

Background Guide SC GerMUN 2021

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Committee Overview

Introduction

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

The Security Council held its first session on 17 January 1946 at Church House in London.³ After its first meeting, the Council relocated to its permanent residence at the UN Headquarters in New York City.⁴ At that time, five permanent members and six non-permanent members were part of the Council.⁵ However, over subsequent years, discussions regarding the structure of the Council began to take place.⁶ In 1965, the number of non-permanent members increased to 10, and, although membership has not changed since then, discussions regarding a change in configuration take place frequently.⁷ As the body's structure has remained largely unchanged, debate has arisen over the Security Council's efficacy and authority as a mediator on issues of international security.⁸ Matters such as the Syrian Civil War, Russia's annexation of Crimea, and North Korea's nuclear weapons program have posed particular challenges to the Security Council.⁹

The Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) works to support reform initiatives from a western perspective and is actively in favor of restructuring the Security Council.¹⁰ Groups like CFR have little to no influence on UN bodies in terms of advocating for reform, rather they spend time and resources developing what new systems could look like in hopes of redesigning methods for achieving peace and security.¹¹

Traditionally, the Security Council discusses issues related to peacekeeping missions, political processes, as well as the protection of human rights, disarmament, and humanitarian crises.¹² However, with the adoption of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* by the UN General Assembly in 2015, the Security Council has begun to increasingly focus on the intersection between sustainability and peace and security.¹³ Some important crosscutting issues the Council is currently addressing include human rights and the protection of civilians for conflict prevention and sustainable development; Women, Peace and Security; and the prevention of conflict and sustaining peace.¹⁴

Governance, Structure, and Membership

The Security Council is the only UN body that has the power to adopt legally binding resolutions, which place an obligation on Member States to accept and carry out the Council's decisions under Article 25 of

¹ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

² UN Security Council, *What is the Security Council?*, 2019.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Hanhimäki, *The United Nations: A Very Short Introduction*, 2008, p. 32.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Bourantonis, *The History and Politics of UN Security Council Reform*, 2005, p. 10.

⁸ Council on Foreign Relations, *The UN Security Council*, 2018.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Council on Foreign Relations, *The UN Security Council*, 2018.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*; Encyclopaedia Britannica, *United Nations Security Council*, 2014.

¹³ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015; UN DPA, Politically Speaking, *Sustaining Peace, Conflict Prevention, Human Rights and Sustainable Development High on Agenda for New Security Council Members*, 2018.

¹⁴ UN DPA, Politically Speaking, *Sustaining Peace, Conflict Prevention, Human Rights and Sustainable Development High on Agenda for New Security Council Members*, 2018.

the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945).¹⁵ The Security Council also has a variety of other tools to address issues on its agenda.¹⁶ For example, the President of the Security Council may issue press statements or presidential statements to communicate the Council's position.¹⁷ Although these are not legally binding, such statements are used to bring attention to important issues and to recommend solutions to ongoing conflicts.¹⁸

The five permanent members of the Security Council are: China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America, often colloquially referred to as the "P5."¹⁹ Every year, the General Assembly elects five of the 10 non-permanent members for a two-year term.²⁰ Elections for non-permanent seats on the Council can be competitive, with states expressing interest and campaigning years in advance.²¹ States elected to serve on the Security Council are expected to represent the interests of their region; they usually have an influence at the international level and demonstrate leadership in specific areas of interest to their foreign policy.²² Each member of the Security Council has the ability to be represented at all meetings.²³ In the Provisional Rules of Procedure, Rule 13 allows for Members to be represented by an 'accredited representative', such as a Head of Government.²⁴

Belgium, Cote d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Germany, Indonesia, Kuwait, Peru, Poland, and South Africa are the current non-permanent members for the term 2019-2020.²⁵ Security Council elections are held in June, six months before the term starts.²⁶ This change allows Member States sufficient time to prepare for their new role.²⁷ The 10 non-permanent members represent countries from five groups: Africa, the Asia-Pacific Group, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Eastern European Group, and Western European and Other.²⁸

Every Member State of the Security Council has one vote.²⁹ Votes on all matters require supermajority of nine Member States.³⁰ However, if one of the five permanent members of the Security Council votes "no" on a matter of substance, such as a draft resolution, it does not pass.³¹ This is known as "veto power."³² In the 1950s, Security Council Member States, in particular the former Soviet Union, made frequent use of their veto power, but its usage declined in the 1960s, rising again in the 1970s and 1980s.³³ In the last decades, the use of the veto power has been comparatively rare.³⁴ In recent years, the Council has

¹⁵ UN Security Council, *What is the Security Council?*, 2019; *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

¹⁶ UN Security Council, *Functions and Powers*, 2019.

¹⁷ NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, *Mapping Women, Peace and Security in the United Nations Security Council: Report of the NGOWG Monthly Action Points, 2009-2010*, 2010, p. 11.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ UN DGC, *Ahead of Security Council elections, General Assembly President explains how a country can get a non-permanent seat*, 2016.

²² Bourantonis, *The History and Politics of UN Security Council Reform*, 2005, p. 6.

²³ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

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

²⁵ UN Security Council, *Current Members*, 2019.

²⁶ UN General Assembly, *Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (A/RES/68/307)*, 2014, p. 4.

²⁷ UN DGC, *Ahead of Security Council elections, General Assembly President explains how a country can get a non-permanent seat*, 2016.

²⁸ UN General Assembly, *Rules of procedure*, 2017.

²⁹ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Hanhimäki, *The United Nations: A Very Short Introduction*, 2008, p. 52.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Security Council Report, *In Hindsight: The Veto*, 2013; Security Council Report, *The Permanent Members and the Use of the Veto: An Abridged History*, 2013.

³⁴ Security Council Report, *The Permanent Members and the Use of the Veto: An Abridged History*, 2013.

adopted many resolutions by consensus and has only been divided on a very limited number of issues.³⁵ Since 1990, for example, decisions that have been adopted on Iraq and Bosnia-Herzegovina account for 34.1% of Security Council resolutions without consensus.³⁶ On the other hand, only 20.6% of Africa-related resolutions during the same timeframe were not adopted by consensus.³⁷

The issue of reform arose in a debate on November 20, 2018, during which members of the UN General Assembly suggested the Security Council must adapt, reform and expand its membership to include underrepresented regions to meet emerging challenges in the continually-changing and complex international peace and security architecture.³⁸ Delegates called for expanding the number of permanent members and abolishing the permanent member's use of veto power.³⁹

Each member of the Security Council holds the presidency of the Council for one month, rotating according to alphabetical order.⁴⁰ Security Council meetings can be held at any time when convened by the President and by the request of any Member State.⁴¹ Under Rule 3 of the Provisional Rules of Procedure of the Security Council, the President shall call a meeting if a dispute or situation requires the Council's attention.⁴² In accordance with the mandate of the Security Council and the *Charter of the United Nations*, the President shall call a meeting if a dispute or situation requires the Council's attention.⁴³ Any Member State may attend the Council's sessions if the body decides to extend an invitation.⁴⁴ Member States are invited if the Security Council is discussing an issue that directly concerns the interests of the Member State.⁴⁵ Invited Member States do not have the right to vote, but are allowed to submit proposals and draft resolutions.⁴⁶ Furthermore, invited Member States can inform the Council about a current crisis in their region.⁴⁷ However, such proposals may only be put to a vote at the request of a member of the Council.⁴⁸

The Security Council oversees many subsidiary bodies established under Article 29 of the Charter, including: the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, sanctions committees, and ad hoc committees, such as the Ad Hoc Sub-Committee on Namibia.⁴⁹ The Security Council also works with the General Assembly to oversee the work of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).⁵⁰ Additionally, Security Council Member States participate in various working groups, which consist of some or all of the Security Council Member States and focus on regional issues, as well as improving the working methods of the Council itself.⁵¹ For example, established by Security Council resolution 1612 (2005), the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict recommends possible measures to the Council on promoting the protection of children affected by armed conflict.⁵²

³⁵ Security Council Report, *In Hindsight: Consensus in the Security Council*, 2014; Security Council Report, *In Hindsight: The Veto*, 2013.

³⁶ Security Council Report, *In Hindsight: Consensus in the Security Council*, 2014.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Nastranis, *UN Security Council Reform Back on the Table Again*, 2019

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ UN Security Council, *Provisional Rules of Procedure of the Security Council (S/96/Rev.7)*, 1982.

⁴¹ UN Security Council, *Repertoire of the practice of the Security Council*, 2019.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

⁴⁶ UN Security Council, *Provisional Rules of Procedure of the Security Council (S/96/Rev.7)*, 1982.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ UN Security Council, *Committees, Working Groups and Ad Hoc Bodies*, 2019.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ UN Security Council, *Repertoire of the practice of the Security Council*, 2019.

⁵² UN Security Council, *Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict*, 2019.

Cooperation between the Security Council and other entities, such as the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is significant.⁵³ Partnerships with independent regional organizations, such as the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU) are also of paramount importance for addressing a broad range of issues such as terrorism, disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, and extreme violence from non-state actors.⁵⁴ In its annual meeting with the European Union (EU), held in March 2019, the Council discussed strengthening its partnership with regional organizations.⁵⁵ In February 2019, the Security Council adopted resolution 2457 highlighting the “Silencing the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020” initiative aimed at attaining a conflict-free Africa by 2020.⁵⁶

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

The mandate of the Security Council is to maintain international peace and security and to take action whenever peace and security are threatened.⁵⁷ The Council's authority is particularly relevant with respect to the UN's four primary purposes, as specified in the Charter: maintaining international peace and security; developing friendly relations among nations; cooperating in solving international problems; and promoting respect for human rights, as well as being a center for harmonizing the actions of nations.⁵⁸ Chapters VI and VII of the Charter specifically concern the Security Council and the range of actions that can be taken when settling disputes.⁵⁹ Chapter VI by itself aims to settle disputes through peaceful means, such as negotiation and judicial settlement. Additionally, according to Chapter VI, the role of the Security Council is to determine the severity of the dispute brought before the body and the impact of the dispute internationally.⁶⁰ Chapter VII explores further actions that can be taken in regard to threats to peace, breaches of peace, and acts of aggression.⁶¹ This chapter also authorizes the Security Council to implement provisional measures aimed to de-escalate the situation.⁶² Since the 1950s, the Council has invoked Chapter VII when authorizing the deployment of UN peace operations into volatile post-conflict settings where the State is not able to maintain peace and security to be led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO).⁶³

Under Article 41 in the Charter, the Council can call on its members to apply economic sanctions and other measures not involving the use of force to prevent or end violence.⁶⁴ Some of these measures include arms embargos, enforcing disarmament, or calling upon international criminal mechanisms to become active.⁶⁵ Regarding diplomatic tools, the Council is mandated to investigate any dispute or situation that might lead to aggression between states, with other non-state groups, or within states' territories.⁶⁶ Aside from diplomatic instruments, the Council may also take military action against a state or other entity threatening international peace and security, and may further decide on the deployment of troops or observers.⁶⁷ The Council may also decide upon the deployment of new UN peacekeeping operations to be led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO).⁶⁸ The Security Council

⁵³ UN Security Council, *Committees, Working Groups and Ad Hoc Bodies*, 2019; UN Security Council, *Middle East (S/RES/2118(2013))*, 2013.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Security Council Report, *EU-UN Briefing*, 2019.

⁵⁶ UN Security Council, *Cooperation between the United Nations and Regional and Subregional Organizations in Maintaining International Peace and Security – Silencing the Guns in Africa (S/RES/2457 (2019))*, 2019.

⁵⁷ UN Security Council, *What is the Security Council?*, 2019.

⁵⁸ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ UN Peacekeeping, *Mandates and the Legal Basis for Peacekeeping*.

⁶⁴ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

⁶⁵ Malone, *The UN Security Council: From the Cold War to the 21st Century*, 2004, p. 111.

⁶⁶ UN Security Council, *Functions and Powers*, 2019.

