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# Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence

## I. Introduction

1. The present report, which covers the period from January to December 2014, is submitted pursuant to paragraph 22 of Security Council resolution 2106 (2013), in which the Council requested me to report annually on the implementation of resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010) and to recommend appropriate actions. The report presents information on parties to conflict credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for acts of rape and other forms of sexual violence. The year under review was marked by harrowing accounts of rape, sexual slavery and forced marriage by extremist groups, including as a tactic of terror. The denial of women's rights and freedoms, including control over their sexuality and reproduction, are integral to the ideology of these groups, though not yet central to the international community's response.

2. The term "conflict-related sexual violence" (CRSV), which appears throughout the report, refers to rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization and other forms of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls or boys with a direct or indirect link (temporal, geographical or causal) to a conflict. This link may be evident in the profile of the perpetrator, the profile of the victim, the climate of impunity or state collapse, cross-border dimensions and/or violations of the terms of a ceasefire agreement.

3. While CRSV occurs in many settings, the present report focuses on 19 country situations for which credible information is available. It covers 13 conflict settings, five post-conflict countries and one additional situation of concern. It highlights actions taken and challenges faced by states in attempting to protect civilians from such violence. It also provides an update on the efforts of the United Nations system, including through the interagency network United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict; the technical assistance of the United Nations Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict; and recommendations to enhance collective efforts to combat this crime. The report should be read in conjunction with my six previous reports on CRSV, which provide a cumulative basis for the listing of 43 parties in the Annex, 13 of which appear for the first time.

4. The report is based on cases documented by United Nations peacekeeping and political missions, as well as country teams. As such, it is only indicative of the scale and character of sexual violence globally. It is noteworthy that the increased presence of Women's Protection Advisers (WPAs) in the field has made a tangible contribution to improving the quality of information and analysis received.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, since the advent of a Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, ground-breaking gains have been made in terms of traction with

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<sup>1</sup> To date, 20 WPAs have been deployed in six settings to *inter alia* support implementation of the Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements on conflict-related sexual violence (MARA) and to facilitate dialogue with parties to conflict.

national authorities, accountability and engagement with armed forces and groups, though momentous challenges remain.

## **II. Sexual violence as a threat to international peace and security: Overview of current and emerging concerns**

5. Sexual violence during and in the wake of conflict continues to be dramatically underreported because of the risks, threats and trauma faced by those who come forward. These risks affect not only the survivors, but also witnesses, human rights defenders, service providers, journalists, justice officials and others who seek to ensure that sexual violence is no longer suffered in silence. Despite the political momentum and visibility gained in recent years, the reality on the ground is that many governments have not been able to create an environment in which survivors feel safe to report sexual violence. The fear of stigmatisation and reprisals is almost universal, and often compounded by a sense of futility stemming from the limited services available and the painfully slow pace of justice. Even in settings where primary healthcare is available, further capacity-building and resources are urgently needed to help frontline staff deliver comprehensive care, including mental health and psychosocial support. In contexts of live conflict, such as the Central African Republic, Iraq, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Syria, service provision is further impeded by access restrictions and a climate of fear.

6. In 2014, sexual violence against adolescent girls continued to be a disturbing trend, including incidents of rape, sexual slavery and forced marriage. The ideological opposition of extremist groups to the education of girls has placed them at heightened risk of abuse. Other trends include the use of sexual violence as a form of persecution to forcibly displace populations, and the vulnerability of displaced and refugee women and girls to sexual abuse. The threat or use of sexual violence as a form of ill-treatment in detention settings (often against men and boys), is evident in many situations. The targeting of individuals on the basis of sexual orientation (actual or perceived) has come to light as a form of social control employed by certain armed groups in Syria, Iraq and elsewhere. In recent months, sexual violence in the context of rising violent extremism has captured the attention of the world. This transnational threat makes the challenge of engaging non-state actors more urgent than ever.

7. Displaced civilians fleeing their homes in fear for their lives due to instability in Syria or the Horn of Africa remain at high risk even when they reach the supposed refuge of neighbouring countries. Sudan (Darfur) has seen rising numbers of displaced civilians over the past year, with attendant reports of sexual violence. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), vulnerability persists both for those displaced internally and those who seek to cross the border into neighbouring Angola or the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville). Forced dispossession effectively denies women a vital source of livelihood. In Colombia, women working with displaced communities and calling for land restitution have been targeted by armed groups and subjected to repeated sexual assault. Around the world, both urban and camp environments pose considerable risks of sexual exploitation for women and girls. Particular attention must be paid to the underlying political economy of violence, including competition for the control of natural resources and mining settlements by armed groups, which correlates with increased civilian displacement, human trafficking and sexual abuse, as witnessed in the DRC and elsewhere. Since the civil unrest in South Sudan of December 2013, Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya has seen

53,079 new arrivals including many unaccompanied minors, with a corresponding increase in reports of sexual assault, teenage pregnancies and forced marriage. Similarly, in Dadaab camp, sexual violence has increased as the population has grown, with safety and community protection mechanisms (such as lighting and fencing) yet to be established in the new sections of the camp.

