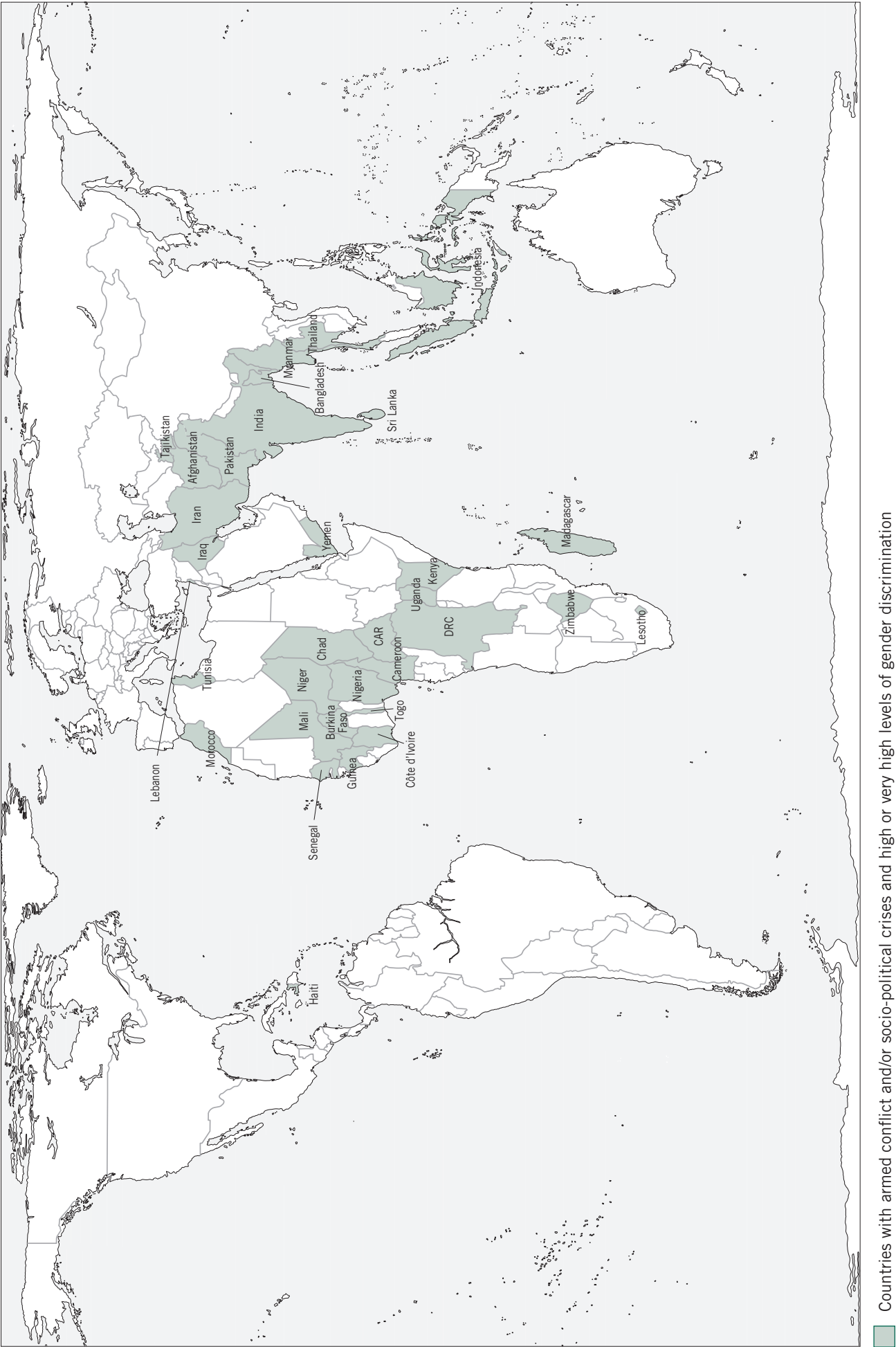


Map 3.1. Gender, peace and security



3. Gender, peace and security

- Seventy-nine per cent (79%) of the armed conflicts for which data on gender equality existed took place in contexts with medium, high or very high levels of gender discrimination.
- Nine of the 19 conflicts that were subject to examination in the UN Secretary-General's report on sexual violence on armed conflicts were of high intensity during 2018.
- Most international peace processes continued to exclude women and did not include gender equality issues in their negotiating agendas, although some progress was made in Afghanistan, Georgia and the Philippines.
- Parity was achieved for the first time in the Senior Management Group of the United Nations, a high-level body chaired by the Secretary-General that brings together the leaders of the organisation's departments, offices, funds and programmes. Gender parity was also achieved among the resident coordinators.
- A total of 79 countries had an action plan at the end of 2018, of which only 43% had a specific budget associated with implementing the plan, according to WILPF.

The Gender, Peace and Security chapter analyses the gender impacts of armed conflicts and socio-political crises, as well as the inclusion of the gender perspective into various international and local peacebuilding initiatives by international organisations, especially the United Nations, national governments, as well as different organisations and movements from local and international civil society.¹ In addition, the chapter conducts a specific follow-up of the implementation of the agenda on women, peace and security, established after the adoption by the UN Security Council in 2000 of resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. The gender perspective brings to light the differentiated effects of the armed conflicts on women and men, but also to what extent and in what way both women and men are participating in peacebuilding and the contributions that women are making to peacebuilding. The chapter is structured into three main sections: the first provides an assessment of the global situation with regard to gender inequalities by analysing the Social Institutions and Gender Index; the second analyses the gender dimension in armed conflicts and socio-political crises; and the final section is devoted to peacebuilding from a gender perspective. At the beginning of the chapter, a map is attached that shows those countries with serious gender inequalities according to the Index of Social Institutions and Gender.

3.1. Gender inequalities

The Index of Social Institutions and Gender (SIGI)² is a measure of discrimination against women in social institutions, which reflects discriminatory laws, regulations and practices in 180 countries taking into account five dimensions: discrimination within the family, violence against women, preference for sons, women's access to resources and their access to public space. Discriminatory social institutions (formal and informal regulations, attitudes and practices) restrict women's access to rights, justice and empowerment, and perpetuate gender inequalities in areas such as education, health, employment or participation in politics.

According to the SIGI, levels of discrimination against women were high or very high in 29 countries, mainly concentrated in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The analysis obtained by crossing the data of this index with those of countries experiencing armed conflict reveals that **13 of the 34 armed conflicts that took place throughout 2018 occurred in countries where serious gender inequalities existed, with high or very high levels of discrimination,**

1. Gender is the analytical category that highlights that inequalities between men and women are a social construct and not a result of nature, underlining their social and cultural construction in order to distinguish them from biological differences of the sexes. Gender aims to give visibility to the social construction of sexual difference and the sexual division of labour and power. The gender perspective seeks to show that the differences between men and women are a social construct which is a product of unequal power relations that have historically been established in the patriarchal system. Gender as a category of analysis aims to demonstrate the historical and context-based nature of sexual differences.

2. The SIGI is an index developed by the OECD that measures five sub-indexes composed of 14 indicators that include: legal age of marriage, early marriage, parental authority, violence against women, female genital mutilation, reproductive autonomy, selective abortions by sex, fertility preferences, secure access to land, secure access to the ownership of other resources, access to financial services, access to public space, access to political participation and representation. OCDE, *Social Institutions & Gender Index*, OCDE, 2019.