⁶⁷ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

⁶⁸ UN DPKO, *Forming a New Operation*.

creates a peacekeeping operation by adopting a resolution that outlines the mandate and size of a particular mission.⁶⁹ The Council also cooperates with a number of international and regional organizations as well as non-governmental organizations to implement its decisions.⁷⁰

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

The Security Council continues to consider the country-specific situations on its agenda.⁷¹ In 2019, the Security Council adopted resolution 2480, which urges the Malian government to accelerate the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali within a realistic and binding timeline.⁷² The Council also adopted resolution 2478 on 26 June 2019, renewing its sanctions regime against individuals and entities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo until 1 July 2020.⁷³ The Council requested the Group of Experts provide updates to the Council every 12 months on the existing information on the Sanctions List.⁷⁴ Additionally, on Sudan, the Security Council adopted resolution 2479 on 27 June 2019 to extend until 31 October 2019 the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Mission Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).⁷⁵

Discussions on the Middle East are also ongoing in the Security Council, including the fundamental right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and independence; the right of Israelis and Palestinians to coexist side by side in peace, based on a two-state solution that results from direct, peaceful dialogue between all parties involved; and the importance of a multilateral approach to the issue.⁷⁶ Further, many Member States on the Security Council remain concerned about the escalation of violence and deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza, which may threaten regional stability and prevent progress towards a peaceful solution.⁷⁷ To address the ongoing conflict in Yemen, the Security Council adopted resolution 2481 on 15 July 2019 to extend the mandate of the UN Mission to support the Hodeidah Agreement (UNMHA) until 15 January 2020.⁷⁸ Similarly, the Council adopted resolution 2470 on 21 May 2019, extending the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) until 31 May 2020.⁷⁹ Resolution 2477, adopted 26 June 2019, calls on all parties in Syria to cooperate with and support the operations of the UN Disengagement Observer Forces (UNDOF). The resolution also urges parties to exercise restraint and prevent breaches of ceasefires in the region.⁸⁰

In addition to state- and region-specific issues, the Security Council has discussed cross-cutting and thematic issues, such as threats to international peace and security, the financing of terrorism, and climate change, peace, and security.⁸¹ On 19 July 2019, the Council adopted resolution 2482, calling on Member States to enhance coordination towards a global response to international terrorism and organized crime.⁸² The resolution also urges Member States to investigate and dismantle organized crime networks involved in trafficking, and to review and implement legislation on issues such as sexual and gender-based violence in armed conflict by ensuring that domestic laws and regulations are in line with Member States' obligations under international law.⁸³ At the same time, the Security Council on 28 March

⁶⁹ UN Peacekeeping, *Role of the Security Council*.

⁷⁰ UN Security Council, *Repertoire of the practice of the Security Council*, 2019.

⁷¹ UN DGC, *Highlights of the Security Council Practice 2018, 2017*.

⁷² UN Security Council, *The Situation in Mali (S/RES/2480 (2019))*, 2019.

⁷³ UN Security Council, *The Situation Concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/RES/2478 (2019))*, 2019.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ UN Security Council, *Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan (S/RES/2479 (2019))*, 2019.

⁷⁶ UN Security Council, *Summary Record of the 8167th meeting (S/PV.8167)*, 2018, p. 44.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ UN Security Council, *The Situation in the Middle East (S/RES/2481 (2019))*, 2019.

⁷⁹ UN Security Council, *The Situation Concerning Iraq (S/RES/2470 (2019))*, 2019.

⁸⁰ UN Security Council, *The Situation in the Middle East (S/RES/2477 (2019))*, 2019.

⁸¹ UN DPA, *Security Council Reporting and Mandate Cycles*, 2018; Security Council Report, *Thematic and General Issues*, 2018.

⁸² UN Security Council, *Threats to International Peace and Security (S/RES/2482 (2019))*, 2019.

⁸³ Ibid.

2019 adopted resolution 2462, a landmark resolution focused on suppressing the funding of terrorist groups.⁸⁴ The resolution calls for the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) to play a leading role in identifying ways to suppress terrorist financing through expanding its focus and working closely with the Financial Action Task Force, an inter-governmental body that sets standards for combating money laundering and terrorist financing.⁸⁵

In March 2017, the Security Council adopted resolution 2349, condemning terrorist attacks and violations of humanitarian law and human rights by Boko Haram and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).⁸⁶ The resolution uniquely acknowledges the “adverse effects” of climate change on the stability of the region, particularly through water scarcity, drought, desertification, land degradation, and food insecurity.⁸⁷ On 11 July 2018, the Security Council discussed the nexus between climate change and global conflicts, marking the Council’s first debate on climate change and security in seven years.⁸⁸ At this session, members of the Security Council specifically focused on SDGs 13 (climate action) and 16 (work for peace), and recognized climate change as a cause of and exacerbating factor in humanitarian crises and conflicts.⁸⁹ While some members argued the Council must address climate change as a security risk, some warned against expanding the Council’s mandate or encroaching on the jurisdiction of other bodies.⁹⁰ In January 2019, the Council had an Open Debate over the maintenance of international peace and security: addressing the impacts of climate related disasters on peace and security.⁹¹ The Chief Scientist of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Pavel Kabat, briefed Member States at the debate, emphasizing that climate change is “undercutting progress” for the SDGs.⁹² Kabat highlighted various security impacts of climate change, such as undermining gains in nutrition and access to food; increasing the risk of wildfires and worsening air quality challenges; raising the potential for water conflict; and, contributing to more internal displacement and migration.⁹³

Conclusion

The Security Council plays an important role in international affairs, especially in matters related to peace and security.⁹⁴ The Council also has a unique and impactful mandate to set norms and govern state actions, as all Member States are required to comply with the Security Council’s legally-binding decisions under Chapter VII of the Charter.⁹⁵ The Council is the only UN body that has the ability to create legally binding decisions.⁹⁶ Although the Security Council is first and foremost the primary UN entity responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda signaled the increasing need to also discuss the linkages between peace and security, and issues of human security and development.⁹⁷ The Council has begun looking at the intersection between the SDGs and international peace and security, namely through discussion and debates on climate

⁸⁴ UN Security Council, *Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts: Preventing and Combating the Financing of Terrorism (S/RES/2462 (2019))*, 2019.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ UN Security Council, *Peace and Security in Africa (S/RES/2349) (2017)*, 2017.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Mead, *UN Security Council Addresses Climate Change as a Security Risk*, 2019.

⁸⁹ UN DGC, *Addressing Security Council, Pacific Island President Calls Climate Change Defining Issue of Next Century, Calls for Special Representative on Issue (SC/13417)*, 2018.

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

⁹¹ UN Security Council, *Provisional Programme of Work of the Security Council – January 2019*, 2019.

⁹² Benson Wahlén, *UNSC Debates Climate Change Impact on Peace, Security and Development*, 2019.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ UN Security Council, *What is the Security Council?*, 2019.

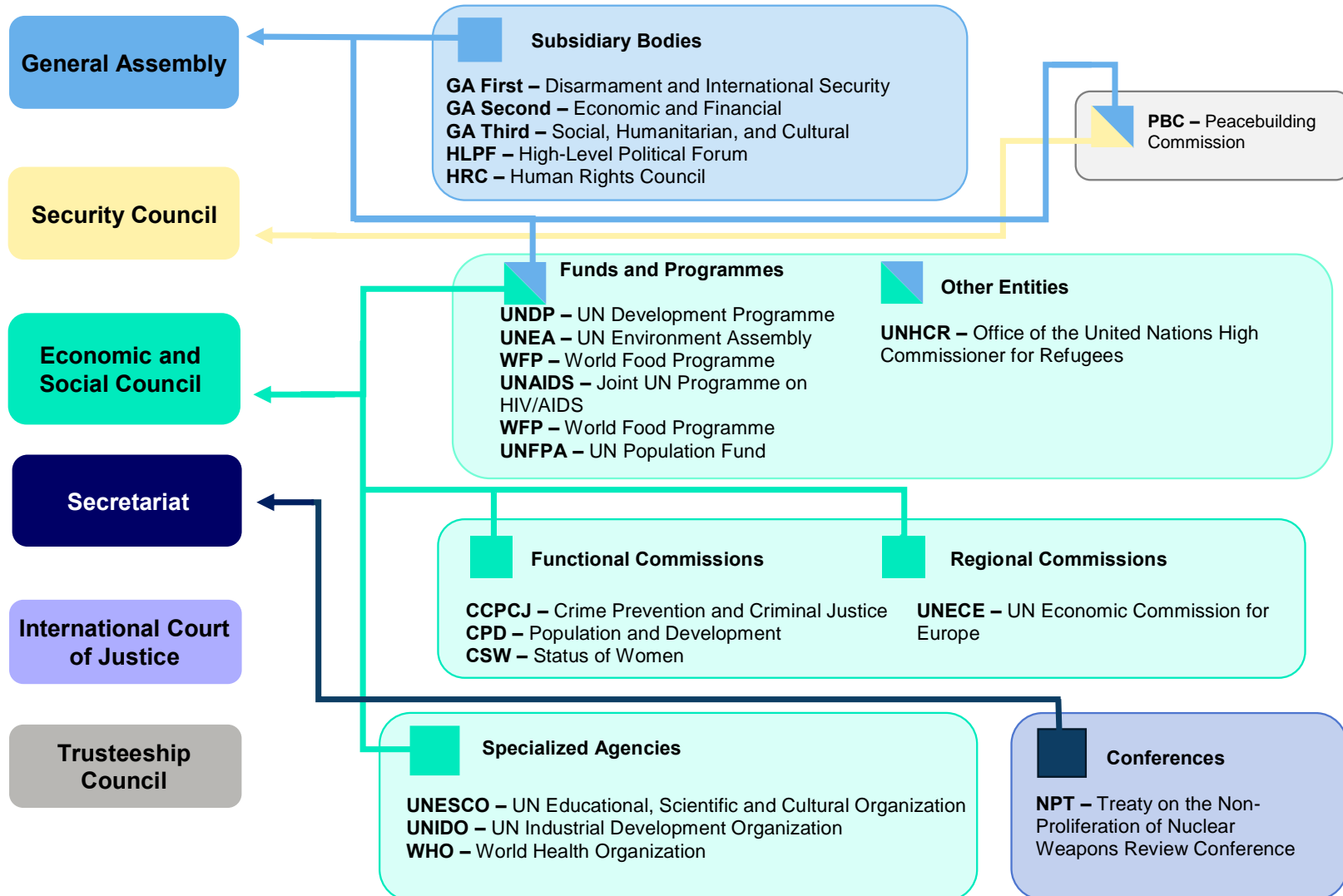
⁹⁵ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ UN DPA Politically Speaking, *Sustaining peace, Conflict Prevention, Human Rights and Sustainable Development High on Agenda for New Security Council Members*, 2018.

United Nations System at NMUN•NY

This diagram illustrates the UN system simulated at NMUN•NY and demonstrates the reportage and relationships between entities. Examine the diagram alongside the Committee Overview to gain a clear picture of the committee's position, purpose, and powers within the UN system.



change.⁹⁸ The Security Council also continues to address regional and country issues, as well as thematic issues, such as climate change and gender.⁹⁹

Annotated Bibliography

Charter of the United Nations. (1945). Retrieved 25 August 2019 from: <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/index.html>

As the fundamental principles of the Security Council are written down in the Charter, this document should be the first resource for delegates to consider. Article 23, which sets the membership structure, and articles 23 to 26, which discuss its basic functions and powers, are important for understanding both the structure and function of the Security Council. In addition, articles 27 to 32 explain the Council's voting procedure and its overall structure. The Charter can also be particularly helpful for delegates in understanding the powers and limitations of the body. Delegates will find Chapters VI and VII most helpful when researching the mandate of the Security Council, and proposing actions and solutions.

Mead, L. (2018, July 13). UN Security Council Addresses Climate Change as a Security Risk. *SDG Knowledge Hub*. Retrieved 25 August 2019 from:

<http://sdg.iisd.org/news/un-security-council-addresses-climate-change-as-a-security-risk/>

This article draws attention to a Security Council session focused on the nexus between climate change and global conflicts. Marking the first debate on climate change and security in seven years, this source highlights the disagreement over the degree to which the Security Council has a responsibility to address climate change. Additionally, this source will provide delegates themselves with the opportunity to think about the relationship between the post-2015 development agenda and peace and security. Keeping in mind the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly SDGs 13 and 16, this source can help delegates analyze the ways in which the cross-cutting issues that the Security Council discusses connect to the 2030 Agenda.

Nastranis, J. (2019). *UN Security Council Reform Back on the Table*. SDGs for All. Retrieved 25 August 2019 from: <https://www.sdgforall.net/index.php/goal-16/876-un-security-council-reform-back-on-the-table-again>

This article discussing UN Security Council reform was published by SDGs for All under SDG 16, promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions for all. The article highlights a debate and the views of different Member States on the issue of Security Council reform, which has been a divisive topic for the Council. Delegates should use this article to widen their knowledge on Security Council reform, keeping in mind the SDGs and how this debate relates to peaceful and inclusive societies and institutions.

