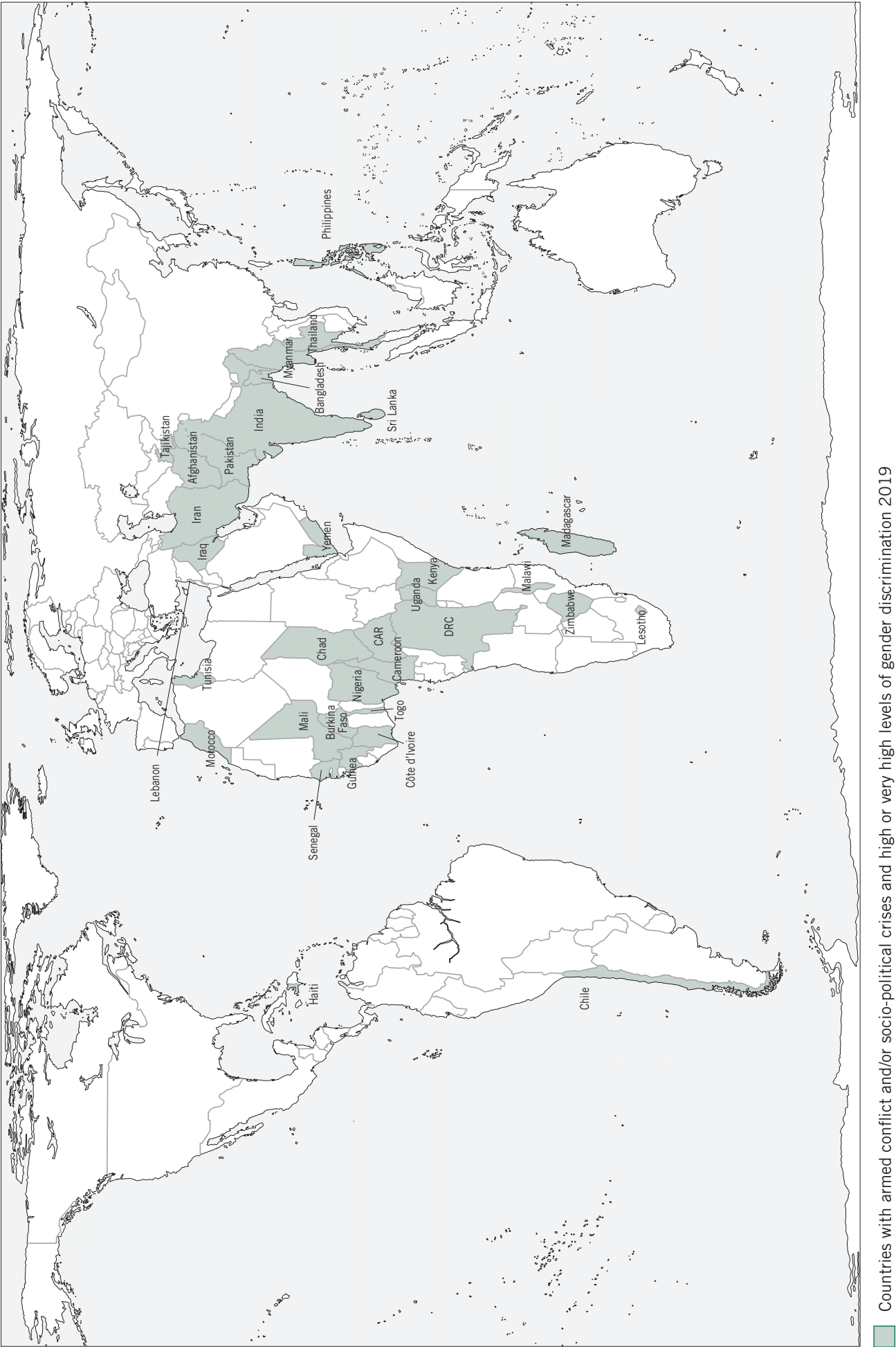


Map 3.1. Gender, peace and security



### 3. Gender, peace and security

- 83 per cent of the armed conflicts for which data on gender equality exist took place in contexts with medium, high or very high levels of gender discrimination.
- According to the ACLED research centre, during 2018 and 2019 women and girls represented 95 per cent of the victims of sexual violence in conflict zones.
- The UN Security Council passed a new resolution (2467) on sexual violence in armed conflict amidst controversy over the exclusion of the sexual and reproductive rights of the survivors of such violence.
- The UN Security Council recognised the links between forced displacement and sexual violence in conflict. According to the UNHCR, women and girls represent around half the population of internationally displaced persons.
- The gender impacts of conflict on men included, among others, the Chechen authorities' campaign of persecution against gay men or the forced conscription of Crimean men by the Russian Armed Forces.
- Women actively participated in the mass protests that took place in countries such as Lebanon, Algeria or Sudan.

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.<sup>1</sup> In addition, a follow-up is made of the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. 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 also analyses the consequences of conflicts on lesbian, gay, trans, bisexual and intersexual (LGTBI) population and their participation in peacebuilding initiatives. 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. 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.

#### 3.1. Gender inequalities

The Index of Social Institutions and Gender (SIGI)<sup>2</sup> 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.

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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 discrimination<sup>3</sup>

	Medium levels of discrimination	High levels of discrimination	Very high levels of discrimination	Sin datos
<b>Armed conflict<sup>4</sup></b>	Burkina Faso <sup>5</sup> DRC (3) India (2) Thailand	RCA Chad <sup>6</sup> Mali Myanmar Nigeria <sup>7</sup>	Afghanistan Cameroon <sup>6</sup> Iraq Pakistan (2) Philippines (2) Yemen (2)	Argelia Burundi Egypt Israel <sup>9</sup> Libya Níger <sup>10</sup> Palestine <sup>11</sup> Somalia Sudan (2) South Sudan Syria
<b>Socio-political crises</b>	Chile DRC (4) <sup>12</sup> Haiti India (5) <sup>13</sup> Kenya Senegal Thailand Tajikistan Zimbabwe	Chad Côte d'Ivoire Indonesia Malawi Madagascar Nigeria (2) Philippines Sri Lanka Togo Tunisia Uganda (2) <sup>14</sup>	Bangladesh Guinea Iran (4) Iraq (2) Lebanon (2) <sup>15</sup> Morocco Pakistan (2)	Angola Argelia Bahrein China (5) Congo, Rep. Egypt Equatorial Guinea Eritrea Gambia Guinea Bissau Israel (2) Kosovo Palestine <sup>16</sup> Saudi Arabia Somalia South Sudan Sudan (2) Syria Taiwan Uzbekistan Venezuela

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 comparing the data from this indicator with that of the countries that are affected by situations of armed conflict reveals that **14 of the 34 armed conflicts that took place throughout 2019 occurred in countries where serious gender inequalities exist, with high or very high levels of discrimination; 6 in countries with medium levels of discrimination; and that 10 armed conflicts took place in countries for which there are no available data in this regard –Algeria,**

**20 of the 34 armed conflicts that took place in 2019 were in countries with medium, high or very high levels of gender discrimination**