Table 3.1. Countries in armed conflict and/or socio-political crisis with medium, high or very high levels of gender discrimination³

	Medium levels of discrimination	High levels of discrimination	Very high levels of discrimination	No data
Armed conflicts⁴	Burkina Faso ⁵ DRC (3) India (2) Thailand	CAR Chad ⁶ Mali Myanmar Nigeria ⁷	Afghanistan Cameroon ⁸ Iraq Niger ⁹ Pakistan (2) Yemen (2)	Algeria Burundi Egypt Israel ¹⁰ Libya Niger Palestine ¹¹ Somalia South Sudan Sudan (2) Syria
Socio-political crises	DRC (4) ¹² Haiti India (4) ¹³ Kenya Lesotho Senegal Tajikistan Thailand Zimbabwe	Chad Côte d'Ivoire Indonesia Iraq Madagascar Morocco Nigeria (2) Sri Lanka Togo Tunisia Uganda	Bangladesh Guinea Iran (4) Lebanon (2) ¹⁴ Pakistan (2)	Angola Bahrain China Djibouti Egypt Equatorial Guinea Eritrea Gambia Guinea Bissau Israel (2) Palestine ¹⁵ Republic of the Congo Saudi Arabia Somalia South Sudan (2) Sudan (2) Syria Uzbekistan Venezuela

and seven in countries with medium levels of discrimination, while 11 armed conflicts took place in countries for which there are no available data: Algeria, Burundi, Egypt, Israel, Libya, Niger, Palestine,¹⁶ Syria, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan. Thus, more than 54% of the armed conflicts for which data on gender equality existed took place in contexts with high or very high levels of gender discrimination. This figure rises to 79% when contexts with medium levels of discrimination are included. In four other countries experiencing one or more armed conflicts, levels of discrimination were lower, and in some cases reached low (Ethiopia, Ukraine and Turkey) or very low levels (Colombia),

20 of the 34 armed conflicts in 2018 took place in countries where there were medium, high or very high levels of gender discrimination

according to the SIGI. At least 26 of the 83 active socio-political crises during the year 2018 occurred in countries where there were serious gender inequalities (high or very high levels according to the SIGI), accounting for 41% of the socio-political crises for which data existed. This figure rises to 56% if countries with medium levels of discrimination are included. Eighteen (18) socio-political crises occurred in countries for which no data are available (Angola, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, China, the Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Gambia, Gaza and the West Bank, Guinea Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Israel, Syria, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uzbekistan and Venezuela).

3. Table created based on levels of gender discrimination found in the SIGI (OECD), as indicated in the latest available report (2019), and on Escola de Cultura de Pau's classifications for armed conflicts and socio-political crises (see chapter 1, Armed conflicts, and chapter 2, Socio-political crises). The SIGI establishes five levels of classification based on the degree of discrimination: very high, high, medium, low and very low.
4. The number of armed conflicts or socio-political crises in the country appears between parentheses.
5. Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali are involved in the same armed conflict, called the Western Sahel region.
6. Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger are involved in the same armed conflict, called the Lake Chad Region (Boko Haram).
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Israel and Palestine and involved in the same conflict.
11. In the SIGI, Palestine is referred to as Gaza and the West Bank.
12. One of the socio-political crises in the DRC is the international one called Central Africa (LRA), in which both the Congolese Armed Forces and self-defence militias from the DRC are involved. See chapter 2 (Socio-political crises).
13. One of the socio-political crises in India refers to the one between it and Pakistan.
14. One of the socio-political crises in Lebanon refers to the one it has with Israel and Syria.
15. See footnote 11.
16. Ibid.

3.2. The impact of violence and conflicts from a gender perspective

This section addresses the gender dimension in the conflict cycle, especially in reference to violence against women. The gender perspective is a useful tool for the analysis of armed conflicts and socio-political crises and makes it possible to give visibility to aspects generally ignored in this analysis both in terms of causes and consequences.

3.2.1. Sexual violence in armed conflicts and crises

As in previous years, during 2018 sexual violence was present in a large number of active armed conflicts.¹⁷ Its use, which in some cases was part of the deliberate war strategies of the armed actors, was documented in different reports, as well as by local and international media.

In April, the UN Security Council held an open discussion on sexual violence in armed conflicts. The Secretary-General presented his annual monitoring and evaluation report on the issue. The Secretary-General's report covered the year 2017 and analysed the situation in 19 countries, 13 of which experienced armed conflict: Afghanistan, the CAR, Colombia, the DRC, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan (Darfur), Syria and Yemen, as well as the conflict in the Lake Chad region, which includes Nigeria. The report also identified governmental and non-governmental actors responsible for the use of sexual violence in conflicts, stated that 21 female protection advisors were deployed in seven missions and added that the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict conducted activities in Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Iraq, Liberia, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, the CAR, the DRC, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan in 2017. The report noted the deteriorating conditions for civil society organisations around the world and how violence has been used to assault human rights advocates and intimidate witnesses in trials for crimes of sexual violence and war crimes. The Secretary-General's report noted that most of the victims are economically and politically marginalised women and girls, often in remote rural areas or in situations of forced displacement.

The UN Secretary-General's annual report identified armed actors responsible for sexual violence in armed conflicts in 10 countries where 14 armed conflicts took place

Sexual violence was also a factor causing displacement and an obstacle to the return of refugees or internally displaced persons.

The discussion focused on the prevention of sexual violence, with Rohingya lawyer Razia Sultana participating as a civil society representative. Sultana spoke about the violent situation of the Rohingya civilian population, which has been massively displaced as a result of Burmese state military operations, denouncing the alarming levels of sexual violence that occurred. Sultana also referred to the impact of arms transfers and the mining industry on the use of sexual violence against the civilian population in the context of the armed conflict. It was the first time that the Secretary-General's report mentioned the sexual violence in Myanmar. Meanwhile, the Secretary-General's special representative for sexual violence in conflict, Pramila Patten, outlined the Secretary-General's new agenda in this area based on three pillars: 1) transforming the culture of impunity into one of deterrence through judicial action; 2) addressing structural gender inequalities as the root cause of sexual violence; and 3) enhancing national ownership and leadership to provide sustainable responses focused on survivors through the empowerment of women and civil society. Patten also invited the UN Security Council to consider the possibility of establishing a reparations fund for the victims.

Nine of the 19 armed conflicts¹⁸ that were analysed in the UN Secretary-General's report experienced high levels of intensity in 2018 –Libya, Mali, the Lake Chad region (Boko Haram), South Sudan, Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Yemen (Houthi)–, topping 1,000 fatalities during the year and producing serious impacts on people and the territory, including conflict-related sexual violence. Moreover, five of them also reported an escalation of violence during 2018 compared to 2017, notably in the CAR, Mali, Colombia, Afghanistan and Yemen (Houthi).

Regarding the situation in **Myanmar**, the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar, which was established by the United Nations Human Rights Council, presented its report on human rights violations

17. The UN considers sexual violence related to conflicts to be "incidents or patterns of sexual violence [...], that is, rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancies, forced sterilisation or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, boys or girls. These incidents or patterns of behaviour occur in situations of conflict or post-conflict or in other situations of concern (for example, during a political confrontation). In addition, they have a direct or indirect relationship with the conflict or political confrontation, that is, a temporal, geographical or causal relationship. Apart from the international nature of the alleged crimes, which depending on the circumstances constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, acts of genocide or other gross violations of human rights, the relationship with the conflict may be evidenced by taking into account the profile and motivations of the perpetrator, the profile of the victim, the climate of impunity or the breakdown of law and order by which the State in question may be affected, the cross-border dimensions or the fact that they violate the provisions of a ceasefire agreement". UN Action Against Sexual Violence In Conflict, Analytical and conceptual framework of sexual violence in conflicts, November 2012.

18. There was more than one armed conflict in some countries covered by the UN Secretary-General's report, according to the definition of the Escola de Cultura de Pau. The complete list of armed conflicts in the countries included in the Secretary-General's report is: the CAR; the DRC (East); the DRC (East-ADF); the DRC (Kasai); the Lake Chad region (Boko Haram), which includes Nigeria; Libya; Mali (North); Somalia; South Sudan; Sudan (Darfur); Colombia; Afghanistan; Myanmar; Iraq; Syria; Yemen (Houthi); and Yemen (AQAP).