United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. (2018). *Security Council Reporting and Mandate Cycles*. Retrieved 25 August 2019 from:

https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/sites/www.un.org.securitycouncil/files/general/reportingandmandatecycles_122018.pdf

Published by the UN Department of Political Affairs, this document provides information on the work and decisions of the Security Council, including resolutions and presidential statements. The document primarily consists of tables on items that have been discussed by the Security Council, various requests by the Security Council, and mandates of different entities and operations that report to the Council. This report will help delegates

⁹⁸ Mead, *UN Security Council Addresses Climate Change as a Security Risk*, 2019.

⁹⁹ UN DGC, *Fragile countries risk being 'stuck in a cycle of conflict and climate disaster,' Security Council told*, 2018; UN DGC, *Women vital for 'new paradigm' in Africa's Sahel region, Security Council hears*, 2018.

by providing succinct and clear information on the recent actions taken by the Security Council on its various thematic issues. Additionally, delegates may find the tables providing the actual clauses of different Security Council resolutions particularly helpful to their research.

United Nations, Security Council. (2017). What is the Security Council?. Retrieved 25 August 2019 from: <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/what-security-council>

This website gives an overview of the Security Council's history, its mandate, and its basic functions and powers. It should be considered one of the most important resources for delegates' further research, since it provides detailed information about how the Security Council works in practice. The website also contains the body's provisional rules of procedure and a section on frequently asked questions. The latter is particularly useful when it comes to understanding the Council's functions and powers. Delegates will find on this website detailed information about the Council's recent sessions as well as other relevant outputs, which will aid in further research.

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Hanhimäki, J. (2008). *The United Nations: A Very Short Introduction*. New York, New York: Oxford University Press.

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Nastranis, J. (2019). *UN Security Council Reform Back on the Table*. SDGs for All. Retrieved 25 August 2019 from: <https://www.sdgforall.net/index.php/goal-16/876-un-security-council-reform-back-on-the-table-again>

NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security. (2010). *Mapping Women, Peace and Security in the UN Security Council: Report of the NGOWG Monthly Action Points, 2009-2010*. Retrieved 25 August 2019 from: http://peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/NGOWG%20Report_Mapping%201325_October%202010.pdf

- I. The Impact of Climate-Related Disasters on International Peace and Security

I. The Impact of Climate-Related Disasters on International Peace and Security

Introduction

Climate-related disasters are increasing in frequency and severity.¹⁶⁹ These disasters include flooding, storms, droughts, and heat waves, which affect human security and can disrupt peace and security at the regional and international levels, especially by displacing large populations or causing a breakdown in social order.¹⁷⁰ Climate-related disasters can also cause resource scarcity, which can strain resources and worsen conflict, especially food insecurity, which disasters worsened for over 39 million people in 23 different countries in 2017 conflict.¹⁷¹ Disasters compound socioeconomic exclusion that degrades ongoing conflict, disrupts fragile peace processes, and is being increasingly viewed as a threat multiplier by the international community.¹⁷²

Findings from a report from the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) presented at a Security Council debate concluded that climate change, extreme weather, natural disasters, and water crises were the top four global existential threats.¹⁷³ The Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo, cited climate-related effects as a reason for the prolonged instability in Haiti and in the Latin American/Caribbean region.¹⁷⁴ The Security Council held another debate in January 2019, during which many in attendance acknowledged that climate change is a threat to international security.¹⁷⁵ The Security Council has also addressed climate-related issues by recognizing that climate change can impact the stability of a region in resolutions addressing specific conflict situations including the Lake Chad Basin, Somalia, West Africa and the Sahel, Mali, and Darfur.¹⁷⁶ The Security Council has held several formal debates on the extent of the impacts climate-related disasters and climate change have on the environment, and acknowledged that climate change and climate-related disasters can exacerbate conflict and threaten global peace and security.¹⁷⁷

International and Regional Framework

Climate change has been a major priority in the United Nations (UN) for the past few decades and the 1992 *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) was the first international framework to systematically address the issue of climate change.¹⁷⁸ UNFCCC established a commitment, from all parties who are signatories to the Convention, to work together to prevent, mitigate, and minimize the effects of climate change.¹⁷⁹ The Conference of Parties (COP) is the governing body of UNFCCC, which meets regularly to discuss progress on the goals of UNFCCC and propose proactive measures the international community can take to confront climate change and lower greenhouse gas emissions.¹⁸⁰ As

¹⁶⁹ World Meteorological Society, *Atlas of Mortality and Economic Losses from Weather, Climate, and Water Extremes*, 2014; Thomas & Lopez, *Global Increase in Climate-Related Disasters*, 2015.

¹⁷⁰ Thomas & Lopez, *Global Increase in Climate-Related Disasters*, 2015.

¹⁷¹ World Economic Forum, *Global Risks Report 14th Edition*, 2019, p. 15.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ UN, Department of Global Communications, *Massive Displacement, Greater Competition for Scarce Resources Cited as Major Risks in Security Council Debate on Climate-Related Threats*, 2019.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*; UN Security Council, *Concept note for the Security Council open debate on the theme, "Addressing the impacts of climate-related disasters on international peace and security", to be held on 25 January 2019*, 2019.

¹⁷⁵ UN, Department of Global Communications, *Massive Displacement, Greater Competition for Scarce Resources Cited as Major Risks in Security Council Debate on Climate-Related Threats*, 2019.

¹⁷⁶ UN Security Council, *Concept note for the Security Council open debate on the theme, "Addressing the impacts of climate-related disasters on international peace and security", to be held on 25 January 2019*, 2019, p. 3.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2; UN Department of Global Communications, *Massive Displacement, Greater Competition for Scarce Resources Cited as Major Risks in Security Council Debate on Climate-Related Threats*, 2019; Schaller & Pohl, *Security Council Debates how Climate Disasters Threaten International Peace and Security*, 2019.

¹⁷⁸ UN Security Council, *Concept note for the Security Council open debate on the theme, "Addressing the impacts of climate-related disasters on international peace and security", to be held on 25 January 2019*, 2019, p. 2.

¹⁷⁹ UNFCCC, *What is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change?*, 2019.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*; UNFCCC, *Climate-related risks and extreme events*, 2019.

the associated security risks to climate change became more recognized, the UN Secretary-General released a report entitled “Climate change and its possible security implications” in 2009.¹⁸¹ The report specifically elaborates on how climate change affects security through five channels that are outlined as vulnerability, development, coping, statelessness, and international conflict.¹⁸²

The 2015 *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*, under the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, outlined measures to mitigate disaster risk and aiding affected people and communities.¹⁸³ The 21st session of COP established the *Paris Agreement* on 12 December 2015.¹⁸⁴ One of the main goals of the *Paris Agreement* is to prohibit global temperature rise exceeding 2 degrees Celsius with an additional goal of preventing global temperature rising more than 1.5 degrees Celsius.¹⁸⁵ This is a globally recognized threshold for global temperature rise before climate change causes severe effects that could impact food supplies.¹⁸⁶ Food scarcity and insecurity can cause instability in food pricing, which can lead, and has led, to violent conflicts including war.¹⁸⁷ Shortly after the adoption of the *Paris Agreement*, UN Member States, climate experts, and civil society, convened in The Hague for the third annual Planetary Security Conference, which produced *The Hague Declaration on Planetary Security* (2019).¹⁸⁸ The declaration outlined an agenda for action to address risks and current implications associated with climate change and security.¹⁸⁹

Role of the International System

In 2007, the Security Council first discussed the role of climate change and its impacts on international peace and security.¹⁹⁰ The meeting presented a range of perspectives on the ways in which climate change affects international peace and security and how, and whether, the Security Council has an active role in mitigating it.¹⁹¹ Some remarks noted that “climate change exacerbates a multitude of non-military threats” and described resource scarcity and increased migration as a result of climate change.¹⁹² In July 2011, the Security Council again discussed the impacts of climate change.¹⁹³ This meeting recognized climate-related disasters and the resulting environmental degradation occurring in the Asian, African, and Central Asian regions.¹⁹⁴ Security Council resolution 2349 (2017) established that climate change and ecological change affect regional stability and impact the recognized factors of food insecurity, water scarcity, desertification, depletion of land, and drought.¹⁹⁵ The resolution also highlights humanitarian crises due to depleted natural resources, such as terrorist recruitment and migration.¹⁹⁶ In December of 2017, the UN Secretary-General briefed the Security Council on the role of natural resources as a root

¹⁸¹ UN General Assembly, *Climate change and its possible security implications: Report of the Secretary-General (A/64/350)*, 2009.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ UN, OCHA, *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2015.

¹⁸⁴ UNFCCC, *The Paris Agreement*, 2019; UNFCCC, *What is the Paris Agreement?*, 2019.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ FAO, *Food Security and Conflict: Empirical challenges and future opportunities for research and policy making on food security and conflict*, 2018.

¹⁸⁸ Planetary Security Initiative, *The Hague Declaration on Planetary Security*, 2018.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ UN Security Council, *Summary of the 5663rd meeting (S/PV.5663)*, 2007; UN Global Communications Department, *Security Council holds first-ever debate on impact of Climate Change on Peace, Security, Hearing over 50 speakers*, 2007.

¹⁹¹ UN Department of Global Communications, *Security Council holds first-ever debate on impact of Climate Change on Peace, Security, Hearing over 50 speakers*, 2007.

¹⁹² UN Security Council, *Summary of the 5663rd meeting (S/PV.5663)*, 2007, pp. 2 & 5.

¹⁹³ UN Security Council, *Summary of the 6587th meeting (S/PV.6587)*, 2011.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ UN Security Council, *Resolution 2349 (2017) (S/RES/2349 (2017))*, 2017, p. 7; Schaller & Pohl, *Security Council Debates how Climate Disasters Threaten International Peace and Security*, 2019.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 1.

cause of conflict, and emphasized the UN needed to strengthen its own capacities against climate-related security risks.¹⁹⁷

In July 2018, the Security Council held another debate on “understanding and addressing climate-related risks” and also held an Arria-formula meeting on water, peace and security in October of 2018.¹⁹⁸ It was in the Arria-formula meeting that council members further stressed the need to monitor climate-related security risks, especially in terms of water-stressed areas that are fragile and prone to conflict.¹⁹⁹ At the initiative of the Federal Republic of Germany, 27 UN Member States joined together to form the Group of Friends on Climate and Security which aims “to develop solutions for the impact of climate change on security policy, raise public awareness and boost the involvement of the UN in this area.”²⁰⁰ In response to the rising concern of climate change and security, the UN established a pilot initiative in 2019 called the Climate Security Mechanism housed in the Department for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs.²⁰¹ With technical input from the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Environment, the mechanism provides “integrated climate risk assessments to the Security Council and other UN bodies through synthesizing first-hand insight from different UN agencies and external experts.”²⁰²

The Security Council collaborates with other UN agencies, such as the UNDP, to combat climate-related disasters and the security risks they exacerbate.²⁰³ UNDP collects data, including carbon emission reports, and shares it with UN bodies, including the Security Council, so that action plans and humanitarian efforts can be developed in regions facing conflict.²⁰⁴ In 2019, UNDP proposed a three-part plan to the Security Council, which included Member States taking a more ambitious approach when pledging to combat economic, social, and political turmoil; better ways to promote reducing emissions; and more investment for people at risk.²⁰⁵ Another UN actor that addresses this issue is UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), which is an entity that helps with natural disaster responses and monitors the threat they pose to international peace and security.²⁰⁶

The Effects of Climate-Related Disasters on Conflict Prone Areas

The Security Council works on climate-related disasters in the context of international peace and security.²⁰⁷ In January 2019, the Council held an annual debate discussing climate change and the effects it has on disasters.²⁰⁸ The Council recognized that climate-related disasters, such as hurricanes and earthquakes, lead to drought, as they tend to deplete the water supply in the regions they strike.²⁰⁹ In 2017, over 18 million displaced persons had to migrate due to hurricanes, heat waves, flooding, and drought, as climate-related disasters affect natural resources which then impact people.²¹⁰ Areas under consideration by the Council for climate-related disasters include Somalia, Darfur, Mali, the Central African Republic, Japan, and the Lake Chad Basin.²¹¹ According to the Security Council and other UN

¹⁹⁷ Security Council Report, *The Role of Natural Resources as a Root Cause of Conflict Briefing*, 2018.

¹⁹⁸ UN DPI, *Climate change recognized as ‘threat multiplier’, UN Security Council debates its impact on peace*, 2019; Security Council Report, *Water, Peace and Security Arria-formula meeting*, (2018).

¹⁹⁹ Security Council Report, *Water, Peace and Security Arria-formula meeting*, (2018).