8. Sexual violence perpetrated by state actors, or armed groups associated with the state, remains of grave concern in settings such as Sudan (Darfur), South Sudan, Syria and the DRC. Indeed, in recent years, particular emphasis has been placed on the duty of governments to protect the civilian population. This has been exemplified by such actions as the appointment of advisers to fight sexual violence and the adoption of codes of conduct and action plans by militaries, as in the DRC and Côte d'Ivoire, or zero-tolerance policies for the armed forces, as in Colombia and Nepal. However, it is non-state actors that account for the vast majority of incidents, and engaging them raises political and operational challenges. Sexual violence perpetrated by non-state armed groups, including those pursuing extremist ideologies in Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Nigeria, Mali, Libya and Yemen has been of grave concern during 2014, and efforts to divest and degrade the capacity of groups like Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, Ansar Dine and Al-Qaida affiliates are an essential part of the fight against CRSV.

9. As in 2013, political will to end CRSV was demonstrated by both affected states and the international community at large. In June 2014, the United Kingdom hosted the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict in London. At this forum, several states made new commitments and an *International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict* was launched. Senior military leaders, including army chiefs of staff, addressed the role of the security sector in this effort. Côte d'Ivoire, the DRC and the Federal Government of Somalia presented initiatives underway to fight sexual violence. Funding was pledged to support these processes, as well as reparations for survivors and resources for the ICC Trust Fund for Victims. In addition to high-level advocacy, greater support is needed to enhance the capacity of grassroots women's organizations and frontline service-providers to meet elevated expectations.

10. Indeed, the era of silence has been replaced by international recognition that the shame of sexual violence resides not in the victims, but in the perpetrators and any party that condones or conceals their conduct. However, serious concerns persist about official denials and efforts to downplay these crimes, including pressure to induce victims and witnesses to withdraw their complaints. Evidence of sexual violence is not readily apparent or easily traced, hence the need for timely, independent and transparent investigations, linked to services and survivor care.

11. Across the varied contexts examined in this report, a point of commonality is that waves of CRSV take place against a backdrop of structural gender-based discrimination, including in formal and informal systems of law, and the exclusion of women from political life. For example, the disempowerment of women that attends the rise of violent extremism is not incidental, but systemic. In countries where CRSV is most prevalent, safe abortion is inaccessible or illegal and survivors face "honor" or "morality" crimes, as well as economic marginalization. Often women and girls are subjected to sexual violence when engaged in tasks socially prescribed on the basis of gender, such as collecting firewood or water, as documented

in Darfur, the DRC and northern Nigeria. Moreover, many incidents reveal that it is precisely the mechanisms of coping with conflict that place women and girls at risk of sexual violence: whether it is forced displacement to escape the fighting, early marriage to “protect” daughters, or sexual exploitation as a means of survival. Some even face the double victimization of reporting crimes to predatory security officials or being compelled to marry the perpetrator as a form of traditional settlement, as documented in Somalia, South Sudan and elsewhere. These dynamics affirm that efforts to prevent conflict, foster equality and build gender-responsive institutions are central to eradicating the scourge of sexual violence.

## **A. Sexual violence in conflict-affected settings**

### **Afghanistan**

12. Sexual violence is chronically underreported in Afghanistan due to the stigmatization of complainants and lack of access to Taliban-controlled areas. Under the applicable legal framework, women victims may be charged with adultery and exposed to further harm, discouraging them from seeking redress. Between January and December 2014, UNAMA documented 44 incidents of sexual violence against women and girls, three of which were committed by a party to the conflict, namely members of the Afghan National Police in Faryab and Herat provinces, and a member of an illegal armed group in Baghlan province. In 2014, eight incidents of sexual violence against children were carried out by parties to the conflict: seven by the Afghan National Security Forces and one by a pro-government militia. According to the government’s second report on implementation of the *Elimination of Violence against Women* law, 174 rapes and one case of forced prostitution were recorded between March 2013 and March 2014. In September 2014, the New Afghanistan Women’s Association presented research based on 2000 survey questionnaires, in which 35 percent of respondents identified the perpetrators of sexual violence as “influential people, armed commanders and illegal armed individuals”. In 2014, the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission undertook a national inquiry into *bacha bazi* (the practice of subjecting boys to sexual exploitation), which found that eight percent of perpetrators are local commanders. Available information does not indicate that parties to the conflict are committing systematic patterns of sexual violence, which is the threshold for listing in the annex of this report.