**Burundi, Egypt, Israel, Libya, Niger Palestine,<sup>17</sup> Syria, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan.** Thus, 58 per cent of the armed conflicts for which gender equality data is available took place in contexts with high or very high levels of discrimination. This figure rises to 83 per cent if countries with medium levels of discrimination are included. Similarly, in 4 other countries where there were one or more armed conflicts, levels of discrimination were lower, in some cases with low levels (Mozambique, Ukraine and Turkey) or very low levels (Colombia) of discrimination, according to the SIGI. As regards socio-political crises, **at least 42 of the 94 active**

- 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.
- The number of armed conflicts or crises in that country appear between brackets.
- Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali are engaged in a single armed conflict, called the Western Sahel Region.
- Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger are involved in a single armed conflict, called the Lake Chad Region (Boko Haram).
- Ibid.
- Ibid. Cameroon is also the scene of another armed conflict called Cameroon (Ambazonia/North West and South West).
- Israel and Palestine are involved in a single conflict.
- See Note 6.
- The SIGI labels Palestine as Gaza and the West Bank.
- In the case of DRC, one of the crises is the international crisis called Central Africa (LRA), which involves both the Congolese Armed Forces and the self-defence militias of the DRC. See chapter 2 (Socio-political crises).
- One of the crises in which India is involved is related to the crisis with Pakistan.
- One of the crises in Uganda concerns the so-called Central Africa (LRA) crisis. See chapter 2 (Socio-political crises).
- One of the crises in Lebanon relates to the crisis with Israel and Syria.
- See Note 11.
- Ibid.

**cases of socio-political crisis during 2018 took place in countries where there are severe gender inequalities (medium, high or very high levels according to the SIGI), representing 57 per cent of the cases of socio-political crisis for which data were available.** 21 socio-political crises took place in countries for which no data are available (Angola, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Burundi, China, Egypt, Eritrea, Gambia, Gaza and the West Bank, Guinea Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Israel, Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Syria, Taiwan, Uzbekistan and Venezuela).

## 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 2019 sexual violence was present in a large number of active armed conflicts.<sup>18</sup> 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 2018 and analysed the situation in 19 countries, 13 of which experienced armed conflict: Afghanistan, CAR, Colombia, 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.

It should be highlighted that, as was the case in 2018, nine of the 19 armed conflicts<sup>19</sup> 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 (Houthis)–, topping 1,000 fatalities during the year and producing serious impacts on people and the territory, including conflict-related sexual violence. Six of these also saw an escalation of violence during 2019 compared to the previous year –Mali, Libya, Lake Chad Region (Boko Haram), DRC (east), Colombia and Afghanistan. Most of the armed actors identified by the Secretary-General as responsible for sexual violence in armed conflict were non-state actors, some of whom had been included on UN terrorist lists.

The ACLED research centre also published a toll on the impact of sexual violence in conflict, noting that between the beginning of 2018 and June 2019, 400 incidents of sexual violence in conflict zones had been recorded globally, of which 140 took place in 2019.<sup>20</sup> Sexual violence accounted for more than a quarter of the political violence targeted specifically against women. According to ACLED, women and girls represented 95 per cent of the victims of sexual violence in conflict zones. As regards conflict zones, during 2018 the most affected countries were: DRC, South Sudan, Burundi, India and Sudan; and during the first months of 2019: DRC, India, South Sudan, Burundi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

Throughout 2019, various reports established and expanded the evidence on the phenomenon of sexual violence in the context of the armed conflict in **Syria**. The investigations made public during this period documented, in particular, the abuses committed by the forces of the Syrian regime. A report by the Syrian Justice and Accountability Center (SJAC) focusing on the experiences of former prisoners, analysed the experiences of more than 300 survivors since 2012, 91 of whom provided evidence of sexual and gender-based violence. The report, published in January, noted a range of crimes, including rape, threats of sexual violence, genital torture and restrictions on access to reproductive health care, against both men and women. Another study by Lawyers and Doctors for Human Rights (LDHR), released in March, focused on

18. 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.

19. 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: CAR; DRC (East); DRC (East-ADF); DRC (Kasai); Lake Chad region (Boko Haram), which includes Nigeria; Libya; Mali (North); Somalia; South Sudan; Sudan (Darfur); Colombia; Afghanistan; Myanmar; Iraq; Syria; Yemen (Houthis); and Yemen (AQAP).

20. ACLED, *Fact Sheet: Sexual Violence in Conflict*, 19 June 2019.

### Box 3.1. Armed actors and sexual violence in conflicts<sup>21</sup>

The UN Secretary-General's report on sexual violence in conflicts, published in March 2019, 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.<sup>22</sup>

	STATE ACTORS	NON-STATE ACTORS
<b>Iraq</b>		ISIS
<b>Mali</b>		MNLA, part of Coordination des mouvements de Azawad; Ansar Eddine, part of Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin; Mouvement pour l'unification et le jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest whose former members joined Islamic State in the Greater Sahara; Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, part of Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin; Groupe d'autodéfense des Touaregs Imghad et leurs alliés, part of Platform coalition of armed groups/Plateforme des mouvements du 14 juin 2014 d'Alger.
<b>Myanmar</b>	Myanmar Armed Forces (Tatmadaw Kyi)	
<b>CAR</b>		Lord's Resistance Army; Ex-Séléka factions: Union pour la paix en Centrafrique, Mouvement patriotique pour la Cen-trafrique, Front populaire pour la renaissance dela Centraf-rique – Gula faction, Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique – Abdoulaye Hussein faction, Rassemble-ment patriotique pour le renouveau de la Centrafrique; Front démocratique du peuple centrafricain – Abdoulaye Miskine; Révolution et justice; Retour, réclamation et réha-bilitation – Abbas Sidiki; Anti-balaka associated militia.
<b>DRC</b>	Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo; Police nationale congolaise.	Alliance des patriotes pour un Congo libre et souverain-Janvier; Alliance des patriotes pour un Congo libre et sou-verain-Rénové led by "General" Mapenzi Bulere Likuwe; Allied Democratic Forces; Forces pour la défense du Congo; Bana Mura militias; Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda; Force de résistance patriotique de l'Ituri; Kamuina Nsapu; Lord's Resistance Army; Nduma défense du Congo; Mai-Mai Kifuafua; All Mai-Mai Simba factions; Nyatura; Nduma défense du Congo-Rénové led by "General" Guidon Shimiray Mwissa; Mai-Mai Raia Mutomboki; All Twa mili-tia.
<b>Somalia</b>	Somali National Army; Somali Police Force (and allied militia); Puntland forces.	Al-Shabaab
<b>Sudan</b>	Sudanese Armed Forc-es; Rapid Support Forc-es.	Justice and Equality Movement; Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid faction.
<b>South Sudan</b>	South Sudan People's Defence Forces; South Sudan National Police Service	Lord's Resistance Army; Justice and Equality Movement; pro-Riek Machar Sudan People's Liberation Army in Oppo-sition; Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition forces aligned with First Vice-President Taban Deng.
<b>Syria</b>	Syrian Arab Armed Forces; Intelligence services.	ISIS; Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham led by Nusrah Front (Levant Liberation Organization); Army of Islam; Ahrar al-Sham; Pro-Government forces, including the National Defence Forc-es militia.
<b>Other cases</b>		Boko Haram

the use of sexual violence against men. The document warns of its use to humiliate and silence prisoners in regime-controlled detention centres, with practices that allegedly include rape, forced sterilisation and genital burning and mutilation as a way of forcing confessions or obtaining submission. Of the 138 people interviewed by LDHR, more than 40 per cent admitted to having suffered some form of sexual assault and 90 per cent to having been forcibly undressed in front of their guards. Another report by UNFPA, published in May and based on testimonies collected in 2018, confirmed that violence and sexual harassment, domestic violence and early marriage continued to harm the lives of women and girls. The research highlighted the fact that fear of sexual violence had led to greater restrictions on women

and girls' mobility in some areas, against the backdrop of patriarchal customs and traditions. These restrictions were identified as the main obstacle to accessing assistance services for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

The Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on **Myanmar**, set up by the UN Human Rights Council, published its specific report on the impact of sexual violence in the armed conflict.<sup>23</sup> The report notes that despite the fact that the Mission had verified cases of various forms of sexual violence being used on women, men and girls –rape, gang rape, sexual torture, sexual slavery– in the context of the military operations in

21. 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.

22. UN Security Council, *Sexual violence related to conflicts. Report of the Secretary-General*, S/2019/280, 29 March 2019.

23. Human Rights Council, *Sexual and gender-based violence in Myanmar and the gendered impact of its ethnic conflicts*, A/HRC/42/CRP.4, 22 August 2019.



Kachin and Shan states, and particularly during the military operations in Rakhine state in 2017, resulting in the genocide of the Rohingya population, the Burmese government has not carried out any investigation or sought accountability, and the military authorities responsible for the operations continue to hold their positions of command. As a result, the independent fact-finding mission decided to publish this specific report, expanding the scope of its investigations and gathering new evidence on the perpetrators of sexual violence in the context of the armed conflict in the country.<sup>24</sup> In its first report in 2018, the Mission had already concluded that acts of sexual and gender-based violence constituted international crimes of torture and war crimes, as well as constituting crimes against humanity and acts of genocide. In the 2019 report, the Mission noted that sexual violence underlines the genocidal intent of the Myanmar Armed Forces to destroy the Rohingya population, with the killing of women and the infliction of severe physical and mental harm on Rohingya women and their living conditions, with the purpose of annihilating the Rohingya population. The report documents the widespread and systematic killing of women and girls, the systematic targeting of women and girls of reproductive age for rape, attacks on pregnant women and babies, mutilation and other injuries to their reproductive organs, physical marks on their bodies and injuries so severe that they are unable to have sex or conceive again. The International Mission noted that the Government of Myanmar completely evaded its responsibility to protect the population and to investigate, prosecute and punish those responsible for such serious human rights violations.

In early 2019, LGBTI activists and human rights organisations denounced a new campaign of persecution by the Chechen authorities against gay and bisexual men, and those perceived to be so. The Russian platform LGBTI Network filed a complaint with the Russian authorities at the end of January concerning the detention of at least 14 people in the Chechen capital city of Grozny, as well as acts of torture and at least one murder, which were motivated by the victim's sexual orientation. According to information obtained by the network, the detainees were beaten, sexually assaulted and tortured with electric currents, as well as forced to sign empty forms. In subsequent reports, the network reported that between late December 2018 and January 2019, 40 people had been arrested by the police in Chechnya due to their homosexuality. Of these figures, 14 people were held in facilities of the security forces. The organisation also estimated that 150 LGBTI people have been evacuated from Chechnya by the platform since April

*The Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar reported that the Burmese Government had not conducted any investigation into sexual violence in the armed conflict, despite reports of rape, sexual torture and sexual slavery*

2017. International organisations also echoed the reports of increased persecution of LGBTI people in Chechnya. In January, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch (HRW) disseminated the Russian network's allegations. In April, Amnesty International reported that two years after the widespread persecution of gay men in Chechnya in 2017 –kidnapping, torture and murder– there had still been no accountability for these crimes. HRW published a report in May documenting and denouncing human rights violations against gay men, including illegal arrests, beatings and at least one rape at a compound of the Chechen regime's Department of Internal Affairs, located in the capital, Grozny. The report also denounced the impunity of the persecution suffered in 2017.

### 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.

In relation to the UN response to sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel serving under his command, the strategy promoted by UN Secretary-General António Guterres continued to be implemented, although allegations continued to be received. According to the Secretary-General's 2019 report, progress<sup>25</sup> has been made in reinforcing the victim-centred approach, with new tools to prevent the recruitment of personnel with a history of sexual exploitation or abuse; increased collaboration with civil society and external experts, including the launch in 2019 of a Civil Society Advisory Board, which has a mandate to make proposals to intensify the fight against sexual exploitation and abuse. However, many obstacles remained, such as difficulties for Member States to follow up on complaints from non-United Nations forces. **In his report, the Secretary-General identified the progress made and the commitments in the peacekeeping and humanitarian sectors, while urging greater efforts in development programmes.**

In relation to the allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by military and civilian personnel deployed on peacekeeping and special political missions, **the report noted a decrease in the number of complaints in 2018 compared to 2017.** According to the report, there were 54 complaints (56 according to the United Nations'

24. The mission had already submitted an initial report in 2018 on all the human rights violations committed in the context of the military operations in the country. For more information, see the chapter Gender, peace and security in Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2019! Report on conflicts, human rights and peacebuilding*, Icaria editorial, 2019.

25. UN Secretary-General, *Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse*, A/73/744, 14 February 2019.

Conduct in UN Field Missions online database), compared to 62 in 2017 and 104 in 2016. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) received a further 33 complaints not included in the report for various reasons, including overlap with previous complaints and a lack of sufficient information to open an investigation, among others. 83 per cent of the 94 victims affected by the complaints were adults, and the remaining 17 per cent were minors. 34 of the 54 complaints (63 per cent) involved sexual exploitation of adults and the remaining 20 complaints (37 per cent) involved sexual abuse. 64 of the persons reported as perpetrators of sexual violence were military personnel, 14 were police officers and 14 were civilians. At the mission level, 74 per cent of the allegations involved 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). The remaining 26 per cent involved the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS). In addition, according to the UN online database, **80 complaints were received in 2019, 56 of which were related to sexual exploitation, 19 to abuse and 5 to both forms. The complaints affected 71 adult victims and 20 minors.**

In addition, 94 complaints were filed against United Nations personnel working in bodies other than peacekeeping bodies. In the case of the World Food Programme (WFP), 19 complaints were received in 2018, 11 of them against WFP staff and 8 against external partners involved in the implementation of its programmes or projects. The total number of complaints in the previous 12 years was 26. The United Nations noted the difficulty of determining whether the sharp increase was due to a greater number of incidents or to a greater willingness to report them in a context of increased awareness. For the UNHCR, there was also a significant increase, with 34 complaints against agency staff in 2018 (compared to 19 in 2017), and 83 against external partners (compared to 20 in 2017). The United Nations also reported an increase in the number of complaints against non-United Nations personnel collaborating with the United Nations in the implementation of programmes or projects, with 109 complaints filed in 2018 (compared to 25 in 2017). In the case of UNICEF, the number of complaints rose from 8 in 2017 to 15 in 2018.