²⁰⁰ Federal Republic of Germany, Federal Foreign Office, *United Nations: Germany initiates Group of Friends on Climate and Security*, (2019).

²⁰¹ UN DPPA, *This Week in DPPA, 6 – 10 May 2019*, 2019.

²⁰² Smith, D. et al., *Climate Security: Making it #Doable*, Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 2019. p. 15.

²⁰³ UNDP, *UN Development Chief to Security Council: Climate change’ aggravates fragile situations, feeds insecurity and conflict*, 2019.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ UNDRR, *About UNDRR*, 2019.

²⁰⁷ Security Council Report, *Climate Change and Security*, 2018.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ UN, Security Council, *Maintenance of International Peace and Security (S/PV.8451)*, 2019.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ibid

entities, “the risks [to] international security posed by the impacts of the climate change must become a central element of the conflict prevention agenda.”²¹²

Worsening of Instability in Conflict Prone Regions

Water scarcity is becoming a leading factor in malnutrition and the recruitment of child soldiers.²¹³ In places like Yemen and Afghanistan, water tables have lowered significantly.²¹⁴ Water scarcity often leads to migration in search of a new water source and causes open conflict.²¹⁵ The concerns surrounding international peace and security include food and water insecurity, with climate change as a threat multiplier to human security.²¹⁶ When these means are low, individuals become desperate and either migrate or do whatever is necessary to obtain these resources.²¹⁷ Alongside the Security Council, Small Island and Developing States (SIDS) have led efforts to conserve lands and natural resources that often are depleted during climate-related disasters.²¹⁸ SIDS spoke at the January 2019 UN Security Council debate on, “the need to enhance understanding about the security implications of climate change-related natural disasters ... [and] the need to determine how the Security Council, the peace operations it mandates, and the UN Country Teams can best collaborate to address such risks.”²¹⁹

Case Study: Climate-Related Disasters and The Lake Chad Basin

The Security Council has taken a special regional interest in security issues associated with climate-related disasters in the Lake Chad Basin.²²⁰ The Lake Chad Basin is in a state of crisis due to the aftermath of many disasters, including the decimation of the water and nutrients of the lake and the surrounding areas.²²¹ Considering that Lake Chad is one of Africa’s largest lakes, it is a frequently used food and water resource for cooking and fishing.²²² It is also under duress due to climate change.²²³ The Lake Chad Basin is shared with Niger, Nigeria, Chad, and Cameroon, and it extends as far as Libya and Sudan.²²⁴ Over the last 60 years, the size of Lake Chad had decreased over 90%, from 26,000 square kilometers in 1963 to about 1500 square kilometers in 2018.²²⁵ As citizens of the surrounding areas continue to pull resources from the lake, with no water source to replenish it due to drought, they deplete the main water source in the region.²²⁶ The Executive Director of UN Environment stated that, “with around 4.5 million people in the basin severely food insecure, there is a need to rigorously address [the] cause and effect relationship between the environment and human security.”²²⁷

Much of the degradation of the lake is due to climate change through rising temperatures, leading to drought.²²⁸ This degradation increased migration from West Africa to southern Africa.²²⁹ Due to high migration rates in the Lake Chad Basin, many people, including children, are at increased risk of terrorist

²¹² Ibid, p. 19.

²¹³ Ibid, p. 12.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid, p. 17.

²¹⁶ IISD, *Assessing the security implications of climate change for West Africa*, 2008. p. 2; UNFCCC, *Climate-related risks and extreme events*, 2019.

²¹⁷ IISD, *Assessing the security implications of climate change for West Africa*, 2008. p. 2.

²¹⁸ Climate Diplomacy, *Climate change to return to UN Security Council agenda under Dominican Republic presidency*, 2019.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ UN, Security Council, *Statement by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/2018/3 (2018))*, 2018.

²²¹ UNEP, *The tale of the disappearing lake*, 2018.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ UN Department of Global Communications, *Security Council wrap up Lake Chad Basin Visit; stops in ‘epicentre’ of Boko Haram violence*, 2017.

²²⁹ Ibid.

recruitment.²³⁰ Boko Haram, alongside many other terrorist groups, target vulnerable children looking for both social and financial stability, which has steadily eroded and been exacerbated by the effects of drought in the region.²³¹ Over 14 million people have been affected by Boko Haram, and, of that 14 million, 8.5 million people were in need of humanitarian aid.²³²

In 2017, the Security Council decided to visit the area to understand what policies and humanitarian aid gaps existed in the region.²³³ The Council found there was a need for more economic opportunity for displaced persons, more educational resources, and more services for areas affected by drought due to climate change.²³⁴ The Security Council further discussed collaborative efforts with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the acting Nigerian president on more efficient ways to collect and share data on climate change and its effects on peace and security.²³⁵

Following the trip to the Lake Chad Basin, the Security Council deemed the area, as well as the effects of climate change and depleted water resources, a crisis.²³⁶ The Security Council then adopted resolution 2349, which focused on the root causes of insecurity and the development of the region.²³⁷ The resolution not only discussed the crisis of Boko Haram but also the climate-related disasters that the terrorist group is exploiting.²³⁸ The Security Council addressed the insecurities that climate-related disasters cause, such as drought, erosion, and depleting natural resources in the Basin, by calling for more risk assessments on water and water management, better ways to address the impact of water on society, and more proactive solutions focused on human security as part of international peace and security.²³⁹

Conclusion

Although the topic is a relatively recent addition to its agenda, the Security Council continues to address the detrimental impacts of climate-related disasters on international peace and security.²⁴⁰ The Council collaborates with other UN entities on the causes of international humanitarian crisis and threats to peace and security as it expands its focus on the issue.²⁴¹ The Security Council also internally considers causes of climate change and its link to peace and security, but has yet to adopt a resolution officially recognizing climate change as a direct threat to international peace and security, including climate-related disasters.²⁴²

Further Research

Delegates are encouraged to expand their knowledge on the topic beyond this background guide and consider the following questions: How does the peace and security mandate of the Security Council cover or not cover climate-related disasters? How can the Council expand its current work on the topic effectively and work with other UN entities? What role to peacekeeping and political missions have in addressing climate-related disasters and how can they be leveraged moving forward and how can they respond quickly and efficiently respond? As climate changed continues to impact land and resource

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Security Council Report, *Lake Chad Basin Briefing*, 2018.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Schaller & Pohl, *Security Council Debates how Climate Disasters Threaten International Peace and Security*, 2019; Climate Diplomacy, *Climate change to return to UN Security Council agenda under Dominican Republic presidency*, 2019.

²⁴¹ Climate Diplomacy, *Climate change to return to UN Security Council agenda under Dominican Republic presidency*, 2019.

²⁴² Ibid.

management, what role could UN entities, such as the DPPA, play in managing resource conflict between groups?

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The following declaration provides a recent comprehensive overview and action items of how the international community, namely Member States, climate experts, and civil society, aim to alleviate climate change's impact on global security. The report provides six detailed topic areas for the international community to address that include both thematic issues, such as urban resilience and migration, and country-specific and regional issues, such as the Lake Chad Basin, Mali, and Iraq. This source is useful in practically identifying potential solutions UN actors can take in addressing climate change's impact on peace and security.

Smith, D. et al. (2019, February). *Climate Security: Making it #Doable*. Netherlands Institute of International Relations. Retrieved 23 July 2019 from: https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2019-02/climatesecurity_makingit_doable_latest.pdf.pagespeed.ce.naqctbogs7.pdf

The following report from the Netherlands Institute of International Relations provides a very recent, comprehensive, and thorough review of the state of climate change and its impacts on global security. More importantly, the source succinctly outlines the current efforts and initiatives taken by the UN in addressing this topic, outlining what specific actors are doing. Delegates will find this review useful in understanding the current state of the topic and what the Security Council has done to address it.

United Nations, Department of Global Communications. (2019). *Massive Displacement, greater Competition for Scarce Resources Cited as Major Risks in Security Council Debate on Climate-Related Threats*. [Article]. Retrieved 28 April 2019 from: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sc13677.doc.htm>

This source provides a summary of the debate the Security Council had on the topic of climate change and the threats that pose a potential threat to international security. The debate discussed climate change and its effects on the economy, the social status of citizens, and the potential for war due to weakened infrastructure. The article includes testimony from other NGOs and IGOs the Security Council has collaborated with and shares the outcome of research and implementation of programs as mandated by the Council. Delegates will find this source helpful when researching the most recent actions and discussions of the Security Council on climate-related disasters.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-fourth session. (September 2009). *Climate change and its possible security implications: Report of the Secretary-General (A/64/350)*. Retrieved 22 July 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/A/64/350>

The Secretary-General's report on climate change and its possible security implications outlines key channels on how climate change can potential impact global security. Though the topic of climate change has shifted in its focus since 2009, the report still provides substance that helps conceptualize the topic. This resource is of benefit to delegates who wish to better understand how the UN and other actors view climate change as a threat to international peace and security.

United Nations, Security Council, 7911th meeting. (2017). *Resolution 2349 (2017) (S/RES/2349 (2017))*. [Resolution]. Retrieved 2 June 2019 from: [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2349\(2017\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2349(2017))

This source is the resolution adopted by the United Nations Security Council where the Council discussed climate-related disasters as a threat to international peace and security, and the links between climate change, climate-related disasters, and degradation of the environments in various regions. The resolutions details root causes of threats to international peace and security, and challenges that are facing the central



Asian, Asian, and African regions, such as terrorism recruitment, socio-economic depletion, and scarcity of water and nutrients. The resolution also mentions the efforts of collaboration between governments and local aids in the respective regions to aid those impacted by climate-related disasters and climate change.

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II. Women, Peace, and Security

II. Women, Peace and Security

Introduction

The year 2020 marks the 20th anniversary of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) adopted by the United Nations (UN) Security Council.²⁰⁹ The resolution not only addresses the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, but also highlights the importance women play in conflict prevention and conflict resolution efforts and lays the foundation for the women, peace, and security (WPS) agenda.²¹⁰ Both male and female civilians often become targets in conflicts, however, women have different roles prior, during, and in post-conflict situations and suffer more from gender-based violence.²¹¹ Specifically, they often face conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) used as a weapon or tactic in violent conflicts, while the perpetrators are not seldom exempted from punishment.²¹² They can also be involved in ongoing conflicts as fighters or supporters, often being forced to participate to avoid abuse or oppression.²¹³ Due to their responsibility as caretakers for children, women are usually less mobile and able to protect themselves, which increases their vulnerability.²¹⁴ Additionally, conflicts increase the occurrence of sexual health risks for example due to rape, sexual slavery, or forced prostitution, and raise the risks of cultural practices, such as female genital mutilation and honor killings.²¹⁵ Available statistics on the impact of conflicts on women and girls are alarming.²¹⁶ About 500 women and adolescent girls in war-torn and disaster-prone regions die from causes related to pregnancy every year.²¹⁷ In Yemen, child marriage increased by 66% in 2017 in areas with a high density of internally displaced persons (IDPs).²¹⁸ Conflicts also increase the danger of human trafficking, where 70% of victims are women and girls.²¹⁹

While there has been some progress in implementing the WPS agenda since 2000 and, in 2017, about 70% of all the resolutions adopted by the Security Council referred to WPS, many challenges and implementation gaps remain.²²⁰ The average representation of women in national parliaments has increased by 5.2% in the last ten years, yet in 2019, the average representation number globally remains only 24.2%.²²¹ Correspondingly, women are still underrepresented in rule of law institutions and in transitional justice and peace processes.²²² In all major peace processes between 1990 and 2017, women accounted for only 2% of mediators and 8% of negotiators.²²³ However, the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) highlights that “women’s meaningful participation in peace processes increases the likelihood that an agreement will last longer than 15 years by as much as 35 per cent.”²²⁴ In peacekeeping operations, the number of women within troop contingents was only 3.9% in 2018, and less than 1% were in senior positions.²²⁵ Similarly, less than 10% of the military

²⁰⁹ Security Council Report, *Women, Peace and Security*, 2019; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1325 (2000))*, 2000.

²¹⁰ UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1325 (2000))*, 2000; United States Institute for Peace, *What is UNSCR 1325? An Explanation of the Landmark Resolution on Women, Peace and Security*.

²¹¹ Rehn & Sirleaf, *Women, War and Peace: The Independent Experts’ Assessment on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women’s Role in Peace-building*, 2002, p. 10.

²¹² SRSG-SVC, *Our Mandate*.