### ***Recommendation***

13. I urge the Government to adopt legislative reforms to ensure that sexual violence offenses are not conflated with adultery or “morality crimes”, and to establish infrastructure for the delivery of protection, health and legal services to survivors. I call on the Ministry of Interior to accelerate efforts to integrate women into the Afghan National Police, thereby enhancing its outreach and capacity to address SGBV.

### **Central African Republic**

14. During the reporting period, 2,527 cases of CRSV were documented in the Central African Republic (CAR), including rape perpetrated to terrorize civilians, with many victims

being assaulted in their homes, during door-to-door searches, and while sheltering in fields or the bush. Women and girls have been systematically targeted. There have also been cases of CRSV against men and boys. Alleged perpetrators are associated with ex-Seleka, armed herders from Fulani Mbarara communities, anti-Balaka, *Révolution et Justice* and the *Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafricain*. On 5 May, my Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict briefed the Sanctions Committee on CAR, noting that all parties have used sexual violence to subjugate and humiliate opponents.

15. There are particular concerns about CRSV in the prefectures of Ombella-Mpoko, Ouham, Ouham-Pende, Nana-Mambere, Lobaye and Mambere-Kadei. Sexual violence occurred at alarming rates during and in the immediate aftermath of hostilities. Currently, the number of rapes seems to be declining in the main towns owing to the combined security presence of MINUSCA, Sangaris and EUFOR. However, violence persists on the outskirts of towns, with the breakdown of social services presenting extreme hardship for civilians, especially those in mining and border areas. Medical care, including post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) to prevent HIV transmission, remains largely out of reach. The Transitional Government is in the process of adopting a decree to establish a joint rapid response unit to combat sexual violence. In April 2014, the authorities created a special investigation unit for prosecution of serious human rights violations. Efforts are also underway to draft a law to establish a Special Criminal Court, which would have jurisdiction over grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, including CRSV. Sexual violence was taken into account in the *Cessation of Hostilities Agreement* negotiated in July 2014 in Brazzaville, and has been identified as a violation to be monitored in the implementation of the agreement.

### ***Recommendation***

16. I urge the authorities to ensure that efforts to restore security and the rule of law take into account the prevention of sexual violence and that monitoring of the ceasefire and peace agreement explicitly reflect this consideration, in line with the Joint Communiqué of the Government and the United Nations on the prevention of and response to CRSV signed in December 2012. I further encourage the authorities to render operational the rapid response unit to combat sexual violence and to establish a Special Criminal Court.

### **Colombia**

17. In 2014, the Government of Colombia took important steps to address more than five decades of internal armed conflict in which sexual violence has been regarded as systematic, according to Colombian Constitutional Court Order 092. A landmark law on access to justice for victims (Law 1719) was signed by President Juan Manuel Santos on 18 June 2014, to enhance the status of sexual violence survivors in order for them to receive reparations, psychosocial support and free medical care. Law 1719 explicitly recognizes that sexual violence can constitute a crime against humanity and that there can be no statute of limitations for such crimes. It includes offences that were previously omitted from the Penal Code, such as enforced sterilization, forced pregnancy and forced nudity, and adds specific reference to aggravating circumstances, such as when sexual violence is committed as a form of retaliation or intimidation against human rights defenders.

18. Furthermore, in August 2014, Decree 1480 was adopted establishing 25 May as the National Day for the Dignity of Women Victims of Sexual Violence caused by the Internal Armed Conflict, as a collective reparations measure. In 2014, 2,081 women victims of “crimes against sexual freedom and integrity” received compensation, of a total of 7,353 victims registered between 1985 and 2014. In November 2014, the Peace and Justice Tribunal in Bogotá delivered a milestone judgment in the case of *Salvatore Mancuso et al*, which addressed 175 cases including kidnapping of women for the purpose of prostitution and sexual slavery, sexual assault, forced sterilization and forced abortion. The judgment requests Mancuso and other paramilitary leaders to provide reparations to over 9,500 people, including victims of CRSV, and to issue a public apology.