Box 3.1. Armed actors and sexual violence in conflicts¹⁹

The UN Secretary-General's report on sexual violence in conflicts, published in March 2018, included a list of armed actors who are suspected of having committed systematic acts of rape and other forms of sexual violence or of being responsible for them in situations of armed conflict, which are subject to examination by the Security Council.²⁰

	STATE ACTORS	NON-STATE ACTORS
CAR		LRA; former Séléka factions: Union for Peace in the Central African Republic, Central African Patriotic Movement, Popular Front for the Revival of the Central African Republic/Gula faction, Popular Front for the Revival of the Central African Republic/Abdoulaye Hussein faction, Patriotic Association for the Renewal of the Central African Republic; Democratic Front of the Central African People/Abdoulaye Miskine; Revolution and Justice; Return, Claim and Rehabilitation/General Sidiki; anti-balaka groups
DRC	Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Congolese National Police	Alliance of Patriots for a Free and Sovereign Congo; Allied Democratic Forces; Forces for the Defence of the Congo; Bana Mura militias; Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda; Patriotic Resistance Front of Ituri; Kamuina Nsapu; LRA; Nduma Defence of the Congo; Mai-Mai Kifuafua; all Mai-Mai Simba factions; Nyatura; Nduma Congo Defence-Renewed; Mai-Mai Raia Mutomboki; all the TWA militias
Iraq		ISIS
Mali		MNLA, Ansar Dine, MUJAO, AQIM, Imghad Tuareg Self-Defence Groups and Allies
Myanmar	Burmese Armed Forces (Tatmadaw)	
Somalia	Somali National Army; National Police of Somalia and its allied militias; military forces of Puntland	Al-Shabaab
South Sudan	Sudan People's Liberation Army; National Police of South Sudan	LRA; Justice and Equality Movement; Sudan People's Liberation Army-in-Opposition/pro-Machar faction); Sudan People's Liberation Army-in-Opposition/pro-Taban Deng faction
Sudan	Sudanese Armed Forces; Rapid Support Forces	Justice and Equality Movement
Syria	Syrian Armed Forces and Syrian intelligence services	ISIS; Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (previously the al-Nusra Front); Jaysh al-Islam, Ahrar al-Sham; pro-government forces that include militias attached to the National Defence Forces
Other cases		Boko Haram

in the states of Kachin, Rakhine and Shan.²¹ The report identifies many infringements on rights and freedoms, as well as serious violations of International Humanitarian Law. The mission included an expert advisor on sexual and gender-based violence with a mandate to investigate cases of rape and other forms of sexual violence. The report reveals that sexual violence was used as a method of torture against women accused of being part of or supporting the armed ethnic opposition groups in the states of Shan and Kachin during the security operations carried out by the Burmese Armed Forces, known as Tatmadaw. This sexual violence was also perpetrated by the intelligence services against people in detention. Many victims suffered sexual violence at the same time that they were subjected to forced labour for the Tatmadaw. Some of these victims were underage girls, who were repeatedly threatened. The report denounces the specific persecution of civilians and the use of sexual violence mainly against women and girls, but also against men, including sexual slavery, forced marriage, and the persecution of victims who managed to escape. The UN

report collects stories of many victims of kidnapping by soldiers individually and in groups in order to subject them to sexual violence in areas affected by the armed conflict. The report says that sexual violence has been accompanied by extreme cruelty and very humiliating treatment of the victims. It also indicates that sexual violence and other serious human rights violations have forcibly displaced large numbers of people. The armed Kachin and Shan opposition groups also engaged in sexual violence, though on a much smaller scale than the Burmese Armed Forces, and yet the report describes the serious difficulties experienced in documenting this situation as a result of obstacles to its work imposed by the Burmese authorities.

The report also notes the use of sexual violence against Rakhine and Rohingya civilians in the armed conflict in Rakhine State. Rohingya women and girls suffered many different forms of sexual violence in 2012 and there is also ample evidence of the use of sexual violence when the conflict escalated in 2017. The United Nations

19. This table uses the names of the armed actors as they appear in the Secretary-General's report, so they do not necessarily coincide with the ones used in chapters 1 and 2 of this yearbook.

20. UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence*, S/2018/250, 23 March 2018.

21. *Report of the independent international fact-finding mission on Myanmar*, A/HRC/39/64, 12 September 2018.

report shows that women and girls were separated from men by the Burmese Armed Forces, subjected to gang rape and various forms of sexual torture, including mutilation, and raped during security operations that forcibly displaced hundreds of thousands of people who took refuge mostly in Bangladesh. The pattern observed in these operations started with the security forces' entry into a village, continued with their burning of houses and property belonging to the Rohingya population, and ended with their indiscriminate or selective killing of civilians and use of sexual violence against women and girls, causing massive displacements of the population.

In the **CAR**, reports about sexual violence in the armed conflict persisted. Médecins sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders) reported an armed attack in the village of Kiriwiri in February in which a dozen women became victims of sexual violence.²² The NGO also indicated that it treated 1,914 victims of sexual violence in its specialised clinics in the country during the first six months of the year.²³ In November, UNICEF reported that thousands of children had been victims of sexual violence, mostly girls, as a result of the armed conflict rocking the country in which two out of every three children depend on humanitarian aid.²⁴ Girls not only suffer sexual violence by armed actors, but also by people from their trusted environment. Once demobilised, girls who have participated as combatants in armed groups suffer from great stigma due to prejudices regarding their sexual activity within them. UNICEF has also pointed out that girls who do not attend school are at serious risk of sexual violence and early marriages and pregnancies, putting their health in serious jeopardy.

South Sudan was another scenario of armed conflict where sexual violence had a serious impact. In December, the United Nations reported that more than 100 women had been treated as a result of the attacks suffered in the Bentiu area, near the border with Sudan. Several human rights organisations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch condemned the violence during the year. Amnesty International condemned cases of kidnapping, systematic rape and gang rape committed by government forces and related militias in the counties of Leer and Mayendit (Greater Upper Nile region) as part of the military offensive that took place between April and July. Human Rights Watch also reported allegations of sexual assault and rape against women and girls who sought refuge in UN facilities in the town of Wau (the northwestern region of Bahr el Ghazal).

Sexual violence continued to be reported in **Nigeria** as part of the armed conflict pitting the Nigerian

government against the regional Boko Haram insurgency. Members of the Nigerian Armed Forces have committed sexual violence and sexual exploitation against women and girls in the so-called satellite camps, established in areas controlled by the Nigerian Army after being controlled by Boko Haram, according to a new report by Amnesty International published in 2018.²⁵ According to the report, sexual violence was especially widespread between late 2015 and mid-2016 and was carried out by Nigerian soldiers and the allied militias of the Civilian Joint Task Force. According to Amnesty International's investigation, soldiers and members of the militias have continued to commit sexual violence and sexual exploitation since. The report also condemns the collective arrest of men and adolescents and their transfer to military detention centres for prolonged periods of time, without individualised evaluations, simply on the basis of having fled from areas previously controlled by Boko Haram, and without receiving any further information regarding many of them. According to Amnesty International, various factors led people to flee from areas previously controlled by the insurgents, including attempts to escape Boko Haram's control, food insecurity, indiscriminate violence committed by the Nigerian Army in those locations and others.

Furthermore, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights published a report on the human rights situation in the Indian state of **Jammu and Kashmir**. The report documented the sexual violence that both the Indian security forces and armed opposition groups have committed in the armed conflict in recent decades, the enormous difficulties that the victims face in getting access to justice and the impunity and inaction of the Indian government and the state of Jammu and Kashmir.²⁶ The report mentioned the Kunan Poshpora Survivors organisation's request that the government's Human Rights Commission investigate 143 cases of sexual violence between 1989 and 2017. The report also voiced concern about the fact that the anti-terrorism legislation currently in force (AFSPA) makes it extremely difficult to prosecute members of the security forces responsible for sexual violence. The United Nations said that allegations of sexual violence by security forces have not been investigated credibly and independently, and there is also evidence of sexual violence perpetrated by the insurgents.