²¹³ Rajivan & Senarathne, *Women in Armed Conflicts: Inclusion and Exclusion*, 2011, p. 2; OSCE, *Enhancing Gender-Responsive Mediation*, 2013, p. 13.

²¹⁴ Rehn & Sirleaf, *Women, War and Peace: The Independent Experts’ Assessment on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women’s Role in Peace-building*, 2002, p. 1.

²¹⁵ Jayakumar, *Conflict & Women – 10 Facts about Conflict & Its Impact on Women*, *TransConflict*, 2016; WHO, *Violence against Women in Situations of Armed Conflict and Displacement*, 1997, p. 1.

²¹⁶ UN-Women, *Facts and Figures: Peace and Security*, 2018.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

²¹⁹ UN ECOSOC, *Special Edition: Progress Towards the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2019/68)*, 2019, p. 21.

²²⁰ UN-Women, *Facts and Figures: Peace and Security*, 2018.

²²¹ UN ECOSOC, *Special Edition: Progress Towards the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2019/68)*, 2019, p. 12.

²²² UN-Women, *Facts and Figures: Peace and security*, 2018.

²²³ *Ibid.*

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁵ UN DPO, *Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028*, p. 4.

members working for the Office of Military Affairs (OMA), which provides military expertise to UN peacekeeping missions, was female.²²⁶ As a consequence, while it is important to further recognize the vulnerability of women in conflict, it is even more crucial to strengthen their role as “agents of change” for peace and security.²²⁷ The background guide will therefore focus both on the problem of CRSV and the participation of women in peace processes and missions. It will first discuss in more detail some of the challenges facing the WPS agenda. To this end, foundational international and regional frameworks together with the most important actors for the WPS agenda will be presented.

International and Regional Framework

In 1974, the UN General Assembly adopted the *Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict*, which highlights that girls and women are considerably vulnerable in conflict situations.²²⁸ Five years later, in 1979, the UN General Assembly also adopted the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*.²²⁹ In 30 articles, the convention addresses fundamental issues such as non-discrimination; women’s political, economic, and social rights; and women’s right to equality.²³⁰ In order to measure the progress of Member States in implementing and ensuring these rights, the convention established the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).²³¹ In 2013, the committee decided to adopt the *General Recommendation No. 30 on Women in Conflict Prevention, Conflict and Post-conflict Situations*, which provides guidance to States parties on how to implement all obligations from the 1979 convention.²³² Moreover, the 1995 *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, the outcome document of the Fourth World Conference on Women, identifies twelve strategic objectives addressing, among others, violence against women and women in conflicts and in decision-making processes, and recommends actions to reach each of them.²³³

In 2000, the Security Council adopted landmark resolution 1325 on “Women and Peace and Security,” which recognizes that increased protection and participation of women and girls in armed conflicts can contribute to peace and security.²³⁴ The four pillars of the resolution – participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery – address the roles women have and should have in conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping, and peacemaking.²³⁵ Security Council resolution 1889 (2009) also on the topic of “Women and Peace and Security” set the first step for the creation of indicators to monitor the implementation of resolution 1325.²³⁶ As demanded in the resolution, the UN Secretary-General developed a set of 26 indicators to track the implementation.²³⁷ The indicators cover a wide range of activities relevant for the WPS agenda, for example the number of incidents of violence against women in conflict areas or the number of women involved in prevention or conflict resolution efforts.²³⁸ Ten years after the adoption of this landmark resolution, the Secretary-General published a report (S/2010/498) to

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Ruane et al., *Security Council Scorecard on Women, Peace and Security: Lessons Learned from 2010-2016*, 2017, p. 5.

²²⁸ UN General Assembly, *Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict (A/RES/3318 (XXIX))*, 1974.

²²⁹ UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*, 1979.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² CEDAW, *General Recommendation No. 30 on Women in Conflict Prevention, Conflict and Post-conflict Situations (CEDAW/C/GC/30)*, 2013.

²³³ UN Fourth World Conference on Women, *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, 1995.

²³⁴ UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1325 (2000))*, 2000.

²³⁵ United States Institute for Peace, *What is UNSCR 1325? An Explanation of the Landmark Resolution on Women, Peace and Security*.

²³⁶ UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1889 (2009))*, 2009.

²³⁷ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security (S/2010/173)*, 2010, p. 1.

²³⁸ Ibid., pp. 4-9.

provide an overview of the implementation progress on resolution 1325.²³⁹ The report analyzed the activities undertaken by the Security Council, Member States, civil society, and the UN system as a whole and revised and simplified the indicators to measure the progress.²⁴⁰ In 2015, a High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) gathered to review the implementation of resolution 1325.²⁴¹ The review issued by HIPPO identified challenges and priority areas for action, but also highlighted successes achieved in the implementation process, such as the adoption of the *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court* in 2002, which provides a summary list of crimes against women, and the increased reference to women in peace agreements and Security Council resolutions.²⁴² At the same time, the report pointed to the lack of women involved in peace negotiations, the lack of national prosecutions, and the lack of funding for the WPS agenda.²⁴³

In addition to the HIPPO report, in 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.²⁴⁴ Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 (gender equality), plays a crucial role for each of the remaining 16 SDGs.²⁴⁵ It aims to safeguard the existence or creation of legal frameworks for non-discrimination; eliminate violence against women and girls, child marriage, and genital mutilation; and ensure women's participation in leadership positions and at all levels of policy and decision making.²⁴⁶ Another essential goal for the WPS agenda is SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions), as it promotes peaceful and inclusive societies and aims to reduce physical, psychological, and sexual violence.²⁴⁷

On the regional level, the Department of Peace and Security of the African Union (AU) Commission has provided the *2016-2020 African Peace and Security Architecture Roadmap* of 2015, where gender mainstreaming is one of the main priorities, and established the Gender, Peace, and Security Programme (2015-2020) that guides the implementation of resolution 1325.²⁴⁸ Most recently, the Continental Results Framework (CRF) was adopted, which suggests 28 indicators to track the progress of AU Member States on the implementation of the WPS agenda in Africa.²⁴⁹ While the European Union (EU) has already decided to implement the *Gender Action Plan 2016-2020* (GAP II2) to promote gender equality, in 2018, the *EU Strategic Approach to Women, Peace and Security* was adopted with the explicit purpose of implementing resolution 1325.²⁵⁰ The approach calls for the implementation of both EU internal measures, such as the ones aiming to increase the role of women in decision-making, monitoring, and evaluation processes, and external measures through enhanced efforts to support the implementation of the WPS agenda in non-EU countries.²⁵¹

Role of the International System

Since the adoption of resolution 1325, the UN Security Council has adopted numerous resolutions on "Women, Peace and Security," namely 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106

²³⁹ Ibid., p. 2.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 2-6; 28.

²⁴¹ UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 13.

²⁴² Ibid., p. 14.

²⁴³ Ibid., pp. 14-15.

²⁴⁴ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

²⁴⁵ UN-Women, *Women and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*.

²⁴⁶ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ African Union Commission, *Implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda in Africa*, 2016, p. 7.

²⁴⁹ African Union Commission, *Continental Results Framework (CRF): Monitoring and Reporting on the Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa (2018 - 2028)*, 2019, pp. 3-4.

²⁵⁰ Council of the European Union, *Women, Peace and Security - Council Conclusions (14943/18)*, 2018, pp. 6-10.

²⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 15-16.

(2013), 2242 (2015), and 2467 (2019).²⁵² In resolution 1888, the Council decided to establish the tasks of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SVC).²⁵³ The SRSG-SVC monitors SVC against women, acts as the spokesperson on SVC, and presides the UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict network consisting of 13 UN entities.²⁵⁴ Additionally, the UN Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict reports to the SRSG-SVC and provides support for Member States institutions to ensure accountability of SVC perpetrators.²⁵⁵ Moreover, in 2016, the Security Council Informal Experts Group on Women, Peace and Security (IEG) was established as the first working group of the Council on WPS.²⁵⁶ It provides a platform for transparent knowledge exchange between UN entities and Member States regarding WPS and thus enables better coordination between them.²⁵⁷ Another initiative in place is The Friends of 1325, an ad hoc group formed by UN Member States actively advocating for the implementation of resolution 1325.²⁵⁸

In addition to the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, other UN bodies also play a crucial role in pursuing the WPS agenda.²⁵⁹ UN-Women, the lead actor in the field of gender equality and women empowerment, gathers information, publishes data, documents best practices, and enables knowledge exchange on the participation of women in peace processes.²⁶⁰ For Member States, UN-Women provides support regarding capacity building and practice-oriented approaches to implement the WPS agenda.²⁶¹ The Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE), which is chaired by UN-Women, gathers all UN entities that work on gender equality and facilitates coordination among them.²⁶² CEDAW is responsible for measuring the progress of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*.²⁶³ It reviews reports submitted by Member States and recommends further actions on how to fully implement the convention globally.²⁶⁴ The UN Secretariat, concretely the Department of Peace Operations (DPO, former DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS) are essential to ensure and promote gender equality in UN peacekeeping missions.²⁶⁵ One example illustrating the work of the DPO is the rule adopted in 2018 establishing that troop and police contributing countries (TPCCs) have to deploy at least 15% women as part of their staff officers.²⁶⁶

The success of the implementation of the WPS agenda depends largely on Member States and regional organizations.²⁶⁷ Resolution 1325 encourages Member States to develop National Action Plans (NAPs), which contain the domestic and foreign policy steps Member States plan to meet the obligations of the

²⁵² UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1820 (2008))*, 2008; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1888 (2009))*, 2009; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1889 (2009))*, 2009; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1960 (2010))*, 2010; UN Security Council, *Women Peace and Security (S/RES/2106 (2013))*, 2013; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/2242 (2015))*, 2015; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security: Sexual Violence in Conflict (S/RES/2467 (2019))*, 2019.

²⁵³ UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1888 (2009))*, 2009.

²⁵⁴ OSRSG-SVC, *About the Office*; OSRSG-SVC, *UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict*.

²⁵⁵ UN Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, *About the Team of Experts*, 2019, p. 1.

²⁵⁶ PeaceWomen, *The 2242 Informal Expert Group on WPS*.

²⁵⁷ UN Security Council, *Guidelines for the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security (S/2016/1106)*, 2016, p. 3.

²⁵⁸ PeaceWomen, *The Group of Friends of 1325*.

²⁵⁹ UN OHCHR, *Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women*, 2019; UN Peacekeeping, *Promoting Women, Peace and Security*.

²⁶⁰ UN-Women, *Peace and Security*.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² PeaceWomen, *United Nations Obligations on Women, Peace and Security*.

²⁶³ UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*, 1979.

²⁶⁴ UN OHCHR, *Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women*, 2019.

²⁶⁵ UN Peacekeeping, *Promoting Women, Peace and Security*.

²⁶⁶ Ghittoni et al., *Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations*, 2018, p. 6.

²⁶⁷ PeaceWomen, *Member States*.

WPS agenda.²⁶⁸ In other words, NAPs serve as a tool to ensure the implementation of the international framework on the national level.²⁶⁹ The status of implementation and content differ between Member States.²⁷⁰ While most NAPs contain sections on gender mainstreaming or education on WPS, only some NAP address peacekeeping, disarmament, or a security sector reform, and only a fraction of them include a mandatory annual review of the implementation status.²⁷¹ In addition to NAPs, regional organizations, including the EU, the AU and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), adopted in total 11 Regional Action Plans (RAPs).²⁷² These include measures such as the establishment of an AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security or the creation of an EU informal task force for WPS best-practice sharing.²⁷³

To fully implement resolution 1325, civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are crucial too.²⁷⁴ The supraregional Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network coordinates WPS implementation efforts between Member States and CSOs as well as local organizations with a focus on WPS; provides a platform for knowledge exchange and best-practice sharing, and promotes partnerships on WPS issues.²⁷⁵ The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security consists of 18 international NGOs, which address WPS agenda issues.²⁷⁶ This working group provides the Security Council with insights of the civil society regarding the WPS implementation and participates on a regular basis in Security Council WPS sessions.²⁷⁷ The Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) combines women's groups and other CSOs to provide Member States with technical support for the development of NAPs.²⁷⁸ It particularly aims to raise awareness and give local women a stronger voice at international conferences and forums.²⁷⁹

Protection of Women against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Conflict Situations

CRSV is defined as “rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilization, forced marriage, and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls or boys that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict.”²⁸⁰ To effectively address CRSV, it is crucial to prevent violence against women in the first place and also to make perpetrators accountable for their crimes.²⁸¹ In many countries, weak justice system and non-existing political will to prosecute the perpetrators pose a big challenge to stopping the occurrence of CRSV worldwide.²⁸² Already resolution 1325 highlighted the responsibility of Member States in this regard.²⁸³ Subsequently, the Security Council made the promise in resolution 1888 (2009) to support governments with implementing legislative and security sector reforms, improving the state of criminal investigation and prosecution, and achieving more effective protection of victims and witnesses and established the Team

²⁶⁸ Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, *National Action Plans: Localising Implementation of UNSCR 1325*, 2018.