*In 2019, only 37 States granted refugee status to applicants who were persecuted on the basis of their gender orientation, identity or expression, despite the disproportionate levels of violence faced by the LGBTI population and their particular vulnerability*

### 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. Impunity for human rights violations continued to be a recurring theme. The report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights, published in July 2019, examined the **continued impunity for human rights violations committed against human rights defenders**, including female human rights defenders and defenders of the rights of the LGBTI population.<sup>26</sup> It examined the main obstacles, compiled a list of best practices and

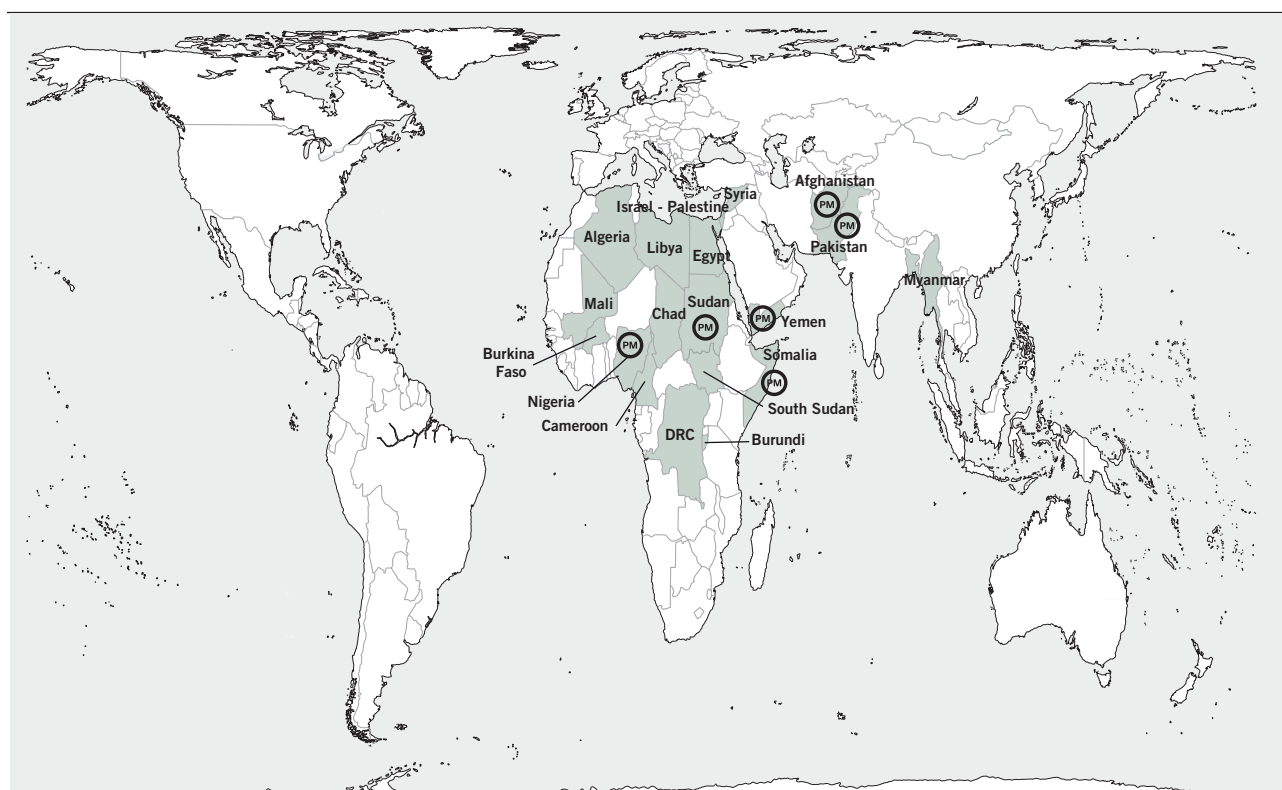
proposed guidelines and recommendations. At the intersectional level, the report highlights the specific risks of violence faced by individuals, groups or movements depending on the type of rights they defend and also the economic or political interests they challenge. The Rapporteur warned of the risks faced by people defending gender equality, sexual diversity, the environment and land, among others. Among the obstacles that limit access to justice and create impunity for human rights violations, the report noted –among others– the lack of a differentiated and intersectional approach. In this regard, the Rapporteur noted the additional obstacles related to gender discrimination faced by female human rights defenders, including their stigmatisation. Specific obstacles also include the difficulty of assuming the

costs associated with filing complaints and following up on cases in which they are responsible for family care, as well as the lack of protection mechanisms for family members and the physical and emotional costs of dealing with a system that reinforces gender stereotypes. The Rapporteur also highlighted the obstacles for LGBTI people to access justice, as well as indigenous peoples and people of African descent. To bring about change in this situation, the report raises the importance of a differential and intersectional approach.

In relation to violence against the **LGBTI population at global level**, the United Nations Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, Victor Madrigal-Borloz, made an **appeal in July to States and other actors involved in the protection of LGBTI asylum seekers and refugees to recognise their particularly vulnerable status and special requirements, and identified access to asylum as a basic element of protection** against the disproportionate levels of arbitrary detention, police abuse, violence and extrajudicial killings by state and non-state actors to which the LGBTI population is

26. Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation, A/74/159, 15 July 2019.

Map 3.2. Countries in armed conflict and with discriminatory legislation against the LGBTI population



■ Countries in armed conflict in 2019 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 2019 where death penalty for LGBTI population is codified.

Source: Prepared by the authors, with data from Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alerta 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 3.3. Armed conflicts in 2019 in countries with discriminatory legislation against the LGBTI population<sup>27</sup>

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

Source: Prepared internally with data from Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alerta 2020! Report on conflicts, human rights and peacebuilding*. Barcelona: Icaria, 2020. ILGA World: Lucas Ramón Mendos, *Homofobia de Estado 2019: Actualización del Panorama Global de la Legislación (State Homophobia 2019: Global Legislation Overview Update)*. Geneva, ILGA, December 2019.

27. This list includes those countries included in the ILGA's report in the categories of Criminalisation (Consensual sexual acts between adults of the same sex and Consensual sexual acts between adults of the same sex) and Restriction (Restrictions on freedom of expression in issues related to sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sexual characteristics and Restrictions on the registration or running of civil society organisations). ILGA World: Lucas Ramón Mendos, *Homofobia de Estado 2019: Actualización del Panorama Global de la Legislación (State Homophobia 2019: Global Legislation Overview Update)*. Geneva; ILGA, December 2019.



subject in the countries from which they are forced to flee. They also face rights violations in the form of forced sterilisations, so-called “conversion therapies” and restrictions on freedom of expression, assembly and association. The independent expert therefore urged the States to ensure that well-founded fears of persecution on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and/or sexual characteristics are accepted as grounds for the recognition of refugee status. According to their data, only 37 States granted asylum on such grounds.

