About*, 2021.

²⁶⁵ UN DGC, *Ban on Afghan Women Working Outside Home Threatens Humanitarian Operations, WFP Director Says, UN Meetings Coverage and Press Releases*, 1996.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ U.S. Agency for International Development, *National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan Assessment Report*.

²⁶⁸ *Taliban replaces ministry for women with ‘guidance’ ministry*, Aljazeera, 2021.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

Empowerment and Rural Development Project, which had been operated out of the Ministry.²⁷¹ In November 2021, UNICEF warned that child marriage in Afghanistan is on the rise, due to a combination of poor economic conditions and a lack of access to education.²⁷² In December 2021, the Taliban government published two “guidance notes” and one decree relating to the rights of Afghan women.²⁷³ The first guidance note advised media to stop publishing content contrary to Sharia, which included a mandate of dress codes for female journalists and a ban on women performing in films.²⁷⁴ A later decree declared rights of women, including the right to consent to marriage, and called upon the supreme court to hear cases involving women.²⁷⁵ The second guidance note stated that women seeking travel beyond short distances may not be offered public transportation unless accompanied by a close male relative.²⁷⁶ In January 2022, HRC experts reported that most girls’ secondary schools remained closed after the winter holidays, denying millions of girls access to education.²⁷⁷

Internal displacement is another issue facing many Afghans, with a disproportionate impact on women.²⁷⁸ Since the Taliban took over, thousands of people have been forced to relocate to find a safe space away from the violence.²⁷⁹ However, millions of people cannot leave as they depend on the humanitarian aid that reaches the country.²⁸⁰ As of December 2020, Afghanistan recorded 3,547,000 IDPs from conflict and violence.²⁸¹ This number has consistently increased over time.²⁸² Women, along with their children, make up roughly 65% of Afghan IDPs and refugees.²⁸³ Furthermore, it is estimated that over two million Afghan women are war widows and even larger numbers are sole heads of households.²⁸⁴ This places women in a vulnerable position not only mentally, but also physically, as accounts of women being assaulted and harassed have increased in post-Taliban Afghanistan.²⁸⁵

Child Welfare in Afghanistan

Living conditions for children living in Afghanistan are dire.²⁸⁶ Only 30% of children in the country are registered at birth, placing them at increased risk of underage recruitment into armed groups, unlawful detention, and less opportunities to access healthcare.²⁸⁷ Moreover, displacement due to war and natural disasters, in addition to exposure to violence, has detrimental effects on the psychological and developmental wellbeing of Afghan children.²⁸⁸

Since 1999, the UN Security Council has adopted seven resolutions on children and armed conflict.²⁸⁹ Most notably, Security Council resolution 1539 (2004), Security Council resolution 1612 (2005), and Security Council resolution 1882 (2009) outline what actions entail grave violations against children in

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² UNICEF, *Statement by UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore on Girls increasingly at risk of child marriage in Afghanistan on 12 November 2021*, 2021.

²⁷³ European Union Agency for Asylum, *Country Guidance: Afghanistan Common Analysis and Guidance Note April 2022*, 2022; UNICEF, *Statement by UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore on Girls increasingly at risk of child marriage in Afghanistan on 12 November 2021*, 2021.

²⁷⁴ European Union Agency for Asylum, *Country Guidance: Afghanistan Common Analysis and Guidance Note April 2022*, 2022.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ UN DPI, Experts Decry Measures to ‘Steadily Erase’ Afghan Women and Girls from Public Life, *UN News*, 2022.

²⁷⁸ UN-Women, *Women’s Centers in Afghanistan*, 2021.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, *Afghanistan*, 2022.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ UN-Women, *Women’s Centers in Afghanistan*, 2021.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ UNICEF Afghanistan, *Child Protection*.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Watchlist On Children and Armed Conflict, *Why are UN Security Council Resolutions Important for the Children and Armed Conflict Agenda?*, 2020.

armed conflict, delineate a framework for monitoring and reporting on violations against children in armed conflict, and request that the Secretary-General includes in the “list of shame” of parties that violate children’s rights in situations of conflict, respectively.²⁹⁰ To strengthen the protection of children affected by armed conflict in Afghanistan, the Secretary-General presented report 2021/662, on 14 August 2021 on “Children and Armed Conflict in Afghanistan.”²⁹¹ The report offers information on trends pertaining to violations committed against children involved in the conflict in Afghanistan besides identifying which parties acted as perpetrators.²⁹² The report also offers solutions to relieve this problem, namely the use of systems that are already in place in Afghanistan, such as the implementation of the Law on the Protection of Child Rights to effectively investigate and discipline those who recruit children to fight in the conflict.²⁹³

Child soldiers have been present in Afghanistan for many years, having been recruited to fight against the British Empire, Soviet invasion, and U.S. occupation.²⁹⁴ Since their establishment, the Taliban have used children as fighters on the frontlines of Afghanistan’s armed conflicts, as well as suicide bombers.²⁹⁵ While the UN is aware of “hundreds of individual cases in which the Taliban have recruited and used children in recent years,” the real figures are likely much higher and have yet to be confirmed officially.²⁹⁶ Typically, the Taliban have used Islamic religious schools known as madrasas to recruit and train children as young as 6 as soldiers given their propensity for persuasion.²⁹⁷ However, the U.S.-backed Afghan government and pro-government forces have also recruited children for belligerent purposes.²⁹⁸ Often, these children are recruited through deception or threats against their lives and those of their families.²⁹⁹