19. Challenges persist in implementing progressive legal frameworks at the local level due to institutional capacity constraints and the underreporting of cases, which is both a cause and consequence of impunity for this crime. Of continuing concern, for example, is sexual exploitation in areas under the influence of non-state armed groups or groups that have emerged from the process of demobilization. According to official data from the Ombudsman’s Office, post-demobilization groups and other local armed elements are identified as the main source of threat, followed by guerrilla groups (namely, the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo*, FARC-EP and *Ejército de Liberación Nacional*, ELN). Members of the Colombian Armed Forces were also identified as perpetrators in some instances, with such cases being addressed by the Ministry of Defense pursuant to its zero-tolerance policy.

20. Reports indicate that sexual violence has been used by non-state armed groups as a strategy to assert social control, and to intimidate civilians, in particular women leaders and human rights defenders. It has also been employed as part of extortion strategies, with women who are unable to pay being subjected to sexual violence in order to set an example to others. Women living in close proximity to illegal mining settlements controlled by armed groups are at heightened risk of sexual exploitation, forced prostitution and trafficking. According to the Colombian Ombudsman’s Office, there have been cases of targeted sexual assault against women’s rights defenders who raise their voices in support of land restitution. CRSV remains a driver of displacement in Colombia, disproportionately affecting ethnic minorities in remote rural areas. Sexual violence committed against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) individuals, as a form of “corrective violence” or to “cleanse the population”, has caused many to flee areas under the influence of armed groups.

21. Other noteworthy developments include the participation of sexual violence survivors in the Havana peace talks, as part of a group of 60 victims that directly addressed the negotiations. Following the creation of a “gender sub-commission” in September 2014, leaders of women’s rights and sexual diversity organizations also participated in the talks. As a result of both exercises, CRSV has been raised in the negotiations by the survivors and stakeholders directly affected, which stands out as an innovation not seen in any prior peace process.

## ***Recommendation***

22. I commend the Government of Colombia for the progress made to date and its collaboration with the United Nations, including through the visit of my Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict in March 2015. I encourage the authorities to implement Law 1719 and continue to prosecute cases of sexual violence committed during the conflict to ensure that survivors see justice and reparations. CRSV should continue to be addressed in the Havana peace talks, as well as the resulting accords and transitional justice mechanisms. Particular attention should be paid to groups that face additional barriers to justice such as ethnic minorities, women in rural areas, children, LGBTI individuals and women abused within the ranks of armed groups. I encourage the Government to scale-up its protection measures and share its good practices with other conflict-affected countries.

## **Democratic Republic of the Congo**

23. Unprecedented steps were taken by the Government of the DRC in 2014, such as the prosecution of high-ranking army officers and the payment of reparations to survivors of CRSV. At the same time, the year under review was marked by a resurgence of violence by armed groups, including an increase in rape and forced displacement. From January to September 2014, UNFPA recorded 11,769 cases of SGBV in the provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu, Orientale, Katanga and Maniema. Of these cases, 39 percent were considered to be directly related to the dynamics of conflict, being perpetrated by arms bearers. As in 2013, North Kivu and Orientale remain the provinces most affected by CRSV, with 42 percent of all incidents taking place in Orientale province. Over the same period, the United Nations confirmed 698 cases of CRSV, affecting 361 women, 332 girls, three men and two boys. In 31 percent of these cases, the perpetrators were Government security forces, with members of the Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC) responsible for 201 incidents, the Congolese National Police (PNC) implicated in 157 incidents, and the national intelligence agency (ANR) responsible for two cases. Investigations into FARDC abuses committed in the course of military operations against the *Alliance des Patriotes pour un Congo Libre et Souverain* (APCLS) in Masisi territory, between February and April 2014, found that rape had been used to punish members of the Hunde population who were perceived to support the APCLS, resulting in at least 20 women being raped by FARDC regiments 804 and 813.

24. Violations committed by armed groups represent 69 percent of all confirmed cases of CRSV, with the main perpetrator, Mayi Mayi Simba/Morgan, identified as responsible for 117 rapes. Other groups bearing responsibility for CRSV in areas under their control include: the *Front de résistance patriotique de l'Ituri* (FRPI), *Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda* (FDLR), Raia Mutomboki, Nyatura, APCLS, Mayi Mayi Simba Lumumba and other Mayi Mayi groups. In Orientale province, Mayi Mayi Simba/Morgan continued to use sexual violence to spread fear, compelling civilians to undertake forced labor in mining areas. In February 2014, reports of targeted rape, sexual slavery and forced pregnancy based on ethnicity surfaced in Katanga province, committed by both Batwa and Baluba armed men in order to humiliate members of the opposing group. The internally displaced population remains particularly vulnerable to CRSV in the context of such ethnic clashes, with UNHCR documenting 2,343 alleged incidents.