Furthermore, in July the Independent Expert published his report on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, which addressed the discrimination suffered by LGBTI people worldwide in areas such as education, health care, housing and employment, among others, as well as the dynamics of inclusion for protection against violence.<sup>28</sup> The report specifically addressed the situation of LGBTI asylum seekers, refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons. The report highlighted that the LGBTI community’s structural vulnerability could be exacerbated due to the particular risk they face from violence, abuse and exploitation at all stages of their journey and at the hands of officials, traffickers and smugglers. The expert noted that LGBTI people often hid their identity as a means of survival, to avoid harassment and abuse and also to be able to access food and shelter. The report highlighted the importance of providing adequate housing and sanitation facilities, as well as access to permanent housing. **Stigma and discrimination had a particularly uncommon impact on migrants, displaced persons and refugees, as they specifically discouraged them from expressing their identity, which in turn led to obstacles to the filing of asylum claims linked to persecution on the grounds of sexual orientation.** LGBTI migrants living in an irregular legal situation can be at greater risk of violence, harassment and exploitation. Similarly, LGBTI migrants detained for illegal entry and stay could be subject to social isolation and physical and sexual violence, which is exacerbated in the case of transgender people. The report also warned of threats to the physical safety of unaccompanied LGBTI minors, including their difficulties in accessing services, safe accommodation, and having their specific psychosocial needs met.

The United Nations refugee agency, UNHCR, presented its annual report, which notes the **international situation in the area of forced displacements** and examines the global figures for 2018. A record 70.8 million people were displaced worldwide this year, 25.9 million of whom were refugees. With regard to the analysis of these data from a gender perspective, the sex-disaggregated figures available to UNHCR for the population of concern to

this agency indicated that 25.7 million were women and girls and 25.4 million were men and boys. It should be noted that 131 countries provided the UNHCR with sex-disaggregated figures, which is lower than the figure for 2017, when 147 countries provided such data. Figures referring specifically to the refugee population indicated that women and girls represented 48 per cent of this population, although in the specific case of Africa, for example, women constituted 52 per cent of the refugee population. It should be noted that resolution 2467 on women, peace and security adopted by the Security Council in 2019 identified the link between forced displacement and sexual violence in the context of armed conflict, noting that such violence can constitute a form of gender-based persecution, leading to eligibility for the recognition of asylum or refugee status. **In his 2019 report on women, peace and security, the UN Secretary-General noted that one in five refugee women in complex humanitarian situations had experienced sexual violence.**<sup>29</sup> Organisations such as Oxfam, noted that in situations of forced displacement linked to the global climate emergency, women were more vulnerable to violence and abuse, and gender inequalities made it more difficult to improve their living conditions.<sup>30</sup> UN Women also drew attention to the situation of displaced and refugee women. In a report on the living conditions of Syrian refugee women in Lebanon, it noted that gender inequalities and discrimination increase the risk of women and girls suffering physical and sexual violence and exploitation in the public and private spheres.<sup>31</sup> Syrian women represent just over half of the Syrian refugee population in Lebanon and about 80 per cent of those interviewed by UN Women said they could not meet their basic needs and had great difficulty accessing humanitarian aid.

In the context of the armed conflict in **Ukraine**, its gendered impacts, including the impacts of militarisation on men, were once again highlighted. Thus, men living in the Crimea were affected by the roll-out of the ninth campaign of compulsory recruitment into the Russian Armed Forces. **In the spring months and up to June 2019, 3,300 men were conscripted in the Crimea, the largest number in any single campaign since the forced recruitment process began in 2015.** HRW reported that international humanitarian law explicitly prohibits Russia, as an occupying power, from forcing Crimean residents to enlist in its armed forces. HRW also denounced the filing of criminal charges against Crimean men who refused to be conscripted. Since 2015, Russia has forcibly conscripted between 18,000 and 18,900 men living on the peninsula.

The UN, NGOs and research centres warned of the situation of women and minors linked to the armed group Islamic State (ISIS) who are held in detention

28. Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, *Report of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity*, 17 July 2019, A/74/181.

29. UN Secretary-General, *Report on Women, Peace and Security*. S/2019/800. October 2019.

30. Oxfam, *Forced From Home: Climate-fuelled displacement*, 2019.

31. IPSOS Group SA, *Unpacking gendered realities in displacement: the status of Syrian refugee women in Lebanon*, UN Women, 2018.

centres in north-east Syria, mostly controlled by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) –a coalition dominated by the Kurdish group YPG. Of particular concern were the humanitarian conditions in the al-Hol refugee camp –also referred to as al-Hawi– in Hasakah province, which went from housing some 10,000 people in December 2018 to over 70,000 in April 2019, coinciding with the armed campaign that ended with the expulsion of ISIS from Baghouz, the group’s last stronghold in the area. According to UN data, 94 per cent of the inhabitants of al-Hol were women or minors. Organisations such as Human Rights Watch warned of the serious problems faced above all by the 11,000 foreign women and children –from around 50 different nationalities– living in facilities attached to al-Hol. Around 7,000 are under 12. Following a field visit, HRW denounced the poor hygiene conditions, the proliferation of skin diseases, tuberculosis, diarrhoea, hepatitis, malnutrition, as well as the complications faced by pregnant women before, during and after childbirth. HRW and the think tank International Crisis Group (ICG) highlighted the legal ambiguity in which people held at al-Hol find themselves. Formally, they are not prisoners, but nor are they recognised as internally displaced persons, which makes their access to humanitarian aid difficult. The Kurdish forces believe that these people have been transferred to al-Hol to be repatriated to their respective countries. However, as the ICG points out, the various countries holding their nationals at al-Hol have adopted very different strategies: some had begun repatriations –including Russia, Malaysia, Uzbekistan or Kosovo– and others –such as Morocco or Tunisia– had no particular interest in their return, while Western countries –from the EU, Canada and Australia– had repatriated less than 200 people by October 2019.

It should be noted that a diverse range of women lived together at al-Hol, with very varied links to ISIS. Some of them are active militants of the organisation, but others established relations with the group on a circumstantial basis or in contexts of coercion –including some who were forcibly married to ISIS combatants. Against this backdrop, al-Hol is the scene of continuous disputes and acts of violence. ISIS militant women, followers of the extreme version of Islam promoted by the armed group, control the rest of the women and their clothing, throw stones, insult or threaten to burn down the shops of women and minors they consider to be infidels, among other practices. ICG noted that in late September, in just one week, two women were shot dead by guards in the building attached to al-Hol and the bodies of two others were found in the facility after they had been executed, allegedly after an ISIS activist had sentenced them to death. At the same time, the high vulnerability of the children living in this area has been highlighted, many of whom are unaccompanied minors with problems proving their nationality. According to some reports, some

women are hiding orphaned children or pretending they are their own children for ideological reasons or because they believe this will increase their repatriation options. The very serious humanitarian situation in these centres was also affected by the violent dynamics of the armed conflict. The intensification of Turkish incursions into north-eastern Syria from October onwards raised alarms regarding volatility in the region and the fate of people held in these detention centres.

### 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.<sup>32</sup> 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.