²⁶⁹ Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, *National Action Plans: Localising Implementation of UNSCR 1325*, 2018.

²⁷⁰ PeaceWomen, *National Reviews*.

²⁷¹ PeaceWomen, *Call to Action on 2019-2020 Commitments*; PeaceWomen, *National Reviews*.

²⁷² PeaceWomen, *Member States*.

²⁷³ African Union Commission, *Continental Result Framework (CRF): Monitoring and Reporting Tool on the Implementation of the Woman Peace and Security Agenda in Africa (2018-2028)*, 2019, p. 6; European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, *UNSCR 1325 and Gender Mainstreaming in the EU*.

²⁷⁴ PeaceWomen, *Civil Society*.

²⁷⁵ PeaceWomen, *The WPS National Focal Points Network*.

²⁷⁶ NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, *About*.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁸ Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, *Strategic Plan 2018-2022: Amplifying Women's Voices Towards Sustainable and Inclusive Peace*, 2017, pp. 2-4.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁰ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (S/2017/249)*, 2017, p. 1.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

²⁸² UN Peacekeeping, *Conflict-related Sexual Violence*.

²⁸³ UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1325 (2000))*, 2000.

of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict to this end.²⁸⁴ It also adopted resolution 1960 (2010), which underlined the responsibility of conflict actors to make specific commitments to combat CRSV.²⁸⁵ On a more operational level, the deployment of women protection advisors has led to improved monitoring, data gathering, and access to information, which has proven helpful in tracking the progress of the implementation of resolution 1325.²⁸⁶ Nevertheless, the verification of incidents still remains a challenge, often due to the existence of social stigma against victims of CRSV.²⁸⁷ In a similar manner, cultural norms and discrimination against victims of CRSV in their own communities lead to a high number of unreported cases.²⁸⁸ Increased participation of women in CRSV monitoring and investigation, which so far remains low, can therefore be a force for positive change, as both men and women are more willing to report sexual violence to women.²⁸⁹

Participation of Women in Building and Sustaining Peace

Role of Women in Peace Processes

Women represent only 3.3% of the troops deployed by the top 22 peace mission contributing countries and less than 10% of female staff officers and police.²⁹⁰ This demonstrates the problem of the lack of women participation in peace missions.²⁹¹ However, studies have shown that women can play a crucial role in peace processes, and there are many reasons to increase their presence.²⁹² Participation of women strengthens the acceptance of the local population and thus the legitimacy of peace missions, as female forces are usually better at addressing the needs of affected women.²⁹³ Women bring additional mediation skills to the negotiation table and are well equipped to identify the gender dimensions of conflict issues.²⁹⁴ However, there are various barriers to the participation of women in peace processes.²⁹⁵ There is still a prevalence of deep-seated culture of male dominance, which threatens to remain embedded in political systems and institutional structures for decades.²⁹⁶ Additionally, due to distorted cultural perceptions and gender stereotypes, some men still believe women lack skills, knowledge, and experience necessary for high-level mediator and leadership roles.²⁹⁷ Women also often have roles and responsibilities within the family that may not only hinder their participation in mediation and peace processes, but also increase their economic vulnerability and physical safety during conflicts.²⁹⁸

Barriers to the Deployment of Women in Peace Operations

To overcome the alarmingly low numbers of women in peace operations, Security Council resolution 2242 (2015) calls to double the number of women in peacekeeping operations by 2020 and to undertake a review of recruitment and deployment barriers.²⁹⁹ Additionally, the DPO *Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy* from 2018 calls to increase the percentage of women contracted in the OMA to 25% and to

²⁸⁴ UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1888 (2009))*, 2009.

²⁸⁵ UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1960 (2010))*, 2010.

²⁸⁶ UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (S/2017/249)*, 2017, p. 2; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1960 (2010))*, 2010.

²⁸⁷ UN Peacekeeping, *Conflict-related Sexual Violence*.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁹ Ghittoni et al., *Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations*, 2018, pp. 15-16.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*

²⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 15.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16; UN DGC, *Hailed as 'Role Models,' All-female Indian Police Unit Departs UN Mission in Liberia*, 2016.

²⁹⁴ OSCE, *Enhancing Gender-Responsive Mediation*, 2013, pp. 13-15.

²⁹⁵ Cook, *Women in Mediation: Promoting Participation*, 2018, pp. 3-4.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁹ UN DPO, *Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028*, p. 4; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/2242 (2015))*, 2015.

reach a goal of 15% of women in contingent troops by 2028.³⁰⁰ There are, however, still significant barriers to the deployment of women in peace operations, which are hindering such efforts.³⁰¹ A 2018 study by the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces identified a set of the most common barriers, which include “(1) equal access to opportunities, (2) deployment criteria, (3) the working environment, (4) family constraints, (5) equal treatment during deployment, and (6) career-advancement opportunities.”³⁰² Interestingly, the common problem is not only deployment but also the availability of female forces in Member States.³⁰³ The UN can only deploy female staff based on pledges and nominations from Member States.³⁰⁴ Consequently, besides the necessity to decrease deployment barriers, it is equally important to increase the actual number of women available for such missions.³⁰⁵ To this end, the assistance and assessment team of the UN Police Division launched the “Global Effort initiative” for female police officers which implemented a Gender Toolkit with e-learning courses and a curriculum to provide best practices for mainstreaming gender into its mission activities.³⁰⁶ In 2007, the UN deployed the first all-female Formed Police Unit (FPU) from India, which served with the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).³⁰⁷ The female police officers had tasks such as patrols, capacity building of security institutions, and the maintenance of public order.³⁰⁸ As a result, the percentage of women in Liberia involved with the security sector increased from 6% in 1998 to 17% in 2016.³⁰⁹ Similarly, all-female FPUs from Bangladesh were deployed in Haiti and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, achieving similarly positive results.³¹⁰

Selected Challenges for the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda

Funding

One major impediment to a full implementation of resolution 1325 is the lack of funding.³¹¹ While there are policy commitments to support gender equality and the empowerment of women, financial resources are often not provided to implement these pledges.³¹² One problem is that, for fragile states, most bilateral aid in support of gender equality, including the Official Development Assistance (ODA), does not focus on peace and security issues but primarily on social sectors, such as health or education.³¹³ For UN entities, it is also often difficult to track resources for gender-focused interventions and, according to the *UN System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) (2006)*, progress is still limited in this regard due to the lack of systems allowing for transparent and accountable allocation of funding.³¹⁴ Additionally, actors in the field of WPS often receive only short-term funding and spend too much time and resources on raising additional funds.³¹⁵ To overcome the inadequate funding, the WPS Financing Discussion Group (FDG) was established in 2014, which created a pooled funding mechanism called the Global Acceleration Instrument (GAI) on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action.³¹⁶ The GAI aims to overcome funding gaps, provide coherence and coordination,

³⁰⁰ UN DGC, *Deployment of Female Personnel Boosts Effectiveness, Says Secretary-General, as Security Council Holds Open Debate on Women in Peacekeeping (SC/13773)*, 2019; UN DPO, *Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028*, p. 4.

³⁰¹ Ghittoni et al., *Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations*, 2018, p. 47.

³⁰² *Ibid.*

³⁰³ Smit & Tidblad-Lundholm, *Trends in Women's Participation in UN, EU and OSCE Peace Operations*, 2018, p. 10.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

³⁰⁶ UN Police, *Recruiting More Police Women*; UN Police, *UN Police Gender Initiatives*.

³⁰⁷ UN DGC, *Hailed as 'Role Models,' All-female Indian Police Unit Departs UN Mission in Liberia*, 2016.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

³¹⁰ UN Police, *Recruiting More Police Women*.

³¹¹ UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 372.

³¹² *Ibid.*

³¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 374.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 379-386.

³¹⁵ UN-Women, *Financing of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda*, 2015.

³¹⁶ UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 385.

and combine development, humanitarian, peace, and security financing for WPS-related activities.³¹⁷ The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF), which aims to improve the WPS agenda and follows the recommendations from the 2015 HIPPO review, functions as an additional financing instrument.³¹⁸ Half of the funds received from governments, the private sector, foundations, and individuals is allocated to CSOs.³¹⁹ The WPHF supported, among others, projects in Burundi and Iraq.³²⁰ In Burundi, a network of 516 women mediators received support for economic recovery and conflict prevention projects.³²¹ In total, they were able to organize 6,930 dialogue sessions and address 21,800 micro-level conflicts.³²²

Implementation of UNSCR 1325 National Action Plans

In August 2019, a total of 81 Member States had NAPs, and nine additional Member States pledged to develop NAPs at the High-Level WPS Commitments event in April 2019.³²³ However, only about one third of the NAPs contains an allocated budget.³²⁴ NAPs are important to coordinate the work among different ministries and governmental bodies to avoid duplication of activities and increase efficiency.³²⁵ More importantly, NAPs ensure accountability and monitoring of relevant efforts to implement resolution 1325.³²⁶ One reason behind the low number of NAPs is the belief that they are only necessary for conflict-affected countries or post-conflict societies.³²⁷ In addition to missing awareness, the lack of political commitment makes the adoption and implementation of NAPs more difficult.³²⁸ There is often the assumption that the WPS agenda is focused solely on gender equality and improvement of women's rights, instead of security.³²⁹ This assumption can lead to the exclusion of men, which in turn can result in less understanding and acceptance of the WPS agenda and negatively impact the adoption of NAPs.³³⁰ While there is some progress in adopting NAPs, the implementation remains a challenge.³³¹ Some Member States decided opted for including selected elements of the WPS agenda in their national strategies instead of developing full NAPs.³³² However and according to a study carried out by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), to fully implement the WPS agenda, NAPs remain a crucial instrument, as they address all elements, enable accountability, and ensure monitoring.³³³

Conclusion

The 20th anniversary of resolution 1325, which will be celebrated next year, brings additional attention to the WPS agenda.³³⁴ In nearly twenty years, a considerable amount of WPS-related activities have got underway, and the topic remains a top priority for the Security Council and the UN Member States.³³⁵

³¹⁷ PeaceWomen, *The Global Acceleration Instrument for Women, Peace & Security and Humanitarian Action*, 2016, p. 2.

³¹⁸ UNDP, *Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund; Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, Annual Report January – December 2018*, 2018, p. 5-7.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7; Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, *Our Donors*.

³²⁰ Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, *Annual Report January – December 2018*, 2018, p. 13.

³²¹ *Ibid.*

³²² *Ibid.*

³²³ PeaceWomen, *Member States*.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*

³²⁵ OSCE, *OSCE Study on National Action Plans on the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2014, p. 28.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*

³²⁷ Fellin, *The Women, Peace and Security Agenda: Challenges and Opportunities for the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation*, 2018, p. 30.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*

³³¹ PeaceWomen, *Member States*.

³³² OSCE, *OSCE Study on National Action Plans on the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2014, p. 29.

³³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-29.

³³⁴ UN-Women, *Women, Peace and Security Experts Look Ahead to 2020*, 2019.

³³⁵ UN2020, *Timeline to 2020: UNSCR 1325 & the Women, Peace and Security Agenda*.

However, despite Member States working closely with UN entities, CSOs, NGOs, and regional organizations, the resolution still lacks full implementation.³³⁶ This raises the question on how to achieve its implementation, increased monitoring, and ensure accountability, as emphasized in Security Council resolution 1889.³³⁷ Finally, the international community cannot benefit from the advantages that all genders bring to peace processes if women are not fully included.³³⁸ Neither the percentage of women in negotiation and mediation efforts nor their presence in peacekeeping missions have proved to be sufficient at the moment.³³⁹ Therefore, the Security Council, together with its international, regional, national, and local partners, needs to take further action to ensure the full implementation of resolution 1325 and the WPS agenda worldwide.

Further Research

The difficulty to address this topic lies in the great attention paid to the WPS agenda, which has already led to numerous measures, ideas, and proposals over the last 20 years. Consequently, the topic requires detailed research to identify and overcome the remaining gaps. Delegates should be aware of the existing instruments and debates to be able to develop solutions and are advised to consider the following questions in their further research: Which measures does the international community need to agree on and implement in order to better report crimes, prosecute offenders, and protect women in conflicts? How can sufficient funding for gender equality and the implementation of resolution 1325 be ensured? How can barriers to the recruitment and deployment of women in peacekeeping missions be further removed? How can the political participation of women be strengthened and extended to peace and conflict matters? What measures would strengthen the protection, relief, and recovery of girls and women in post-conflict societies?