25. On 14 July 2014, President Kabila appointed a Personal Representative on Sexual Violence and Child Recruitment, H.E. Jeanine Mabunda Lioko. From 28 August to 1 September, my Special Representative visited the DRC to attend the launch of the *FARDC Action Plan against Sexual Violence*, and on 29 November, a ministerial order was issued to mark the creation of a national commission to oversee the implementation of this plan. In 2014, Military Tribunals convicted 135 individuals, including 76 members of the FARDC, 41 members of the PNC and 18 members of armed groups for sexual violence crimes. On 5 May, the Military Court in Goma concluded the trial for the Minova mass rape incident of 2012. Of the 39 members of the FARDC who had been charged with sexual violence, the Court convicted two for rape. Also during the reporting period, the trials of General Jerome Kakwavu and Lieutenant Colonel Bedi Mobuli Engangela (alias “Colonel 106”) were concluded. General Kakwavu was sentenced to ten years imprisonment for the war crimes of rape, murder and torture, and “Colonel 106” was sentenced to life imprisonment for crimes against humanity, including rape and sexual slavery. These convictions mark a milestone in efforts to hold high-ranking officers to account. In 2014, 30 victims of the 2003 mass rape in Songo Mboyo, Equateur province, received financial compensation from the Government. Specifically, 29 victims received the equivalent of USD 5,000 as compensation for rape and USD 200 for looted property. The mother of one of the victims who died from complications after rape received the equivalent of USD 10,000. These compensation payments represent a breakthrough in the administration of justice.

26. In terms of service-provision, rape remains the predominant form of SGBV reported by survivors accessing services (98 percent). Medical, psychosocial and legal support is only available in and around provincial capitals. In isolated areas where the justice system is weak or absent, civilians resort to practices whereby the family of the victim agrees to a settlement, such as marriage, with the family of the perpetrator in order to “close” the case. The United Nations continues to support the implementation of the *SGBV National Strategy*. For instance, UNICEF has prioritized access to psychosocial, economic and educational support for children born as a result of rape and their mothers. UNFPA has supplied treatment centres with essential equipment and post-rape kits. UNHCR has expanded its “SAFE” project (provision of sustainable cooking fuels and alternative energy) to South Kivu, based on a successful pilot in North Kivu, where it helped to reduce the risk of sexual violence faced by displaced women collecting firewood and water. MONUSCO’s JHRO established seven legal clinics, creating links between medical, psychosocial and legal support. As a result of this integrated approach, 60 percent of clients chose to pursue a legal complaint.

### ***Recommendation***

27. I urge the Government to ensure full implementation of the *FARDC Action Plan against Sexual Violence*, to systematically bring perpetrators to justice and deliver reparations to victims, including payment of outstanding compensation awards. I call on donors and the United Nations system to support the Government in its efforts, paying increased attention to neglected areas, including unregulated mining regions.

## Iraq

28. Armed violence in Iraq resulted in more than 15,000 fatalities among civilians and security personnel in 2014, making it one of the deadliest years on record since 2003. On 29 June 2014, ISIL declared the establishment of an “Islamic caliphate” extending from Aleppo province in Syria to Diyala province in Iraq. Sexual violence has been used as part of ISIL’s strategy of spreading terror, persecuting ethnic and religious minorities, and suppressing communities that oppose its ideology. Following its seizure of Mosul and surrounding areas in June 2014, ISIL instituted a pattern of sexual violence, slavery, abduction and human trafficking, with three cases of forced abortion on the basis of ethnicity being documented by the Government. Sexual and reproductive health services, trauma counselling and reintegration support are severely limited.<sup>2</sup>

29. Many of the women and girls who have fled from ISIL-controlled areas report brutal physical and sexual assault, including sexual slavery and forced marriage. Young women are being “sold” in open markets or “given” to ISIL fighters as gifts. First-hand accounts from IDPs affirm reports of systematic sexual violence, particularly against Yezidi women and girls, with most victims aged between eight and 35 years. UNAMI notes that ISIL purportedly issued a “regulation” setting out the prices to be paid for Yezidi and Christian women and girls, with the amounts varying according to age.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the promise of sexual access to women and girls has been used in ISIL propaganda materials, as part of a recruitment strategy. As of 6 November 2014, UNAMI reports that approximately 2,500 women and children, mostly members of ethnic and religious minorities, remain in ISIL captivity in Northern Iraq. My Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict has condemned the abduction and detention of Yezidi, Christian, Turkomen and Shabak women and children, noting that an estimated 1,500 civilians may have been forced into sexual slavery.

30. Attacks on women and girls, as well as LGBTI individuals, have taken place as a form of “moral cleansing” by armed groups. Concern has also been expressed about incidents of sexual torture against women and men in Iraqi detention facilities. On 6 February 2014, Iraq became the first nation in the Arab world to adopt a *National Action Plan on SCR 1325*, which includes elements on addressing sexual violence.