In October, the **annual debate on women, peace and security was held at the UN Security Council** to coincide with the presentation of the UN Secretary-General’s assessment report on the implementation of the agenda relating to this matter.<sup>33</sup> The Secretary-General’s report collected the results of the independent assessment promoted by UN Women regarding the fulfilment of the commitments acquired in 2015 by the United Nations during the high-level review of the women, peace and security agenda; of the peacekeeping operations; and of the structure for peace consolidation. The independent assessment of the implementation of the commitments to the women, peace and security agenda noted that 50 per cent had been achieved or were on track to be achieved, 40 per cent were being implemented unevenly and 10 per cent had suffered setbacks or had made no progress at all.<sup>34</sup> It should be noted that among the commitments and recommendations established in 2015 that have not moved forward in recent years is that of including the gender perspective in peace agreements. In both 2017 and 2018 there was a decline in the number of

32. See section 4.2.1. of this chapter.

33. Women, peace and security. UN Secretary-General, S/2019/800, UN Security Council, 9 October 2019.

34. Allen, L., *Mapping of the Gender Recommendations in the Three 2015 Peace and Security Reviews*, 2019.

agreements that included clauses concerning gender in their texts. Compared to 39 per cent of the 2015 agreements, only 27 per cent of the 2017 agreements and 7.7 per cent of the 2018 agreements had clauses on gender issues. Recommendations not to resort to formulas such as the creation of advisory councils or observer status to promote the inclusion of women, but rather to promote meaningful participation with advocacy powers, are also not being taken into account.

Among the highlights of the year is the **approval of Resolution 2467**, promoted by the German Government and passed by a majority on the UN Security Council with the abstentions of China and Russia. The Resolution was adopted amidst high tensions between Governments on the Security Council and was the subject of significant criticism by many civil society organisations. At different times during the drafting process of the Resolution, the United States, Russia and China threatened to veto it. The text of the Resolution, concerning sexual violence in armed conflicts, underwent important changes in order to gain approval, since the inclusion of the issue of sexual and reproductive rights for the victims of sexual violence in conflicts led to its rejection by the US government, which refused to approve it if this formula was not excluded, despite the fact that the previous Resolution 2106 of 2013 already referred to this issue and Resolution 2467 mentions it in one of the preamble paragraphs. Other issues that also had to be excluded from the text in order for the Resolution to be approved were the adoption of a formal mechanism within the Security Council regarding sexual violence in armed conflict (for example, a working group), the inclusion of references to the referral of cases to the International Criminal Court or the recognition of the LGBTI population's vulnerability to this violence.<sup>35</sup> Civil society, for its part, once again insisted that it was not necessary to add new resolutions to the agenda, but rather that the priority should be the effective implementation of the commitments made by governments over the last two decades, while it also expressed its serious concern for all the aspects that should have been excluded, such as sexual and reproductive rights or the link to the International Criminal Court. In any case, certain positive aspects of this Resolution were highlighted, such as the adoption of a survivor-centred approach in the design of responses to this violence, as well as greater attention to the continuum of violence that precedes the use of sexual violence in armed conflict. The resolution addressed the issue of children born as a result of rape, identifying the need to provide more and better support to these

***In 2019, only 34 per cent of the national action plans relating to Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security had a specific budget devoted to the issue and only 30 per cent contained references to the issue of disarmament***

children. There was also more explicit recognition of the links between sexual violence and forced displacement, as well as greater consideration of male and child victims of sexual violence. Civil society organisations pointed out that some of the issues that had not been addressed strongly enough in the Resolution were, for example, the accountability of peacekeepers or the situation of female human rights defenders.<sup>36</sup> In October, coinciding with the open debate on the Security Council, another new resolution, Resolution 2493, was adopted, which for the first time mentioned the need for context-specific analyses in the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda and also the importance of regional organisations.

With regard to the national action plans regarding Resolution 1325, **during 2019 four countries adopted new plans: Bangladesh, Namibia, Lebanon and Armenia.** Therefore, a total of 83 countries had a plan in place by the end of 2019, representing 43 per cent of UN member countries. According to the analysis of these plans carried out by the international organisation WILPF, of the 83 existing plans, only 34 per cent of them had a specific budget allocated to the implementation of the plan and only 30 per cent of the plans in force included references to the issue of disarmament. During 2019, nine countries committed to developing their first national action plan with an eye on the 2020 review: Uruguay, Cyprus, Malta, Egypt, Ethiopia, Bulgaria, Latvia, Sri Lanka and South Africa.

In October, the third joint mission of the United Nations and the African Union (AU) on the women, peace and security agenda was conducted, including a visit to the Horn of Africa region led by the AU Special Envoy for this agenda, Bineta Diop, and the UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina J. Mohammed. During the regional visit, they travelled to Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Eritrea, where they met with both government representatives and civil society organisations. In the case of Ethiopia, the meetings with various female government ministers and discussions on the country's regional leadership in the area of women's political participation are worthy of note. In Somalia, the focus of the visit was women's participation in the elections and their role in preventing violent extremism. In Djibouti, the focus was on women's participation in governance, and in Eritrea it was strongly economic in nature, with meetings focusing on the economic empowerment of women. The delegation also included representatives from UN Women and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

35. Davis, Sara E. and True, J., *Pitfalls, Policy, and Promise of the UN's approach to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence and the New Resolution 2467*, PRIO, 2019.

36. Madeleine Rees, *Madeleine Rees on UN Security Council Resolution 2476*, WILPF, 2019.

### 3.3.2. Gender issues in peace negotiations<sup>37</sup>

Several peace processes were relevant from a gender point of view during the year 2019. Women's organisations demanded 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.

#### Colombia

In Colombia, challenges continued to be faced in the application of the gender perspective in the peace agreement reached by the Government and the FARC in 2016, which is currently being implemented. Various agencies published reports on the implementation of the gender perspective. The organisation *Instancia Especial de Mujeres para el Enfoque de Género en la Paz (Women's Special Body for the Gender Perspective in Peace)* published its three-year assessment report on the implementation of the gender perspective. In this assessment, female civil society representatives pointed out that some of the structural causes of inequality and violence that have a particular impact on women and rural, indigenous, Afro-Colombian, Palenquero and Raizal communities in the country, as well as on the LGTBI population, remain unaddressed. They criticised the blurring of gender as a central pillar of implementation, since the Framework Implementation Plan limits its cross-cutting nature. However, the report highlighted the Government's decision to establish the governmental department known as the *Alta Instancia de Género (High Authority on Gender)*. Furthermore, they pointed out the high level of ignorance that exists within institutions in the country's various territories, both regarding the peace agreement itself and the gender perspective and other differentiated perspectives. The Kroc Institute also presented its monitoring report on the gender perspective, which noted the difficulties and delays in implementing this perspective.<sup>38</sup> Compared to 27 per cent of the overall commitments of the agreement whose implementation had not been commenced by August 2019, 42 per cent of the commitments with regard to the gender perspective had not been commenced. In addition, only 8 per cent of the gender perspective commitments had been completed, compared to 25 per cent for the agreement as a whole. Kroc noted that the greatest progress was made on the issue of victims' rights.