Annotated Bibliography

Ghittoni, M., et al. (2018). *Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations: Baseline Study*. The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF). Retrieved 15 July 2019 from: https://www.dcaf.ch/sites/default/files/publications/documents/Elsie_Baseline_Report_2018.pdf

The study contains an overview of the history and the current status of women's participation in peacekeeping operations. It also provides reasons why women should play a more crucial role in such missions, such as their contribution to operational effectiveness or their equal right to serve. Finally, the study discusses barriers to increasing the deployment of women in peacekeeping missions. The document is recommended to all delegates who want to address the issue of women's participation in peacekeeping operations and identify the existing gaps during the conference.

Security Council Report. (2019). *Women, Peace and Security*. Retrieved 15 July 2019 from: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/women-peace-and-security/>

The website lists all events at the UN Security Council related to Women, Peace and Security (WPS). It provides the links and a short description of the most recent high-level open debates, informal working group meetings, and briefings. It helps delegates to better understand the progress the UN has made in the WPS area and simultaneously provides an overview of the status quo debates. This website ensures to be up to date with all ongoing developments and is therefore a good starting point for delegates to begin their research.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2015). *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations*

³³⁶ Smit & Tidblad-Lundholm, *Trends in Women's Participation in UN, EU and OSCE Peace Operations*, 2018, p. 27.

³³⁷ UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1889 (2009))*, 2009.

³³⁸ Ghittoni et al., *Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations*, 2018, pp. 1-68; OSCE, *Enhancing Gender-Responsive Mediation*, 2013, pp. 1-15.

³³⁹ Ghittoni et al., *Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations*, 2018, p. 5; UN-Women, *Facts and Figures: Peace and Security*, 2018.

Security Council resolution 1325. Retrieved 15 July 2019 from:

https://wps.unwomen.org/pdf/en/GlobalStudy_EN_Web.pdf

The 2015 review of the implementation of resolution 1325 identifies gaps and challenges as well as emerging trends and priorities for action. The document contains a detailed list with technical recommendations for Member States and the UN system. They include all four pillars of resolution 1325, i.e. participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery. Fourteen chapters also provide the most detailed overview of the implementation of resolution 1325. The understanding of the implementation progress is essential for delegates to identify gaps and search for possible solutions. The review provides the perfect starting point for this matter.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2018). *Facts and Figures: Peace and Security*. Retrieved 15 July 2019 from: https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures#_Security_Council

The website provides facts and figures on the topic of Women, Peace, and Security (WPS). It includes for example statistics on women's participation in peace processes; their political participation; or financing for the WPS agenda. The numbers provide an excellent overview of existing gaps, such as in terms of funding, or of all regional WPS action plans. Delegates should find this source useful as they begin their research and are looking to get a first comprehensive overview of the topic.

United Nations, Security Council, 4213th Meeting. (2000). *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1325 (2000))*. Retrieved 15 July 2019 from: [http://undocs.org/S/RES/1325\(2000\)](http://undocs.org/S/RES/1325(2000))

This resolution was the first resolution adopted by the Security Council in 2000 on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS). The resolution lays out the four pillars to address the issue: participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery. More importantly, the resolution provides an important milestone in the fight for women's fundamental human rights and lays the foundation for the whole WPS debate. As such, the resolution still guides all actions undertaken by the UN system. It is the most important document that delegates should read to understand the topic at hand.

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III. Countering Violent Extremism

II. Countering Violent Extremism

“Working with reason and justice, we can rebuild a fundamental sense of loyalty and belonging throughout our societies. Discrimination should be fought and equality promoted. Equal access for all to economic, social and cultural rights will contribute to immunizing individuals and societies from violent extremism.”¹⁷¹

Introduction

As violent conflicts have grown in intensity and number over the past decade, the need to prevent Violent Extremism (VE) while preserving sustainable development are of primary focus.¹⁷² VE is a diverse phenomenon, and there is no clear definition of what VE is.¹⁷³ The United Nations (UN) Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism states that VE is “neither new nor exclusive to any region, nationality or system of belief” and calls for a contextualization of VE.¹⁷⁴ The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development defines VE as: “Promoting views which foment and incite violence in furtherance of particular beliefs, and foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence.”¹⁷⁵ UN Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) defines VE as acts that “can be conducive to terrorism, sectarian violence, and the commission of terrorist acts by foreign terrorist fighters, and demands that all foreign terrorist fighters disarm and cease all terrorist acts and participation in armed conflict.”¹⁷⁶ The Frontlines report defines VE as “beliefs and actions of people or groups who support or use violence to achieve ideological, religious or political goals, including terrorism and other forms of politically motivated and sectarian violence.”¹⁷⁷

Acts of VE and terrorism are a threat to international peace and security and undermine human rights and sustainable development.¹⁷⁸ Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) has become essential to sustain international peace and security.¹⁷⁹ Terrorist groups like the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (Da’esh), Al Qaida, or Boko Haram became more relevant in recent years and shaped the debate on how to CVE.¹⁸⁰ The threat of terrorist fighters can be addressed through the prevention of radicalization, recruitment, and mobilization of individuals.¹⁸¹ Preventing violent extremism (PVE) and CVE are interlinked; important aspects in PVE are empowering youth, gender equality and empowering women, and international cooperation and capacity building.¹⁸² Issues like responding to the needs of returned foreign fighters, integrating youth in prevention activities, countering terrorist ideas in online and offline spaces, and the role of women across prevention and response efforts are discussed in regards to PVE and CVE efforts.¹⁸³

¹⁷¹ Ban Ki-moon, *Speech at the Geneva Conference on Preventing Violent Extremism*, 2016.

¹⁷² UNDP, *Improving the impact of preventing violent extremism programming: a toolkit for design, monitoring and evaluation*, 2018.

¹⁷³ UN General Assembly, *Plan of Action to prevent Violent Extremism: Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/674)*, 2015.

¹⁷⁴ UNDP, *Improving the impact of preventing violent extremism programming: a toolkit for design, monitoring and evaluation*, 2018.

¹⁷⁵ UNODC, *‘Radicalization’ and ‘violent extremism’*.

¹⁷⁶ UN Security Council, *Addressing the growing issue of foreign terrorist fighters (S/RES/2178(2014))*, 2014.

¹⁷⁷ UNDP, *Frontlines*, 2019, p. 20.

¹⁷⁸ UN OCT, *Plan of Action to prevent Violent Extremism*; UN General Assembly, *Plan of Action to prevent Violent Extremism: Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/674)*, 2015.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ UN OCT, *Plan of Action to prevent Violent Extremism*.

¹⁸¹ UN Security Council, *Addressing the growing issue of foreign terrorist fighters (S/RES/2178(2014))*, 2014.

¹⁸² UN General Assembly, *Plan of Action to prevent Violent Extremism: Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/674)*, 2015.

¹⁸³ UN Women, *Women’s role vital in countering violent extremism*, 2017.

The impact of VE reaches wide.¹⁸⁴ Violent extremist groups have a big negative impact on peace and security, sustainable development, human rights and the rule of law, and humanitarian actions.¹⁸⁵ At the same time, disregard of human rights and the rule of law enhance conditions such as discrimination, injustice, and youth radicalization that lead to VE.¹⁸⁶ On the contrary, extreme measures to prevent and counter VE can also lead to human rights violations such as arbitrary arrests and the suppression of freedom of speech.¹⁸⁷ The lack of rule of law can generally be conducive for terrorism, and Member States should develop a credible approach to CVE measures.¹⁸⁸

International and Regional Framework

In September 2006, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 60/288 on the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (UNGCTS).¹⁸⁹ UNGCTS calls on Member States to become party to existing international conventions and protocols against terrorism, to implement UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on counter-terrorism, and to comply with international law, human rights, and international humanitarian law.¹⁹⁰ The strategy also contains measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, measures to prevent and combat terrorism, measures to build states' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism, measures to strengthen the role of the UN system in this regard, and measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism.¹⁹¹

The Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism was introduced by the UN Secretary-General in 2016.¹⁹² The plan outlines the drivers of radicalization and VE which need to be addressed through setting a global framework for preventing VE and focusing on seven priority areas to take concrete action.¹⁹³ Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving its 17 Sustainable Development Goals aligns with many recommendations of the Plan of Action, focusing for example on good governance (SDG 16), youth empowerment and education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), and skills development and employment (SDG 8).¹⁹⁴ Member States address these goals through the implementation of national plans of action for preventing violent extremism.¹⁹⁵ These plans are created with input from government and non-governmental actors.¹⁹⁶ The inclusion of various actors ensures effective, accountable, and transparent institutions.¹⁹⁷ Also regional plans of actions are important since VE is a transboundary phenomenon.¹⁹⁸

The UN Security Council adopted numerous resolutions in the context of CVE and more specifically on terrorism.¹⁹⁹ The UN Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), adopted following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks, aims to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorist acts.²⁰⁰ The resolution also

¹⁸⁴ UN General Assembly, *Plan of Action to prevent Violent Extremism: Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/674)*, 2015.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ UN HRC, *Outcome of the panel discussion on the human rights dimensions of preventing and countering violent extremism (A/HRC/33/28)*, 2016, p. 3.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 7-9.

¹⁸⁹ UN General Assembly, *The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (A/RES/60/288)*, 2006.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² UN OCT, *Plan of Action to prevent Violent Extremism*.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ UN General Assembly, *Plan of Action to prevent Violent Extremism: Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/674)*, 2015.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ UN Security Council, *Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts (S/RES/1373(2001))*, 2001.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

established the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee, which focuses on specific thematic areas to help Member States to prevent terrorist acts.²⁰¹ Security Council resolution 1624 (2005) established a Counter Terrorism Implementation Task Force, which task it is to enhance coordination and integrity across all Implementation Task-Force entities.²⁰² The UN Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) addresses the growing issue of foreign terrorist fighters.²⁰³ It calls upon Member States to intensify their efforts addressing the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters through the prevention of radicalization and enhance international, regional, and sub-regional cooperation, or bilateral agreements, to prevent foreign terrorist fighters traveling from or through their territories.²⁰⁴ In 2000, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1325 on "Women, peace and security."²⁰⁵ The resolution created the Women, Peace and Security Agenda to tackle gender inequality as a matter of international security and create inclusive, democratic peacemaking.²⁰⁶ According to the Institute for Economics and Peace, 23% of the global youth population are affected by violence.²⁰⁷ UN Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) urges Member States to increase the representation of youth in decision-making at all levels considering issues such as poverty, health, education, gender equality, employment, inequality, sustainability, and climate change.²⁰⁸ The resolution recognizes the threat of radicalization of youth.²⁰⁹

Role of the International System

The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UN OCT) was established in 2017 through UN General Assembly resolution 71/291.²¹⁰ UN OCT has five main functions: provide leadership on the UN General Assembly counter-terrorism mandates, strengthen coordination and coherence across the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Task Force, bolster counter-terrorism capacity-building assistance to Member States, improve visibility, advocacy and resource mobilization for UN counter-terrorism efforts, and guarantee that the work on PVE is firmly rooted in the Strategy.²¹¹

The Geneva Conference on Preventing Violent Extremism, which was co-hosted by the Government of Switzerland and the UN in April 2016, built upon the formal debate of the UN General Assembly in February 2016 concerning the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.²¹² The Conference gave the international community the opportunity for an exchange of good practices and experiences to address the drivers of violent extremism.²¹³ At the Conference, Member States were encouraged to set policy frameworks, prioritize areas to take actions, and enhance the dialogue with other Member States, regional bodies, and communities in the fight against VE.²¹⁴

Civil society organizations play a crucial role in countering violent extremism.²¹⁵ For instance, the German Violence Prevention Network works with ideologically vulnerable people that are more frequently subjected to ideological influences, deradicalizes people previously convicted for crimes motivated by extremist views, and supports them with the reintegration into the community.²¹⁶ The Think Peace is a Malian think tank which focuses on peace and security and the prevention of radicalization in the Sahel zone – specifically in Mali – emphasizing the participation of local actors

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² UN Security Council, *Prohibition of incitement to commit terrorist acts (S/RES/1624(2005))*, 2005.