### ***Recommendation***

31. I commend the Government of Iraq for its *National Action Plan on SCR 1325* and urge its swift implementation, including through the training of its security forces to ensure respect for women’s rights. Programmes to support the social reintegration of women and girls released from ISIL captivity are urgently needed, as well as community-based medical and psychological care. The capacity of the United Nations system should be enhanced through the deployment of WPAs or equivalent specialists.

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<sup>2</sup> In February 2015, a directive from Yezidi spiritual leader, Baba Sheikh, called for the community to support and not ostracize women who have been abducted and released by ISIL.

<sup>3</sup> ISIL justifies its actions in a pamphlet entitled, “Questions and Answers on Taking Captives and Slaves”, 3 December 2014.

## Libya

32. The last six months of 2014 witnessed the most serious outbreak of armed conflict in Tripoli, Benghazi and elsewhere across Libya, since the 2011 revolution. The majority of the international community withdrew temporarily from Libya, which has limited the provision of essential services to sexual violence survivors, as well as access to verified information. Women have been particularly affected, with a number of female activists targeted for assassination. The deteriorating security situation has increased fears of sexual violence, which has been reported as a driver of displacement to neighbouring countries. Growing numbers of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants attempted to reach Europe from Libya by sea, with sexual violence against women and girls reported in this context. Extremist activity in Libya is a source of serious concern given regional trends regarding sexual violence committed by such groups.

33. Attacks on courthouses and the judiciary have halted the work of the justice system in Benghazi, Derna, Sirte and Tripoli. UNSMIL is intensifying efforts to facilitate a political dialogue among key stakeholders regarding the resolution of the crisis, which provides an opportunity to address sexual violence. On 23 February, the Council of Ministers issued Decree No. 119 of 2014 recognizing victims of sexual violence as victims of war, which paves the way for them to access redress. In June 2014, the Ministry of Justice adopted Resolution 904, which established a reparations fund for sexual violence victims. As one of the first of its kind globally, this fund will require specialized technical support.

### *Recommendation*

34. I urge the national authorities to implement Decree No. 119 and Resolution 904 of 2014 to ensure redress for all victims, including those affected by the current conflict, through the establishment of multisectoral services and the adoption of legislation to categorically prohibit sexual violence.

## Mali

35. The prevailing insecurity in the north, combined with factors such as fear of reprisals and lack of protection for victims, witnesses and the organizations that support them, have severely limited reporting of sexual violence in Mali. At the same time, the increasing trend of attacks on humanitarian workers (23 reported incidents in 2014) has further hampered the response. Moreover, in recent months, armed groups have splintered and multiplied, making it difficult to identify clear chains of command for the purpose of engaging in protection dialogue.

36. In 2014, the United Nations recorded 90 allegations of CRSV: 69 rapes and 21 sexual assaults. All of these cases occurred in the regions of Gao and Timbuktu and all involved female victims: 52 women and 38 girls. Twelve of the incidents have been attributed to the *Mouvement national de libération de l'Azawad* (MNLA) and five to the *Forces Armées Maliennes* (FAMa), with the remaining cases linked to armed elements that could not be identified. Allegations of sexual violence spiked following the deployment of the *Groupe Tactique Inter Armé Debo*, a new FAMa contingent in Timbuktu in September 2014. Displaced women face an elevated risk of sexual violence due to the lack of community-based protection mechanisms and the proximity

of armed groups to population centers, making it particularly dangerous to access isolated water-points and forests.

37. Progress in the investigation and prosecution of sexual violence has been limited due to death threats against local monitors and the constrained capacity of national justice institutions. In November 2014, NGOs filed 104 criminal complaints against armed groups for incidents of CRSV against women and girls, which took place in 2012 and 2013. These incidents were filed as war crimes and crimes against humanity, and have been attributed to members of the MNLA, Ansar Dine and the *Mouvement pour l'unicité et le jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest* (MUJAO). The United Nations reports that 25 children were born as a result of conflict-related rapes that took place in 2012 and 2013: 17 in Gao, 4 in Mopti and 4 in Bamako. Malian law prohibits abortion and international adoption, which limits the coping mechanisms and options available to survivors. In the majority of cases, these women are socially stigmatized and abandoned by their husbands and families, leaving them in extreme poverty. Their children often face abandonment and death.