*In Colombia, challenges continued to be faced in the application of the gender perspective in the peace agreement*

On the other hand, in its report on the human rights situation in Colombia during 2019, the OHCHR acknowledged that some efforts had been made, such as the recognition as victims by the *Comisión para el Esclarecimiento de la Verdad, la Convivencia y la No Repetición (Commission for Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition)* of female human rights defenders, women and the LGBTI community who have been victims of sexual violence. However, the High Commissioner urged the Government to make progress in implementing the provisions of the agreement relating to the ethnic and gender perspective, taking into account some of the challenges that both women and the LGBTI community face in the country. Thus, high rates of sexual violence were recorded in the country, the highest in the last 10 years, with 52.3 victims per 100,000 inhabitants. Women and, above all, the LGBTI population experienced enormous difficulties in participating in the electoral processes in the country. Women accounted for 37 per cent, and openly LGBTI persons for 0.06 per cent, of the candidates who competed in the various electoral processes.

#### Georgia

In Georgia, meetings continued to take place during the year between government representatives involved in the peace process and Georgian civilians affected by the conflict, including women's organisations. This is a practice initiated by UN Women in 2013 and subsequently organised by the government, with support from the United Nations, and is reflected in Georgia's national action plan for the implementation of Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. The meetings addressed both issues dealt with at the highest level of the peace process –the so-called Geneva International Discussions– and those addressed in the incident prevention mechanisms (IPRMs). At the various meetings, the participating women's organisations shared priorities, such as the need to address the security situation around the border line and barriers in the border area and to have greater access to information regarding the system of direct communication between the parties in conflict in order to conduct incident management. Furthermore, they urged the resumption of the IPRM specific to the conflict region of Abkhazia. They also noted the need to promote human rights instruments, especially for women and girls, in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. They also emphasised the problems of freedom of movement and economic difficulties in the border areas in conflict as a factor leading to the exodus of the population, especially young people, from these areas. They also called for improvements in road infrastructure,

37. For more exhaustive information on the inclusion of the gender perspective in the currently active peace processes, please consult the yearbook of Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Peace Talks in Focus. Report on Trends and Scenarios*. Icaria: Barcelona, 2020.

38. Kroc Institute, UN Women, FIDM and Sweden, *Towards a sustainable peace through gender equality. Second monitoring report on the gender perspective in the implementation of the Peace Agreement in Colombia*, December 2019



telephone and internet coverage, irrigation systems and health services, among others.

## Yemen and Syria

During 2019, women's organisations, activists and feminists in the Middle East continued to demand greater protagonism and material presence in public and political life, including in the negotiation processes to define the future of their countries. In Yemen and Syria, through different initiatives and forums, women demanded a minimum presence of 30 per cent. In this regard, as far as Yemen is concerned, the negotiations promoted by the UN that led to the so-called Stockholm Agreement in December 2018 included only one woman in the negotiating delegations. In the case of Syria, the establishment at the end of 2019 of a constitutional committee within the framework of the Geneva peace process, also sponsored by the United Nations, was welcomed as a positive development, among other things, due to the almost 30 per cent representation of Syrian women. In both contexts, *ad-hoc* women's formations also continued to be active, with the intention of advising the respective UN special envoys (the Syrian Women's Advisory Board in the case of Syria, and the Technical Advisory Group in the case of Yemen). At the same time, both in more formal settings and in civil society organisations, emphasis was placed on identifying priorities which, from the point of view of women, are crucial for the transformation of armed conflicts. In the case of Yemen, emphasis was placed on the need to urgently address the humanitarian requirements of the population, curb the scourge of sexual and gender-based violence, address the issue of detained and missing persons, halt the use of child soldiers and take measures to prevent the proliferation of weapons. In Syria, a number of women's organisations made proposals to address issues such as the inclusion of a feminist outlook in a new Constitution, the safe return of internally displaced persons and refugees from the conflict, and a post-war reconstruction that takes into account women's needs and abilities.

## South Sudan

In April, women's organisations in South Sudan called on the transitional government to implement the peace agreement, which calls for 35 per cent of ministries to be led by women. According to a study published by Oxfam, women have actively participated in the various peace processes that have taken place in South Sudan in various forums and levels, although they have generally been excluded from decision-making and the exercise of power.<sup>39</sup> However, civil society organisations have repeatedly demanded greater participation and inclusion, as well as demanding that women's rights and gender-based violence be considered essential aspects of the various peace agreements that have been

signed since 2005. Obstacles that have prevented them from participating in a more significant way include the violence, threats and intimidation they have suffered, as well as the lack of access to necessary resources. Although the various agreements have established participation quotas to ensure the inclusion of women, they have not been respected, which prevents women from being able to exercise their rights to political participation without discrimination. Women's organisations have mobilised in recent years to demand the implementation of the various peace agreements that have been reached.

## Women Mediation Networks

In September, the Global Alliance of Regional Women Mediator Networks was launched, an initiative that aims to improve coordination in the work of the regional networks that comprise it: Mediterranean Women Mediation Network, Nordic Women Mediation Network, Arab Women Mediation Network, FEMWISE Africa and Women Mediators Across the Commonwealth. The objectives of this global alliance are to share information, create synergies and avoid duplication; to create a platform for mutual support between networks; to perform joint advocacy and outreach where relevant; to develop joint actions to improve women's participation and influence in peace processes at all levels: local, national, regional and international, and at all stages; implement joint actions to ensure better gender outcomes in peace agreements and implementation frameworks; work and establish contacts with international mediators to ensure that women's participation in peace processes is prioritised, proposing names for high-level mediation positions, connecting first, second and third track diplomacy initiatives. The presentation of the Global Alliance took place during the 74th session of the UN General Assembly and brought together representatives from all the regional networks.

## OSCE

In December 2019, the OSCE launched a document with tools for women's participation and effective peace processes, in order to respond to the need for measures to ensure the participation of women in peace negotiations in the OSCE area in which inter-governmental organisation plays a facilitating and mediating role. The guide contains practical proposals for OSCE mediators, rotating presidencies, member states as well as the executive structures of the organisation. According to data from *Alert 2020*, in 2019 there were no forums for direct participation in formal negotiations in peace processes under OSCE mediation, and only in the case of Georgia were there institutionalised mechanisms for indirect participation. The document itself points out that throughout its history the OSCE has barely assigned any mediation, facilitation or moderation roles to women in the four formal peace processes in Ukraine, Georgia

39. Soma, Esther, *Our Search for Peace: Women in South Sudan's National Peace Processes*, 2005–2018, Oxfam, January 2020.



(Abkhazia, South Ossetia), Moldova (Transdniestria), Armenia-Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh).<sup>40</sup> Of 52 special and personal representatives/envoys, working group coordinators and co-chairs, only one has been a woman, and served as a special representative of the rotating presidency in Ukraine and of the Trilateral Contact Group. Also according to the OSCE, a woman represented the OSCE as a co-mediator in the working group on humanitarian affairs of the Geneva International Discussions (GID, the name given to Georgia's peace process). If the focus is extended to inter-governmental co-mediating organisations, one woman has served as UN co-chair in the GID and another as EU co-mediator in the GID's humanitarian affairs working group. Furthermore, only one of the 14 managerial positions of the OSCE's Mission to Moldova (involved in the peace process concerning the status of Transdniestria) has been held by a woman.