Violations of human rights and international humanitarian law continued to be reported in an atmosphere of impunity in Libya. The UN and international NGOs reported deaths of civilians, torture, execution and arbitrary detention, both in official centres and in facilities administered by

22. Médecins Sans Frontiers, *Survivors describe a mass rape ordeal outside Bossangoa*, MSF, 8 March 2018.

23. Médecins Sans Frontiers, *"The tip of the iceberg": Stream of patients offer glimpse into scale of sexual violence*, MSF, 7 September 2018.

24. UNICEF, *Crisis in the Central African Republic: in a neglected emergency, children need aid, protection and a future*, UNICEF, November 2018.

25. Amnesty International, *They took our husbands and forced us to be their girlfriends: women in north-east Nigeria starved and raped by those claiming to rescue them*, AI, November 2018.

26. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Kashmir: Developments in the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir from June 2016 to April 2018, and General Human Rights Concerns in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan*, OACNUDH, 14 June 2018.

militias, as well as cases of women and girls who were arbitrarily arrested due to family ties or “moral crimes”. The migrant and refugee population continued to be especially vulnerable in Libya and were subjected to violence and sexual exploitation, kidnapping, extortion, forced labour and slavery. A report published by UNSMIL and the OHCHR in December 2018, based on over 1,300 interviews between January 2017 and August 2018, described the inhumane conditions in detention centres for migrants and refugees and deplored that the overwhelming majority of women and adolescents interviewed confirmed that they were direct victims of sexual violence or witnesses of this type of abuse directed against other women.²⁷ The report stated that the prevalence of rape of women who have travelled through Libya has been documented by many sources and that there are repeated reports of gang rape, the use of physical violence and death threats. The report states that Nigerian women and girls appear especially vulnerable to exploitation by criminal and human trafficking networks, as they leave their country in the belief that a job is waiting for them in Europe and end up in brothels connected with the sex trade in Libya. Although refugee and migrant women and girls are disproportionately victims of sexual violence in Libya, the UN and OHCHR report noted an increase in the number of men and boys who have received physical and psychological support after suffering abuse during their passage through the North African country. It also reported that no or not enough assistance was given to victims in Libya, increasing their risk of being victimised again.

The International Criminal Court opened a preliminary investigation into the crimes committed against the Rohingya population in Myanmar, including acts of sexual violence

3.2.2. Response to sexual violence in armed conflicts

Throughout the year there were different initiatives to respond to sexual violence in the context of armed conflicts, as well as to fight against impunity in different judicial bodies. Some of these are described below.

The International Criminal Court opened a preliminary investigation into the crimes committed against the Rohingya population in Myanmar, which could lead to a formal investigation. The ICC prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, announced the start of this investigation that will include acts of sexual violence and other human rights violations. Even though Myanmar is not part of the ICC, Bangladesh is a member, and has allowed the ICC to begin this preliminary investigation. Hundreds of thousands of people have taken refuge in Bangladesh after fleeing from the violence of the Burmese security forces. The announcement came after the United

Nations presented its extensive report on human rights violations in Rakhine State in Myanmar. The United Nations special rapporteur for Myanmar, Yanghee Lee, had recommended launching the investigation. Furthermore, Amnesty International recommended that the ICC open another full investigation into the activity of the armed group Boko Haram, including sexual violence.

The UN Security Council approved two resolutions imposing sanctions on Libya and Somalia in 2018 that included aspects related to sexual violence and gender violence. In Libya, Resolution 2241 (2018) stated that “the planning, direction or commission of acts of sexual and gender-based violence” may constitute acts that “threaten the peace, stability or security of Libya, or obstruct or undermine the happy conclusion of its political transition”, in an explicit and nearly unprecedented link between sexual and gender violence and insecurity and instability in a country. Similarly, Resolution 2444 (2018), concerning Somalia, stated that “the planning, direction or commission of acts of sexual and gender-based violence” may also be “acts that constitute a threat for the peace, security or stability of Somalia, or the provision of support for such acts”. It should be noted that the resolutions were adopted with China and Russia abstaining.

The United Nations continued to deploy its strategy to address sexual exploitation and abuse by its personnel. Unveiled by UN Secretary-General António Guterres in 2017, the strategy focuses on four areas of action: the rights and dignity of the victims, the end of impunity, the participation of civil society and external partners and the improvement of strategic communication. As part of the deployment, 34 United Nations agencies facilitated country strategies and action plans.²⁸ According to the report, many included provisions for conducting field visits without prior notice and mandatory pre-deployment training for all categories of personnel. Also, in 2017, special representatives were instructed in the four peacekeeping operations with the highest number of sexual exploitation and abuse complaints (MINUSCA, MONUSCO, MINUJUSTH and UNMISS) to establish a position of intermediate or senior status to defend the rights of victims in the field. The purpose of this office is to ensure the incorporation of a victim-centred approach with a gender perspective. They will also answer before the special representative on duty and before the defender of the rights of the victims. According to the report, the work of these new positions has already had positive effects. Moreover, since 2017 all agencies of the United Nations system have been required to file complaints when they have enough information to detect possible sexual exploitation or abuse involving an identifiable victim.

27. UNSMIL-OHCHR, *Desperate and Dangerous: Report on the human rights situation of migrants and refugees in Libya*, joint report issued by UNSMIL and OHCHR, 18 December 2018.

28. UN Secretary-General, *Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse*, A/72/751, 15 February 2018.

Regarding allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by military and civilian personnel deployed in United Nations missions, the UN Secretary-General's report found a decrease in the number of complaints reported in 2017 compared to 2016. **62 complaints were filed in 2017, 20 of which referred to sexual abuse and 42 to sexual exploitation (compared with 145 complaints in 2016, 99 in 2015 and 80 in 2014).** In addition, 41 complaints involved 101 military personnel, another 10 involved 23 police officers and 11 accused 11 civilian officials. The 62 complaints affected 130 victims (21 girls and 109 women). 61 of the 62 complaints were referred for investigation, while one was still under review at the end of the year. 20 of those 61 were completed, with 14 considered founded and six unfounded, while another 41 were still pending at the end of the year. Regarding the complaints filed in 2016 and investigated in 2017, 14 were considered founded and 19 unfounded. Moreover, **75 complaints were filed against personnel from bodies other than peacekeeping operations and special political missions** in 2017, including UNHCR (39 complaints), IOM (nine), UNICEF (eight), UNRWA (eight), UNFPA (three), WFP (three), UNOPS (two), the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (one), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (one) and UN Women (one), which meant a 42% increase compared to 2016. 25 of these complaints involved executing partners.²⁹ In 2017, there was also a report of sexual violence perpetrated by forces outside the United Nations operating under the mandate of the UN Security Council, which meant a drop compared to the 20 complaints filed in 2016.

In addition, the **Office of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General** on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the **CEDAW** Committee signed in 2018 a cooperation framework agreement to promote and protect the rights of women and girls affected by sexual violence related to conflicts. The cooperation framework commits them to 1) establish a joint work programme for implementing the recommendations of both institutions; 2) promote the nationwide implementation of human rights standards for protecting women and girls affected by sexual violence; and 3) cooperate to investigate and collect data that will make it possible to gain ground in governments' accountability regarding their obligations in this matter. The agreement aims to promote the end of impunity with respect to sexual violence. It is the first cooperation framework between a body with a mandate established by the Security Council and a human rights mechanism.

In **Ukraine**, the OSCE special monitoring mission (SMM) established a gender structure in order to strengthen integration of the gender perspective in its work to observe

the security situation, including sexual and gender-based violence. The new architecture includes the position of a senior gender advisor, which answers to the head of mission. Since August 2018, it has also included two gender officers, based in Kiev and Kramatorsk. Finally, it has a network of 13 gender focal points.