38. The *Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali* includes language on CRSV in connection with justice and reconciliation, but fails to address the issue comprehensively. Implementation of the *Ouagadougou Preliminary Peace Agreement* confidence-building measures regrettably resulted in the release of several individuals linked to human rights violations, including CRSV. Following their release, civil society actors and survivors have expressed fear of reprisals and a loss of confidence in the administration of justice. In Timbuktu, MINUSMA interviewed victims of forced marriage to fighters affiliated with Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Ansar Dine, which occurred when these groups occupied the city in 2012. The forced marriages were officiated by Houka Ag Alhousseini, one of the prisoners granted early release.

39. The Government and the UNCT have worked together to train the National Army, Police and Gendarmerie on CRSV. In September 2014, the MAA-MNLA Joint Commander in Timbuktu signed a Military Directive, which calls *inter alia* for the elimination of sexual violence against children. The Malian Police Service has established a hotline linked to rapid police dispatches across the country. Strategic advocacy by the GBV sub-cluster to raise public awareness included 48,000 radio broadcasts in all local languages, reaching 29,060 Malians. The United Nations system has also adapted the *Early-Warning Indicators of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence* to the local context to enhance prevention. The UNCT has supported healthcare providers to improve the clinical management of rape. In Mopti and Bamako, “safe spaces” have been established for women and girls, including those forcibly displaced from the north.

### ***Recommendation***

40. I urge the Government of Mali, with support from UN Action, to develop a comprehensive national strategy to combat SGBV, and to ensure the safety of humanitarian workers so that services can reach remote areas. I further call on all parties to ensure that CRSV is addressed in the inter-Malian dialogue and that perpetrators of sexual violence do not benefit from amnesty or early release.

## Myanmar

41. Information verified by the United Nations indicates that sexual violence remains widespread in Kachin State, where armed conflict continues, as well as Northern Shan and Rakhine States, and areas subject to ceasefire agreements in Chin State and the southeast of the country. Intercommunal fighting in Rakhine State has particularly placed Muslim women in a precarious position due to restrictions on movement and lack of services. Recent reports by women's groups indicate that sexual violence perpetrated by the armed forces continues, with 14 cases of gang-rape and attempted sexual assault documented between January and June 2014. Reports further suggest that the resurgence of conflict and resulting civilian displacements have heightened the risk of sexual violence. Forced marriages of women and girls have been reported, as well as cross-border trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, exacerbated by poverty and the breakdown of community structures. Since early 2014, there has been a marked increase in dangerous migration practices, and a surge in the trafficking of adolescent girls, as well as an increase in sexual violence incidents reported in areas affected by the crisis. However, reporting of such cases is impeded by gaps in service coverage, as well as a requirement that medical care providers share information with the authorities, which compromises confidentiality. Factors exacerbating sexual violence in ethnic areas include the protracted conflict over land and resources, the wide availability of illegal drugs, and the close proximity to civilian population centers and IDP camps of the military bases of all the parties to conflict.

42. The transition process in Myanmar has presented an opportunity for advancing women's rights: The Government's endorsement of the *Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict* in June 2014, and the development of specific legislation on violence against women are promising signs. Nevertheless, during 2014, there continued to be a high level of impunity for CRSV perpetrated by state actors, and a lack of transparency in military courts. While the Government has adopted a zero-tolerance policy for sexual misconduct by its military personnel, successive Special Rapporteurs on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar have recommended the amendment of the Constitution to ensure that security forces are subject to the rule of law and civilian oversight. In 2014, the Government prosecuted two military perpetrators of rape, with one Tatmadaw soldier receiving a 13-year sentence for the rape of a 14-year-old girl and the other being sentenced to life imprisonment for rape. While these are promising first steps, legal recourse needs to be applied uniformly and systematically and must become a better-known part of an overall culture of redress in Myanmar. For instance, in the case of a 10-year-old girl who was raped by a soldier in early 2015, the army intervened to induce her family to accept a financial settlement and to sign a statement that they would not prosecute.

### *Recommendation*

43. I urge the Government to continue with its reform agenda and, in the process, take practical and timely actions to protect and support survivors and to ensure the prosecution of security personnel accused of sexual violence crimes. Sexual violence should be an element included in all ceasefire and peace negotiations, excluded from the scope of amnesty provisions

and addressed in transitional justice processes. It is critical that women are consistently able to participate in and influence these processes.

## Somalia

44. Sexual violence remains widespread across Somalia, notably in the south central regions, with spikes consistently observed during military offensives, particularly at checkpoints. According to the Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS), 2,891 GBV incidents were reported between January and August 2014 in Mogadishu alone. Of these, 28 percent are rape cases and 9 percent are sexual assaults. These numbers are regarded as a gross underestimation, as fear of stigma and reprisals inhibits reporting. Most reported cases (81%) involve IDPs, who number more than a million across the country, with members of minority clans exposed to greatest risk. Armed militias allied with the Government and clan militias are also accused of forcing girls into marriage, with 46 cases of forced marriage confirmed. Interviews with women's groups in the newly-recovered area of Hudur in Bakool region indicate that forced marriage was common, as in other areas under Al-Shabaab (AS) control. Girls forced to marry AS fighters are often left behind during military offensives when AS retreats or when they are deemed "too old" and abandoned.