Children’s rights protection organizations, such as the Child Protection Action Network, have worked tirelessly alongside UNICEF and different international and local stakeholders to safeguard Afghan children’s wellbeing through several initiatives.³⁰⁰ For instance, when emergencies occur, UNICEF and other agencies establish specific spaces for children to safely play and socialize.³⁰¹ To prevent underage recruitment, UNICEF and its partners developed an online registration database within the Ministry of Interior’s Vital Statistics Department in Afghanistan to allow for parents to register their children immediately upon their birth.³⁰² This strategy has been paramount to curb the inadequate age verification procedures that often lead to child recruitment.³⁰³ Furthermore, the creation of Child Protection Centres within police departments and recruitment offices has prevented the recruitment of thousands of children year after year.³⁰⁴

Conclusion

Multifaceted emergencies such as conflict, drought, and food insecurity, have turned Afghanistan into one of the world’s worst humanitarian crises.³⁰⁵ This has had a dire impact on the population, specifically for women and children, whose rights and needs are most vulnerable.³⁰⁶ Many in the international community argue that the Security Council and the UN System have both the practical and moral responsibility of

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ UN Security Council, *Children and Armed Conflict in Afghanistan Report of the Secretary-General*, (S/2021/662) 2021, p. 2.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ OCHA Services, *Afghanistan: Taliban Child Soldier Recruitment Surges*, 2016.

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

²⁹⁶ Becker, This is our Opportunity to End the Taliban's Use of Child Soldiers, *Human Rights Watch*, 2022.

²⁹⁷ OCHA Services, *Afghanistan: Taliban Child Soldier Recruitment Surges*, 2016.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ UNICEF Afghanistan, *Child Protection*.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

³⁰⁵ World Food Programme, *Half of Afghanistan's population face acute hunger as humanitarian needs grow to record levels*, 2021.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

helping Afghanistan address the challenges that the country is facing.³⁰⁷ This will help build upon the success of organizations and other actors working to ensure that Afghanistan, and the globe, embark on a path that fosters peace and prosperity for all.³⁰⁸

Further Research

Moving forward, delegates should consider the following questions: What steps can the Security Council take in order to guarantee that the rights of minorities, including women and children, are protected during the protracted crises, including but not limited to COVID-19, drought, economic turmoil, and security challenges? What sanctions against the Taliban should the Security Council consider without furthering the suffering of Afghans? What strategies can the United Nations system use in order to rebuild trust between the Taliban, the international community, and Afghanistan's citizens? How can the Bonn Conference experience be used to assist Afghanistan given their current political climate?

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This country guidance presents an assessment conducted by members of the European Union regarding the situation in Afghanistan. The guidelines contained within it are non-binding and are mainly focused on asylum aspects. Delegates can find this tool useful to learn more about a wide array of topics concerning Afghanistan, such as about ethnic and religious minorities, women, and members of the LGBTQ+ community, among others.

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. (2022). *Afghanistan*. Retrieved 25 April 2022 from: <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/afghanistan>

This website provides an overview about Afghanistan's displacement crisis, a country that faces one of the world's most grave internal displacement crises as it suffers protracted conflict and insecurity as well as recurring natural disasters. The data compiled in this source depicts the growing severity of IDPs caused by the current situation in Afghanistan. By using this tool, delegates can not only learn about the latest news pertaining to IDPs, but also about patterns of displacement as well as how to interpret the figures found on the webpage.

Maizland, L. (2021, September 15). Backgrounder: The Taliban in Afghanistan. *Council on Foreign Relations*. Retrieved 15 March 2022 from: <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/taliban-afghanistan>

The present backgrounder provides fundamental information regarding the Taliban, an Islamic fundamentalist group that returned to power in Afghanistan in 2021. Given that they are the current government in Afghanistan, learning about their history, how they function, and what challenges they face is vital for a well-rounded understanding of not only Afghanistan, but also the Security Council. Delegates should use this source to better understand the complexity of the situation regarding religion and the Taliban.

Ponzio, R. (2021, December 9). A Step-by-Step Roadmap to Peace in Afghanistan. *Stimson*. Retrieved 15 March 2022 from: <https://www.stimson.org/2021/a-step-by-step-roadmap-to-peace-in-afghanistan/>

"A Step-by-Step Roadmap to Peace in Afghanistan" is a policy brief that is part of the Peace and Regional Connectivity with Afghanistan Project that aims to explore the role that the international community and the United Nations system can play in improving the situation in Afghanistan. Reading this policy brief will be useful to learn about how the United Nations has been involved in Afghanistan. It will help delegates to think critically about what solutions can be implemented to improve the situation in the country.

³⁰⁷ Ponzio, A Step-by-Step Roadmap to Peace in Afghanistan, *Stimson*, 2021.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

Security Council Report. (2021). *UN Documents for Afghanistan: Security Council Resolutions*. Retrieved 23 April 2022 from: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un_documents_type/security-council-resolutions/?ctype=Afghanistan&cbtype=afghanistan

The website of the Security Council Report will be crucial for delegates to learn about all Security Council resolutions regarding Afghanistan as well as to explore the chronology of events and fact sheets on sanctions affecting the country. As the United Nations organ with the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council has published various resolutions on Afghanistan since 1946. This resource will assist delegates in understanding how Security Council resolutions pertaining to the situation in Afghanistan have changed throughout time.

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