3.2.3. Other gender violence in contexts of crisis or armed conflict

In addition to sexual violence, armed conflicts and crises had other serious gender impacts. **Female human rights activists** continued to face many obstacles in armed conflicts, socio-political crises and human rights-related persecution. In the report *Situation of Human Rights Defenders*, published in early 2019,³⁰ the Human Rights Council's Special Rapporteur on the situation of women human rights defenders warned of the serious risks that they run, including the lack of recognition of their role and work as human rights advocates, their marginalisation and systematic exclusion; their social discrediting, stigmatisation and attacks on their honour and reputation; risks, threats and attacks in the private sphere and against family members and people close to them; physical aggression, sexual violence, torture, murder and forced disappearance; harassment, violence and attacks over the Internet; judicial harassment and criminalisation; denial of participation, restrictions and reprisals for collaborating with international and regional human rights systems; threats to legal status; physical imprisonment; and attacks against female human rights defence groups and movements. The report also indicated the specific risks faced by groups of female human rights advocates, such as girls; women who do not conform to hegemonic gender norms; indigenous female advocates and defenders of minority groups; human rights defenders with disabilities; female journalists and lawyers; female advocates in leadership positions; female activists in armed conflicts and post-conflict situations; female refugees defenders, female migrants and victims of human trafficking; female activists deprived of their freedom; environmental activists; female defenders of women's human rights; and female activists who defend the rights of sex workers.

In **Ukraine**, a new gender report issued by the OSCE special monitoring mission (SMM) noted that the armed conflict had increased the risks and prevalence of gender-based violence in the country.³¹ Published in December 2018 and analysing the years 2017 and 2018, the report describes the specific impacts of gender-based violence on internally displaced persons. It also indicates that during the period under review, the number of people given the status of victims of human trafficking rose significantly. Most of the

29. The executing partners are actors that implement activities of United Nations agency programmes through agreements and resources and include government institutions, intergovernmental organisations and civil society organisations.

30. Human Rights Council, *Situation of women human rights defenders. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of Women Human Rights Defenders*, 10 January 2019, A/HRC/40/60.

31. OSCE, *Thematic report. Gender Dimensions of SMM Monitoring, 1 January 2017- 1 November 2018*. OSCE, December 2018.

reported female victims had been trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. According to the report, some government and civil society sources identified an increase in trafficking for the purpose of exploiting their labour, which often affected men. According to the sources consulted by the SMM, the rise in the number of trafficking victims was due to factors linked to the conflict, such as the difficult economic situation resulting from the war in eastern Ukraine, especially for the displaced population, as well as factors unrelated to the conflict, including greater knowledge among the population about aid services. Furthermore, there were several attacks against LGBTI people in Ukraine during the year, as pointed out by the OSCE and the OHCHR. According to the OHCHR, the Ukrainian police rarely classify these types of attacks as hate crimes, which makes the motivations of the perpetrators invisible.

Many women's organisations denounced the violence and criminalisation of feminist organisations in **Nicaragua** during the serious political crisis and violence rocking the country in 2018. UN Women expressed its concern about attacks against female human rights defenders and women's organisations and demanded an end to them. Among other repressive actions, dozens of women activists and human rights advocates were arrested and the march organised to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women was banned. The Network of Women Against Violence (RMCV) condemned the violence committed by the security forces and related armed actors, including cases of murder, injury, sexual abuse, harassment and rape, and said that it is part of a pattern of other forms of violence against women, as 402 women have been reportedly killed in the last six years. The platform *Articulación Feminista* also denounced cases of kidnapping, rape and torture against women since April 2018, when the crisis began, in addition to intimidation, threats, arrests and harassment against feminist activists. Feminist networks and organisations in Latin America, the Caribbean and other parts of the world called for an end to the government's attacks against the Nicaraguan feminist movement and human rights advocates, which have included intimidation, harassment, arbitrary arrests, attacks against their physical and sexual integrity, expulsion from the country, the withdrawal of residency permits and legally obtained citizenship and the withdrawal of the organisations' legal personality and the freezing of their bank accounts.

A report published by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in March 2018 that analysed the year 2017, revealed serious violations of human rights in **Turkey** as part of the state of emergency in the country and the erosion of the rule of law.³² Among the many forms of abuse, the report mentioned the arrest of 100 women who were pregnant or had recently given birth on charges of collaborating with their husbands, who are accused of having connections with terrorist

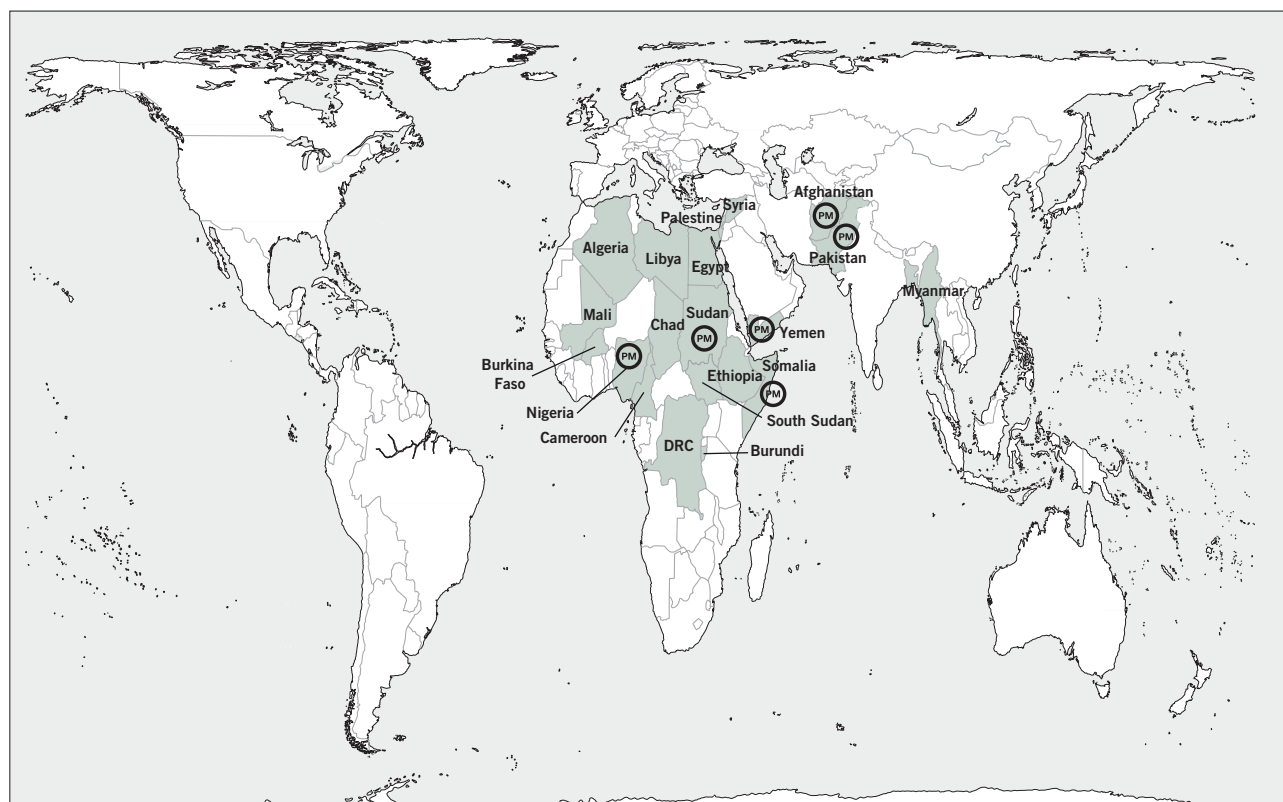
organisations. In relation to the conflict over the Kurdish issue, the report points to allegations of human rights violations specific to the conflict and perpetrated by the state security forces, including but not limited to the use of sexual violence against women, the destruction of homes and the blocking of access to emergency medical aid, potable water and means of life. These are consequences with specific gender impacts. The report also voiced concern about the central government's designation of administrators to replace elected mayors and other members of municipal councils. Eighty-seven (87) elected mayors of Kurdish origin (35 women and 52 men) from a total of 105 municipalities in the southeast were imprisoned between September 2016 and the end of 2017 and were replaced by 94 administrators, all of them men.