### 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.

During 2019 several countries in Africa and the Middle East were once again the scene of massive popular protests against their respective rulers and political regimes. In countries such as **Lebanon** and **Algeria**, women played a particularly prominent role in the protests and drew attention to demands linked to the patriarchal system, gender inequalities and women's rights. There was a strong presence by Lebanese women on social networks, used during the protests as a means to voice their grievances and demands. Women were also at the front line of the barricades and formed human barriers between the security forces and the protesters as a way to avoid an escalation of tensions and preserve the peaceful nature of the protests. The perspective of Lebanese women allowed for the amplification of the complaints way beyond mere criticisms aimed at the political class, poor governance, the inefficiency of public services and problems resulting from an economy in crisis. Thus, intersectional issues and structural challenges facing women were given greater visibility, including legal discrimination in citizenship matters –which, among other things, does not allow Lebanese women to pass on their nationality to their children–; personal status laws –which regulate family issues such as marriage, divorce, custody or inheritance from religious jurisdictions rather than civil courts and which also include multiple discriminatory provisions– and deficits in regulations aimed at combating gender-based violence –which, for example, do not punish marital rape. In this sense, Lebanese women denounced the multiple oppressive practices arising from the patriarchal society and the political-confessional regime

in force in the country. It should be noted that many Lebanese women's organisations have for years been promoting greater representation in political decision-making, and in particular a 30 per cent quota, which has not been adopted. Indeed, in Lebanon the presence of women in Parliament continues to be low, among the lowest in North African and Middle Eastern countries. As regards Algeria, various media outlets highlighted the massive presence and leadership of women (in figures considered to be unprecedented) in the protests against the political powers that have been taking place in the country since February with the intention of putting an end to the regime of Abdelaziz Bouteflika. Some analysts highlighted the demand for the acceptance of women in public spaces and the citizenship rights of Algerian women, and linked the eminently peaceful nature of the protests to their mass participation. Participation in the protests by an iconic figure of the Algerian war of liberation such as Djamilia Bouhired (83) was interpreted as a reminder that, despite the participation of many women in the war of independence, the current unequal system requires an active response from women to ensure equal rights.

In **Sudan**, the military leadership of President Omar al-Bashir was overthrown in April, and the fall of the military was marked by mass protests by civil society groups and, in particular, by Sudanese women's organisations. After the fall of the regime, dozens of feminist organisations in the country continued to demand structural changes in relation to women's rights, asking for greater participation in the executive and legislative bodies, as well as a greater presence at the peace negotiation tables. Months after the mass social protests, various sources had drawn attention to the fact that women were still absent from the new regime. For three decades, the al-Bashir regime had developed repressive legislation to subjugate women, with the aim of satisfying the ultraconservative Islamic forces backing the regime. Despite having led the fall of the regime, various sources indicated that civil society groups and the army had begun to negotiate the country's political future, and women were once again being sidelined, as highlighted, among others, by Sara Abdelgalil, one of the few female representatives in the Sudanese Professionals Association (SPA), one of the main groups organising the protests.<sup>41</sup> In this sense, the activists stressed that the absence of women leaders in the new regime was an equality matter and, moreover, affected the quality of the transition and, ultimately, the success of the revolution. Of the dozens of civilians who participated in the negotiations, only one was a woman, Mervat Hamadelneel, unknown in activist circles. These organisations raised criticism of the leadership shown by the civil society groups that have been negotiating the political transition, the FFCs, which have been more open to reaching a compromise with the military junta than with the population they were supposed to represent.

40. OSCE, *Inclusion of Women and Effective Peace Processes: A Toolkit*, OSCE, 2019.

41. Justin Lynch, *Women fueled Sudan's revolution, but then they were pushed aside*, Independent, 4 August 2019.

Women from **Ukrainian** civil society groups created the Civil Society Network for the Implementation of the CEDAW and Women, Peace and Security Resolutions. The initiative was established in February 2019, within the framework of a seminar organised by the Democracy Development Centre (DDC) and the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP), with the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. The network aims to coordinate the preparation of CEDAW shadow reports by civil society groups, as well as to facilitate the exchange of information between organisations. At the launch, the participants highlighted the lack of women's participation and representation in the peace process, as well as denouncing the impacts of the conflict, including an increased prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence, disproportionate impacts of the economic and political instability on women, including rural women, Roma women and other minorities.

Women's civil society organisations continued to advocate for a negotiated solution to the conflict between **North and South Korea** and carried out various initiatives. The Korea Peace Now platform, composed of several women's organisations (Women Cross DMZ, Nobel Women's Initiative, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and Korean Women's Movement for Peace) published a report on the gender and humanitarian impact of the sanctions imposed on North Korea by the international community.<sup>42</sup> The report, prepared by a group of independent experts, concludes that sanctions are hampering humanitarian access to the country's most vulnerable population, even affecting some of the country's main humanitarian challenges such as chronic food insecurity, lack of access to basic health services, deterioration of the WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) environment, as well as high vulnerability to natural disasters. The report also highlighted the impact of the sanctions on the country's economic network –in economic sectors with a significant presence of women– as well as on society as a whole, exacerbating the rates of domestic violence, sexual violence and trafficking and prostitution of women, as well as the burdens of care that fall primarily to women,

with a significant impact on the living conditions of Korean women.

More than 50 women's organisations in **Cameroon** supported the memorandum "Voices of Cameroonian Women in the National Dialogue Process", presented in September 2019 in Yaounde and prepared by the Women's Consultation Platform for National Dialogue. The Platform is a forum that brings together women from various backgrounds in Cameroon and its diaspora, with the aim of promoting sustainable peacebuilding in the country, which has been gripped by an armed conflict between the State and guerrillas in the English-speaking regions. The document underlines the need for women's voices to be included in the forums with equal participatory strength in order to make a material and constructive contribution to the National Dialogue that took place between 30 September and 4 October. The memorandum is the result of five direct consultation forums held since July with members of the Consultation Platform, an online data collection mechanism, as well as the incorporation of the preliminary results of a participatory gender analysis study on the conflict. The memorandum contains general recommendations for the National Dialogue, including strengthening the participation and inclusiveness of the National Dialogue, involving women, young people and the elderly, and creating a climate that facilitates freedom of expression without fear of reprisals, among others, as well as recommendations on issues specifically affecting women. These include: the establishment of measures to reduce the impunity of perpetrators of gender-based violence; the institutionalisation of peace education; simplified mechanisms for access to birth and identity certificates destroyed in the conflict; the implementation of laws and policies on decentralisation; women's representation and the inclusion of the gender perspective in all the commissions to be created in the framework of the national dialogue; a bilateral ceasefire, holistic programmes that respond to the needs of women, including indigenous women, women with disabilities, children, young adults, the elderly, among others, as well as the establishment of specialised trauma structures to address issues related to sexual and gender-based violence, among other recommendations.

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42. Féron, H., Eriksson Fortier, E., Gray, K., Kim, S., O'Reilly, M., Park, K. B., Yoon, J., *The Human Costs and Gendered Impact of Sanctions on North Korea*, Korea Peace Now, 2019.