²⁰³ UN Security Council, *Addressing the growing issue of foreign terrorist fighters (S/RES/2178(2014))*, 2014.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ UN Security Council, *Women, peace and security (S/RES/1325(2000))*, 2000.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ UN Youth, Peace, and Security, *The Missing Peace- Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security*, 2018, p. 12.

²⁰⁸ UN Security Council, *Maintenance of international peace and security (S/RES/2250(2015))*, 2015.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ UN OCT, *Home*.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² UN OCT, *Plan of Action to prevent Violent Extremism*.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ UN OCT, *Geneva Conference on Preventing Violent Extremism – The Way Forward*, 2016.

²¹⁵ UN OCT, *Plan of Action to prevent Violent Extremism*.

²¹⁶ Violence Prevention Network, *Annual Report 2017*, 2018.

and communities.²¹⁷ Hedayah is the first-ever International Center of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism, based in the United Arab Emirates, focusing on “capacity building programs, dialogue and communications, in addition to research and analysis to counter VE in all of its forms and manifestations.”²¹⁸

Empowering Women and Youth

The UN focuses on women and youth in CVE efforts because they are highly affected by the dramatic rise of terrorist activities around the world.²¹⁹ Women’s rights and mobility, as well as, economic capacities are often jeopardized.²²⁰ Women and girls are also disproportionately victims of violent attacks.²²¹ Youth is especially affected by lack of education, which can lead to radicalization.²²² Unemployment can play a role in the radicalization as well, as young people are pushed to join radical groups that provide basic necessities.²²³ UN Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on “Maintenance of international peace and security” recognizes the importance of youth empowerment in the prevention of violent extremism.²²⁴ Member States with a high number of youth population that are affected by conflicts need to support the positive role young people play in PVE and provide opportunities for youth to be actively involved in CVE and PVE measures.²²⁵ An effective, sustainable, long-term approach to tackling the issue of VE and radicalization of youth requires the active support of young people.²²⁶ Young people are frustrated by the tendency of their governments and international actors to treat youth as a problem to be solved, instead of as partners for peace.²²⁷

There are still high obstacles for youth in the decision-making process such as a lack of political will or lacking democratic structures, a lack of financing or adequate mentors.²²⁸ Bad governance and corruption result in the wrong use of already existing funds.²²⁹ Therefore, the Plan of Action includes six recommendations for Member States to empower youth: (1) support and increase participation of young people in activities that prevent violent extremism, (2) integrate young people into decision-making processes at all levels (3) foster trust between decision makers and youth, (4) involve hard to reach young people from underrepresented regions, (5) establish national mentoring programs for young women and men, and (6) ensure that a portion of all funds to address violent extremism are committed to projects that address young people’s specific needs.²³⁰ Gender equality and empowering women is another key area of the Plan of Action providing five concrete recommendations for Member States: (1) to mainstream gender perspectives across efforts to prevent violent extremism, (2) to invest in gender-sensitive research and data collection on women’s roles in violent extremism, (3) to include all underrepresented groups in national law enforcement and security agencies, (4) to promote women-led civil society organizations, and (5) to ensure a portion of all funds to address VE projects addresses women’s specific needs or empower women.²³¹

²¹⁷ Think Peace, *Who are we; Think Peace, Our approach*.

²¹⁸ Hedayah Center, *About Us - History*, 2019.

²¹⁹ UN Women, *Women’s role vital in countering violent extremism*, 2017.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² UN Youth, Peace, and Security, *The Missing Peace- Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security*, 2018, p. 1.

²²³ UNDP, *Frontlines*, 2019, p. 30.

²²⁴ UN Security Council, *Maintenance of international peace and security (S/RES/2250(2015))*, 2015.

²²⁵ UNDP, *Young people’s role in preventing violent extremism*, 2018.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ UN Youth, Peace, and Security, *The Missing Peace- Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security*, 2018, p. 1; UNDP, *Frontlines*, 2019, p. 30.

²²⁸ UN OCT, *Plan of Action to prevent Violent Extremism*.

²²⁹ UNDP, *Frontlines*, 2019, p. 58.

²³⁰ UN General Assembly, *Plan of Action to prevent Violent Extremism: Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/674)*, 2015.

²³¹ Ibid.

To sustain peace and prevent the outbreak, continuation, escalation, and recurrence of violent conflict requires to expand women's engagement in formal and informal political processes and institutions.²³² The exclusion from meaningful civic and political participation leads to mistrust of systems, the lack of political will to address their exclusion calls for action.²³³ Involvement of women and youth prevents frustration and potential violence, and therefore contributes to sustain peace.²³⁴ UN Women's regional program on PVE focuses on women's participation and leadership within local communities.²³⁵ The program takes a four-track approach: (1) To ensure that national and international CVE strategies are informed by women's experience close work with governments is needed (2) women's economic resilience should be expanded (3) women leadership and participation in CVE efforts should be expanded (4) research on women implication of extremism should develop.²³⁶

Capacity Building for CVE efforts

The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its Plan of Actions is composed of four pillars: Pillar III calls for building states' capacity and strengthening the role of the UN in the fight against terrorism.²³⁷ The Plan of Action therefore calls for Member States to reach out to the private sector for contributions to capacity-building programs, and to share best practices in counter-terrorism capacity building.²³⁸

International, regional, and sub-regional cooperation is of utmost importance to CVE and a means to build capacity on different levels.²³⁹ Therefore, the Executive Directorate of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTED) takes a number of actions for capacity building.²⁴⁰ CTED reviews operational and legal administrative frameworks for international cooperation and makes recommendations to improve practices and implement them.²⁴¹ To tackle the growing issue of terrorist fighters, Member States have to strengthen their cooperation in terms of information sharing, exchanging and adopting best practices, and further understanding transnational aspects of terrorism.²⁴² In 2017, the mandate of the CTED was renewed with Security Council resolution 2395 (2017).²⁴³ The resolution underlines CTED's analysis and recommendations to Member States to identify gaps in countering terrorism.²⁴⁴ These recommendations include that Member States shall prevent the financing of terrorist acts, refrain from any kind of support to terrorists, and intensify the exchange of information on terrorist actors.²⁴⁵

One of CTED's tasks is also to visit Member States and analyze progress that has been made, identify trends and challenges in regard to terrorism, and provide recommendations for taking action.²⁴⁶ These visits include experts from international and regional organizations, such as the International Civil Aviation Organization, the African Union, the European Union, the Financial Action Task Force of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, INTERPOL, the International Organization for Migration, UN OCT, the World Customs Organization, and other specialized bodies and institutions focused on counter-terrorism.²⁴⁷ The

²³² UN Youth, Peace, and Security, *The Missing Peace- Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security*, 2018, p. 64.

²³³ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*; UN Women, *Women's role vital in countering violent extremism*, 2017.

²³⁵ UN Women, *Women's role vital in countering violent extremism*, 2017.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

²³⁷ UN OCT, *UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy*.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*; Wilson & Krentel, *Lessons from Strengthening Capacity in Countering Violent Extremism*, 2018, p. 18.

²³⁹ UN Security Council CTC, *International, regional, and subregional cooperation*.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

²⁴² *Ibid.*

²⁴³ UN Security Council CTC, *About the Counter-Terrorism Committee*; UN Security Council, *Threats to International Peace and Security, caused by terrorist acts – CTED mandate renewal (S/RES/2395(2017))*, 2017.

²⁴⁴ UN Security Council CTC, *About the Counter-Terrorism Committee*.

²⁴⁵ UN Security Council, *Threats to International Peace and Security, caused by terrorist acts – CTED mandate renewal (S/RES/2395(2017))*, 2017.

²⁴⁶ UN Security Council CTC Executive Directorate, *About us*, 2019; Wilson & Krentel, *Lessons from Strengthening Capacity in Countering Violent Extremism*, 2018, p. 10.

²⁴⁷ UN Security Council CTC Executive Directorate, *About us*, 2019.

recommendations focus on areas such as anti-terror legislation, measures against assets used for criminal purposes, effectiveness of law enforcement services, international cooperation, and territorial control.²⁴⁸

Conclusion

CVE continues to be an urgent issue that needs to be addressed on all levels by governments, civil society, and individuals.²⁴⁹ International, regional and subregional cooperation are key to counter violent extremism.²⁵⁰ To address all forms of violent extremism, the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism was introduced by the Secretary-General in 2016.²⁵¹ The fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs, offering every person a sustainable future and participation in its creation, is part of an effective strategy to prevent radicalization and ultimately VE.²⁵² The UN Security Council has created various Committees and Task Forces to combat radicalization and terrorism and focuses on dialogue, inclusion, and promoting understanding and follows a comprehensive approach.²⁵³ Empowering youth and women and girls are key areas of the Plan of Action.²⁵⁴

Further Research

Moving forward, delegates should consider the following questions: Could a general definition of VE help to determine useful CVE measures? How can the empowerment of youth and women in CVE efforts be ensured? Which role could youth-led peacebuilding organizations play? What measures can be taken to prevent radicalization? How can Member States interact to work together on CVE efforts? How can a global framework on PVE work?

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United Nations Development Programme. (2019). *Frontlines* [Report]. Retrieved 19 June 2019 from: <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/frontlines.html>

The Frontlines Report of the UNDP provides data from field case studies, a mapping of youth-led actions, and a global survey on youth and countering and preventing violent extremism. The source also includes examples of practices, policies, and recommendations on CVE efforts. This source is therefore especially useful to research on youth participating in the context of countering violent extremism, as well as on the participation of various actors including governmental and non-governmental actors.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism: Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/674)*. Retrieved 15 May 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/A/70/674>

The Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism is an approach to address conditions that lead to radicalization and people to join extremist groups. The Plan contains more than 70 suggestions to Member States and the UN System to prevent the spread of violent extremism. The Plan introduces not only ongoing and essential security-based counter-terrorism measures, but also systematic preventive measures that directly

²⁴⁸ UN Security Council CTC, *Framework Document for CTC visits to states in order to enhance the monitoring of the implementation of resolution 1373*, 2001.

²⁴⁹ Wilson & Krentel, *Lessons from Strengthening Capacity in Countering Violent Extremism*, 2018, p. 2.

²⁵⁰ UN Security Council CTC, *International, regional, and subregional cooperation*.

²⁵¹ UN OCT, *Plan of Action to prevent Violent Extremism*.

²⁵² UN General Assembly, *Plan of Action to prevent Violent Extremism: Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/674)*, 2015.

²⁵³ UN Security Council, *Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts (S/RES/1373(2001))*, 2001; UN Security Council, *Prohibition of incitement to commit terrorist acts (S/RES/1624(2005))*, 2005; UN Security Council CTC Executive Directorate, *Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorist Narratives*, 2018.

²⁵⁴ UN General Assembly, *Plan of Action to prevent Violent Extremism: Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/674)*, 2015.

address the drivers of VE at the local, national, regional, and global levels. This source is useful to delegates to get an overview of what the UN are calling Member States to implement to tackle the issue of violent extremism.

United Nations, Office of Counter-Terrorism. (n.d.). *Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism*. Retrieved 15 May 2019 from:

https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/sites/www.un.org.counterterrorism.ctitf/files/plan_action.pdf

This document provides the reader with an overview of the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. The overview is divided into three sections: setting the policy framework, taking actions, and supporting Member States, regional bodies and communities through the UN. It is specifically useful to research recommendations for Member States as well as national and regional Plans of Action. Also useful is an overview of the seven key areas to take actions to prevent violent extremism.

Violence Prevention Network. (2018). *Annual Report 2017*. Retrieved 15 May 2019 from: <https://violence-prevention-network.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Annual-Report-2017.pdf>

The Violence Prevention Network is a German NGO founded in 2014 that provides services and training for deradicalization of youth. The approach of the NGO to deal with already radicalized youth and assist their families is new. The NGO also provides training for educators on deradicalization and the prevention of radicalization. This resource is helpful to see what ways of deradicalization are used by the organization and what still needs to be developed. The annual report further describes what the NGO is planning to do in the future to improve its work in the field of deradicalization.

Wilson, L. & J. Krentel. (2018). *Lessons from Strengthening Capacity in Countering Violent Extremism*. Retrieved 15 May 2019 from: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/sr426-lessons-from-strengthening-capacity-in-countering-violent-extremism.pdf>

The report of the United States Institute of Peace is about an evaluation of a project to strengthen the capacity of civil society to address VE in their home communities. The evaluation suggests using effective project design, thoughtful recruitment strategies, and tailored course content that adequately covers approaches across the spectrum of preventing to countering are critical to effectively strengthening the capacity to address the drivers of violent extremism. This resource is helpful to explore possible capacity building measures on CVE as well as see difficulties that are present and call for improvement.

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