The kingdom of **Saudi Arabia** continued with its repressive policies and human rights violations in 2018 and launched an unprecedented campaign of arbitrary arrest against prominent women's rights activists. The first wave of arrests took place in May, weeks before the regime lifted the ban on driving for Saudi women (June), which paradoxically targeted several activists who had demanded an end to the ban. These women included Loujain al-Hathloul, Iman al-Nafjan and Aziza al-Yousef, who have also spoken out against the male guardianship system in the country, which forces women to request permission from a man in their family to engage in various activities, such as travelling, obtaining a passport, entering the university and getting married. Two other well-known leaders were arrested in August: Nassima al-Sadah, a political activist and women's rights activist in the Eastern Province, where most of the country's Shia minority lives and which has been the scene of recurrent protests by dissident sectors, and Samar Badawi, who is also recognised for her criticism of the male guardianship system and for being one of the main promoters of Saudi female political participation. Saudi women were authorised to run as candidates in municipal elections for the first time in 2015. Badawi was one of the women who wanted to run, but her candidacy was vetoed by the Saudi authorities at the time.

Amnesty International reported that all these activists remained in prison at the end of the year, awaiting the formal filing of charges or a trial. Some human rights NGOs warned that several of the detainees are accused of serious crimes, including "suspicious contacts with foreign agents", and that pro-government media launched a campaign against them, calling them traitors. According to the local media, at least nine of them could be prosecuted by a special criminal court originally established to prosecute people accused of terrorist offenses and face sentences of up to 20 years in prison. Several reports said that other activists have been banned from travelling abroad. In late November, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch also

32. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Report on the impact of the state of emergency on human rights in Turkey, including an update on the South-East, January – December 2017*, OHCHR, March 2018.

Map 3.2. Conflicts and rights of the LGBTI population



■ Countries in armed conflict in 2018 with discriminatory legislation against LGBTI population (this includes criminalisation of consensual same-sex sexual acts, legal barriers to freedom of expression on sexual orientation issues and barriers to the establishment of NGOs).

PM Countries in armed conflict in 2018 where death penalty for LGBTI population is codified.

Source: Prepared by the authors, with data from Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2019. Report on conflicts, human rights and peacebuilding*. Barcelona: Icaria, 2019; and Lucas Ramon Mendos, *State-Sponsored Homophobia 2019*, International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA), Genva: ILGA, 2019

Table 3.2. Armed conflict in 2018 in countries with discriminatory legislation against LGBTI population

AFRICA	ASIA	MIDDLE EAST
Algeria Burundi Cameroon (Ambazonia/North West and South West) DRC (east) DRC (east – ADF) DRC (Kasai) Ethiopia (Ogaden) Lake Chad Region (Boko Haram) Libya Mali Somalia South Sudan Sudan (Darfur) Sudan (South Kordofan and Blue Nile) Western Sahel Region	Afghanistan Myanmar Pakistan Pakistan (Balochistan)	Egypt (Sinai) Israel - Palestine Syria Yemen Yemen (AQPA)

Source: Prepared by the authors, with data from Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2019. Report on conflicts, human rights and peacebuilding*. Barcelona: Icaria 2019; and Lucas Ramon Mendos, *State-Sponsored Homophobia 2019*, International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA), Genva: ILGA, 2019

reported that human rights activists, including several women, were being subjected to torture and sexual harassment during interrogations in Saudi Arabia.

Finally, in **Yemen**, over 100 Yemeni women and prominent Nobel Peace Prize laureates sent a letter to the new UN special envoy for Yemen, Martin Griffiths,

condemning the significant rise in gender violence after the conflict escalated in March 2015. The letter warned that by July 2017, there had been 2,447 documented cases of dead or wounded women and that 76% of the over two million internally displaced people were women or legal minors. It also cautioned that the incidence of child marriage had risen by 66% as a resource

employed by many families to cope with poverty given the economic deterioration of the country.

Scores of **LGTBI** individuals organised as their own group as part of a caravan of Central American migrants headed for the United States to seek refuge in 2018. They formed as a specific group after the march was already under way. Some of its members complained of verbal abuse and specific difficulties along the way, as well as violence in their countries of origin. Around 80 LGTBI people from Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador arrived in Tijuana (Mexico) in November, with the Texan-based organisation RAICES providing transportation support along a stretch to Tijuana. Some media reports estimated that about 120 LGTBI people were in the caravan, which included around 3,600 Central Americans in all.

3.3. Peacebuilding from a gender perspective

In this section some of the most notable initiatives are analysed to incorporate the gender perspective into the various aspects of peacebuilding.

3.3.1. Resolution 1325 and the agenda on women, peace and security

The implementation of the women, peace and security agenda was marked by two monographic debates on the Security Council. The first one, in April, dealt with sexual violence and armed conflicts. The Secretary General presented his annual report on this matter.³³ Civil society once again highlighted the importance of understanding sexual violence in armed conflicts within a broader framework of gender violence perpetrated by both military and civilian actors in a context of profound international inequalities between men and women, aggravated by the arms race and militarism.

The **UN Security Council's annual debate on women, peace and security** was held in October, coinciding with the submission of the UN Secretary-General's yearly report to evaluate implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. The debate featured the participation of Palestinian activist Randa Siniora as a civil society representative, who highlighted the gender dimension in Israel's occupation of Palestine, the effects of the occupation and the armed conflict on Palestinian women and the resulting increase in gender inequalities. Siniora also spoke about the exclusion of women from official peacebuilding efforts.

The Secretary-General's report expressed concern about the lack of progress made on basic commitments to peace and security, human rights and gender equality. Among the aspects analysed, the report noted that gender parity was achieved for the first time in the United Nations Senior Management Group, a high-level body chaired by the Secretary-General that brings together leaders of UN departments, offices, funds and programmes. Gender parity was also achieved among the resident coordinators. For the first time in the history of the UN, a woman was appointed to head the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (Rosemary A. DiCarlo, the Under-Secretary General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs). Regarding the participation of women in peace processes, the report indicated that specialised technical knowledge about gender was required in three of the four (75%) peace processes in which the United Nations was involved as a main mediator or co-mediator and that women were included in all United Nations mediation support teams. In 2016, the demand for technical expertise fell compared to previous years, occurring in 57% of mediation processes led or co-led by the UN, compared to 89% of those processes in 2015, 67% in 2014 and 88% in 2013. Thus, this aspect deserves detailed follow-up, since it has not yet been fully established. In addition, consultations with women's civil society organisations were guaranteed in all UN-supported processes in 2017, such as in Syria, Cyprus, West Africa and the Sahel. Only three of 11 peace agreements (27%) signed in 2017 included provisions on gender equality. This figure is particularly worrying, as it consolidates and aggravates the trend that began in 2016, when gender issues were included in only 50% of the agreements, compared to 70% in 2015.

Six countries presented national action plans on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 for the first time in 2018: Luxembourg, Albania, Poland, Tunisia, Moldova and Mozambique. Thus, according to the data compiled by WILPF, a total of 79 countries had an action plan at the end of 2018. However, WILPF points out that only 43% of these plans have a specific budget associated with implementing the plan, which it describes as a severe obstacle to achieving the objectives of the gender, peace and security agenda and reveals a notable lack of governments' commitment to it. Georgia approved the third Resolution 1325 action plan in 2018. This plan lacks any specific budget and does not include references to financing plans, as noted by WILPF. However, it does establish the promotion of women's participation in peacebuilding as a government priority.

Thus, it maintains mechanisms of consultation between government representatives participating in peace negotiations and representatives of civil society, including women, an important element in the peace

In recent years, there has been a decline in the inclusion of gender equality-related aspects in peace agreements: they were included in 70% of the agreements in 2015, but in 50% in 2016 and in only 27% in 2017

33. See section 4.2.1. of this chapter.

process between Georgia and the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. On the other hand, Moldova adopted its first national action plan on women, peace and security in March, which covers the period from 2018 to 2021. This is the result of dialogue in previous years between institutional and civil society representatives. The action plan has no associated specific budget and is almost entirely focused on security and defence, with only one of the eight objectives referring to women's participation in peacebuilding and in peacekeeping missions. Meanwhile, the Afghan government presented its annual report to evaluate implementation of its national action plan. Although some progress was noted, civil society organisations highlighted the ambitious nature of the plan and the weakness of its execution.

Moreover, the Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security, formed in 2016 to coordinate the work of the UN Security Council and other United Nations agencies on the women, peace and security agenda, met during the year to assess the situation in the Lake Chad region, Libya, Yemen, Iraq, the DRC and the CAR.

In December 2018, the **Council of the European Union** ratified new Conclusions on Women, Peace and Security and adopted the **Strategic Approach to Women, Peace and Security**, added as an unofficial and non-binding working document appended to the Conclusions. The Strategic Approach gathers the EU's commitments and priorities in this area and replaces the previous Comprehensive Approach to the EU Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security, of 2008.³⁴ The Strategic Approach indicates the binding nature of the women, peace and security agenda and its necessary implementation by all actors in the EU and the member states, setting priorities in participation, prevention, protection and assistance and recovery. Despite other limitations, the document incorporates contributions from EU civil society, including those channelled through the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office's (EPLO) Working Group on Gender, Peace and Security, including some references to intersectionality, more emphasis on issues related to women's organisations' agency and effective participation, an enhanced human rights approach and emphasis on the internal and external dimensions of the EU women, peace and security agenda. The Council of Europe's Conclusions call for the creation of a concise, specific, measurable and feasible action plan in the first quarter of 2019.

3.3.2. Gender issues in peace negotiations³⁵

Several peace processes were relevant from a gender point of view during the year 2017. Women's organisations

demanding greater participation in different negotiations around the world as well as the inclusion of gender agendas. However, in most of the negotiating processes, significant changes were not implemented to include the participation of women in a significant way.

Afghanistan

The exploratory peace process in Afghanistan achieved remarkable progress and rapprochement between the parties, especially between the Taliban insurgency and the US government. With regard to female inclusion and the women, peace and security agenda, the president of Afghanistan publicly approved of having women take an active role in these negotiations in line with their growing role in the government and the 12-person team formed to conduct negotiations with the Taliban would be composed of men and women. The Taliban may also be softening its position on women, as evidenced by different events that happened throughout the year. During the June truce, different photographs emerged of Taliban fighters with civilians, including women, and even female media professionals. In July, the media reported a meeting in Qatar between Taliban leaders and a US delegation led by diplomat Alice G. Wells. Also, during the meeting in Moscow in November, Taliban representatives agreed to give interviews to female journalists. At the same meeting, Habiba Sarabi, a member of the High Peace Council and the only woman in attendance, asked the Taliban when they planned to add a woman to the talks. The Taliban delegation responded that they were willing to recognise the rights of women in Islam, education, work and property, and that the only requirement was that they wear a veil.

Colombia

Regarding implementation of the peace agreement with the FARC in Colombia, the Special Body to Contribute to Guarantee the Gender Approach in the Implementation of the Final Agreement continued its activity to advise and monitor compliance with the peace agreement. The Special Body presented its First Management Report, describing its activity since its creation until the end of 2017.³⁶ The report contains some of the main concerns regarding the application of the gender approach, especially those related to the lack of mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the Implementation Framework Plan and the confusion between gender and ethnic approaches, as well as the lack of impact and result indicators that would allow for more appropriate measurement of progress in implementation.

Several follow-up reports were presented on implementation of the gender approach in the peace agreement between the government of Colombia

34. Council of the European Union, *Women, Peace and Security*, Council Conclusions, 10 December 2018, 15086/18, CFSP/PESC 1150.

35. For more exhaustive information on integration of the gender perspective in the currently active peace processes, see the Escola de Cultura de Pau's yearbook, *Peace talks in focus 2019: report on trends and scenarios*.

36. Technical Secretariat of the International Verification Component. *First report on the implementation of the gender approach in the Peace Agreements*, June 2018.

and the FARC. The first was the one prepared by the Technical Secretariat of the International Verification Component.³⁷ Among other issues, the report highlights the delays found in the fulfilment of gender commitments in the political and socio-economic reincorporation process. It also indicates that in general terms, progress can be identified in the implementation of nationwide and regional measures that seek to ensure the effective participation of women and the LGBTI population, although with gaps in the mechanisms to make such involvement a reality. Second, a report jointly prepared by the Kroc Institute and several members of the international verification component of the agreement –UN Women, the Swedish Embassy in Colombia and the International Democratic Women’s Federation (FDIM)– highlighted the gaps in implementation between the provisions contained in the agreement and the provisions with a gender focus.³⁸ Thus, only 4% of the 130 provisions of the agreement that the Kroc Institute has identified as having a gender focus had been fully implemented, while implementation of 51% had not begun. Thirty-eight per cent (38%) had achieved minimum levels of implementation and 7% had achieved an intermediate level of implementation. These figures contrast with the overall levels of implementation of the agreement, with 37% of the provisions whose implementation has not begun, compared to 51% of the specifically gender-related provisions. In addition, 22% of the provisions of the agreement have been fully implemented, compared to 4% of the gender provisions. With regard to the content of the agreement, the report indicates that the points that have a lower level of implementation are those related to comprehensive rural reform, political participation and the solution to the problem of illicit drugs. The report also includes a set of recommendations to improve implementation of the gender approach: 1) maintain normative and institutional progress in including the gender approach and developing positive measures to guarantee the rights of women and the LGTBI population; 2) ensure budget allocation in the Implementation Framework Plan and the National Development Plan; 3) strengthen the institutional architecture for incorporating a gender approach in institutions with responsibilities for implementation; 4) guarantee implementation of specific measures to protect the rights of indigenous and Afro women and the LGTBI population, ensuring the mainstreaming of the gender approach in the ethnic indicators of the Implementation Framework Plan; and 5) provide mechanisms that help to generate information disaggregated by ethnicity, sex and sexual orientation.

The civil society platform Gpaz also presented a report monitoring its implementation, studying 109 of the 122 measures with a gender approach established in the text of the agreement, in accordance with its

monitoring methodology.³⁹ Gpaz’s report drew attention to the normative development resulting from the peace agreement and stated that 72% of the related measures in this field have begun to be implemented satisfactorily. With regard to the operational development of the agreement, however, only 17% of the measures have begun implementation satisfactorily. The recommendations made by Gpaz include: 1) accelerate implementation of the agreement by the authorities and the state in general; 2) establish further support for the peace process among the international community; and 3) prioritise a gender approach in implementation by both the state and the international community.

Georgia

For the first time, the peace process in Georgia had a woman in the position of chief co-mediator. In July, UN Secretary-General António Guterres appointed Ayse Cihan Sultanoglu (Turkey) to be the UN representative in the Geneva International Discussions (GID), the negotiating format for the peace process between Georgia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia that also involves Russia and has the UN, OSCE and EU as co-mediators. Furthermore, the December round of the GID included a session on women, peace and security, also for the first time.

The Philippines

Ratified in July 2018 by the Philippine government and the MILF, considered a milestone for the peace process and pending a vote in a referendum to be held in 2019, the Organic Law for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (OLBARM) includes various gender provisions. The law includes some elements of affirmative action, such as the reservation of one seat for each of the following population groups: women, youth, traditional leaders and the ulama (Muslim scholars), as well as two seats for the non-Moro indigenous population and two for settler communities. It also stipulates that at least one woman must be appointed in the executive branch of government in the Bangsamoro region and establishes that an office on women may be created as part of the administrative organisation of the government. According to the OLBARM, women will be represented in the Council of Leaders (in numbers and mechanisms to be determined by Parliament), will advise the chief minister on governance in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region. Likewise, Congress must approve a law that recognises the role of women in regional development and nation-building and guarantees their participation in other decision-making and policy-making bodies of the Bangsamoro government. The law establishes that Parliament must pass a law to create a commission on women and define

37. Special Body to Contribute to Guarantee the Gender Approach in the Implementation of the Final Agreement, *First management report*, 31 May 2018.

38. Kroc Institute, UN Women, FDIM and Swedish Embassy in Colombia, *Special Report of the Kroc Institute and the International Accompaniment Component, UN Women, FDIM and Sweden on the Monitoring of the Gender Perspective in the Implementation of the Colombian Final Peace Accord*, 2018.

39. Gpaz. *Peace advances with women: observations on the incorporation of the gender perspective in the Peace Accord*, October 2018.

its powers, functions and composition. The OLBARMM obliges the government to defend the fundamental rights of women, expressed in the CEDAW, and stipulates that Parliament must approve the pertinent legislation to implement what appears in the section of the law regarding the protection of women. It also sets a budget threshold of 5% that should be allocated for gender and development programmes. During the year, several women's organisations, such as the Bangsamoro Women Organisation, urged both houses of Congress to approve the OLBARMM, presenting proposals and participating in public hearings and discussions organised by the Senate and House of Representatives committees responsible for processing the law.

Libya

Throughout 2018, Libyan women criticised their exclusion from civic and public spaces, which has prevented integration of the narrative of female civil society activists into analysis on the root causes of the conflicts affecting the country. As part of the 39th meeting of the UN Human Rights Council, the Libyan organisation Together We Build It drew attention to the frustrations over the effective inclusion of women in the consultation process promoted by the UN action plan for Libya and made specific recommendations for their substantive inclusion. Likewise, a joint investigation conducted by Cordaid, Human Security Collective and eight civil society organisations in Libya revealed the disconnect between the formal agenda of the discussions on the future of Libya and the Libyan population's (and especially women's) concerns about security and the need for justice. In this regard, Libyan women raised various issues that from their point of view should have a more central place in the negotiating agenda, including strengthening the arms embargo, withdrawing the weapons of war, demobilising combatants, reforming the security sector to place the many armed actors in Libya under civilian control, preventing sexual and gender violence and fighting against impunity for crimes against women.

Western Sahara

During 2018, the government of Morocco and the POLISARIO Front held their first direct meetings since 2012. In the talks held in December, under the auspices of the UN, one woman participated in each of the delegations. Rabat sent Fatima Adli, described by the official Moroccan press as a community representative and member of the municipal council of Smara. Meanwhile, Fatma Mehdi, secretary general of the Union of Sahrawi Women (UNMS), joined the POLISARIO Front's negotiating team. In civil society, **independent Sahrawi women recalled the impacts of the conflict on women and their role as peacemakers, calling for more active participation in the talks.** In a message addressed to Köhler and supported by international women's

NGOs for peace, such as WILPF, these Sahrawi women asked both the UN and the countries participating in the dialogue to take the steps necessary to guarantee female involvement in the meetings, to organise parallel meetings between Sahrawi and Moroccan women and to move forward on multiple issues that can help to establish a lasting peace, including action to eradicate all types of violence against women.

Yemen

The UN special envoy's office promoted the formation of the Yemeni Women's Technical Advisory Group. Composed of eight women, the group reportedly aims to represent a variety of voices under the principles of neutrality, independence and professionalism, and to support the work of the Gender, Peace and Security Unit under the office of the special envoy. This technical group supported Griffiths' work during the meetings held in Sweden between the main parties to the conflict in Yemen, which led to the Stockholm Agreement in December.

3.3.3. Civil society initiatives

Different peacebuilding initiatives led and carried out by women's civil society organisations took place in 2018. This section reviews some of the most important ones.

The **Network of Women Mediators of South Caucasus** (NWMSC) was formally established with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding in 2018. Composed of a dozen female peace activists from Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan as well as the disputed regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and promoted by the International Centre on Conflicts and Negotiation (ICCN), this network aims to promote female participation in the various peace processes in the region.

In **Cameroon**, hundreds of women staged demonstrations in the English-speaking regions of Cameroon in August and September to demand a peaceful solution to the conflict between the central government and the armed actors of the Anglophone regions and to condemn the violence.⁴⁰ The security forces have been accused of committing serious human rights violations, such as employing disproportionate force, committing extrajudicial killings and setting villages on fire. Rebel groups have also been accused of attacking the security forces, civilians and infrastructure, such as schools. There have also been reports of sexual violence linked to the conflict.

With regard to the tension between **North Korea** and **the United States** and between **North Korea** and **South Korea**, female civil society activists demonstrated to demand the denuclearisation of the peninsula. A few weeks before the historic summit between North

40. See the summary on Cameroon in chapter 1 (Armed conflicts).

Korea and the US, at a time of diplomatic tensions that were about to lead to the cancellation of the summit, Women Cross DMZ and Women's Peace Walk, bringing together more than 30 women's organisations, and the Nobel Women's Initiative, led by Mairead Maguire, organised a trip to the Korean peninsula by an international delegation of more than 30 female academics and activists from various countries. The delegation organised the International Women's Peace Symposium, held meetings with representatives of the South Korean government and civil society and crossed the Unification Bridge in the Demilitarised Zone together with more than 1,000 women on the same day in late May that the leaders of North Korea and South Korea met a few kilometres away in Panmunjom. To mark the visit, the aforementioned women's organisations issued a statement requesting that some demands be taken into account during the summit between North Korea and the US, such as the replacement of the 1953 armistice with a peace treaty; the complete denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, appealing not only to North Korea but also to other nuclear states; the conversion of the Demilitarised Zone into a Peace Park, which would involve the removal of more than one million mines in the region; the reunification of families separated by war; and the reduction of both countries' military budgets and an end to their arms race. Furthermore, in December, Women Cross DMZ and the Nobel Women's Initiative organised an event in Beijing (China) on women, peace and security with female peacebuilders from North Korea, South Korea, China, Japan, Russia and Canada to address issues of female participation in the negotiating process. Moreover, Women Cross DMZ also met in December with South Korean MPs prior to planned meetings between North Korean MPs and US legislators in March 2019.

During 2018, a group of **Yemeni** women promoted a series of initiatives to articulate their proposals for transforming the conflict and making their voices heard in formal spaces. Created in 2015 with the help of UN Women, the Yemeni Women's Pact for Peace and Security, which represents a diverse group of Yemeni women committed to ending violence in their country and convinced of the need to play a greater role in the negotiations, held meetings in Amman (Jordan) in February to plan response strategies in the different scenarios planned for Yemen. Another dozen Yemeni women participated in a working group led by UN Women, together with women from Syria and Iraq, to discuss how to promote peace in their respective countries. In March, a total of 145 women, including more than 100 female Yemeni leaders, Nobel peace laureates and representatives of international organisations, sent a letter to the newly appointed UN special envoy asking him to take advantage of the opportunity to support the effective participation of Yemeni women in peacebuilding. The letter asserted that despite the situation, Yemeni women had been unflagging in their efforts to achieve peace, especially at the community level, on issues such as local truces, the reintegration of child combatants and humanitarian aid management. The group of Yemeni women complained about the exclusion of women from initiatives promoted to seek a negotiated solution to the conflict in recent years and recommended prioritising roughly a dozen issues, including an immediate cessation of hostilities; the end of the siege of Ta'iz; the resumption of the peace negotiations and mechanisms to put an end to child recruitment and support transitional justice with a gender approach, among other issues. They also demanded support for effective female participation by adding gender experts to the delegations, holding regular consultations with leaders of women's organisations across the country and ensuring at least 30% female representation at all levels of the peace process.