45. Survivors are frequently forced to marry their rapists as a form of "restitution" ordered by customary courts. In Puntland region, many women and girls subjected to sexual violence in displacement camps avoid pursuing legal action for fear of reprisals by their attackers. In the few cases where survivors choose to report, they are required to pay fees to the police to open a case-file and to cover the costs of feeding the accused while detained. There have also been periodic reports of girls raped by members of the national army and police, which erodes trust in the legal system, as demonstrated by GBVIMS data indicating that the majority of survivors decline offers of referral to legal assistance. Women and girls who become pregnant as a result of rape are often further victimized by their families and communities. Health-care facilities are limited, owing to the volatile security situation and restricted humanitarian access.

46. The main perpetrators of sexual violence are unidentified armed men, though there are also reports implicating the Somali National Army and the Somali Police Force, in addition to AS. During the reporting period, military courts sentenced a number of Somali National Army soldiers to lengthy terms of imprisonment and capital punishment for rape. While efforts to counter impunity are critical, these trials have raised serious due process concerns. Troops from the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) have been accused of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), and have taken mitigation measures in response.<sup>4</sup> In May 2014, the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development, with support from the United Nations, developed a *National Action Plan to Combat Sexual Violence in Conflict*. The Government also drafted a *Sexual Offenses Bill*. The United Nations is supporting efforts to ensure that domestic laws align with international standards and that initiatives to address CRSV are integrated into rule of law programming for the police and justice sector.

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<sup>4</sup> A workshop was held in October with AMISOM leadership to strengthen accountability measures; an AU investigation team was deployed to Mogadishu in November; and AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security, Binta Diop, visited Somalia to reaffirm commitment to the zero-tolerance policy. The AU is yet to make their report on this incident public.

## ***Recommendation***

47. I reiterate my call to the Federal Government of Somalia to implement the commitments made under the Joint Communiqué of 7 May 2013 and its *National Action Plan to Combat Sexual Violence in Conflict*, including specific plans for the army and police. I encourage the adoption of a *Sexual Offenses Bill* as a matter of priority.

## **South Sudan**

48. Sexual violence remains prevalent in South Sudan, exacerbated by impunity and a militarized society in which gender inequality is pronounced. Factors such as forced disarmament, illegal arms circulation, mass displacement, cattle-raiding, intercommunal violence and food insecurity have increased the vulnerability of women and girls to sexual violence. Such violence is, however, trivialized by law enforcement officials and the community, with survivors often forced to marry perpetrators as a “remedy”. Moreover, medical, legal and psychosocial services are available only in limited areas, with some facilities deliberately targeted during military attacks, particularly in Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile States. The scale and severity of sexual violence increased with the outbreak of the current conflict between the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) and Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition (SPLM/A-iO) on 15 December 2013. Repeated offensives and counteroffensives have led to cycles of revenge attacks and rapes, often ethnically motivated. Armed elements have also raped women from neighbouring countries based on their nationalities and alleged alliances with parties to the conflict. During the reporting period, 167 incidents of CRSV affecting 236 persons were documented, including 75 incidents affecting 116 minors. Women and girls were targeted in 95 percent of these cases.

49. Incidents of sexual violence have been reported in all ten states as part of military tactics employed by both parties, mainly in Unity, Upper Nile, Lakes, Jonglei, Central, Eastern and Western Equatoria, and Western Bahr el Ghazal States. A report released by UNMISS on 8 May 2014 found credible evidence to suggest that acts of sexual violence committed in the context of the conflict may amount to crimes against humanity. Documented forms of sexual violence include rape, gang-rape, sexual slavery, abduction, castration, forced nudity and forced abortion. At least 31 victims died as a result of rape; some survivors were impregnated, mutilated, or infected with HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. More than 200 allegations of abductions of women and girls taken as “wives” and/or for the purposes of sexual slavery by both parties to the conflict are under investigation. Other trends include the rape and gang-rape of women in and around Protection of Civilians (PoC) sites in Unity State and Jonglei State by soldiers, with an ethnic dimension that mirrors the divisions of the conflict. Unidentified uniformed men have also repeatedly harassed and raped women and girls leaving the PoC sites to access markets, water-points and firewood collection areas. UNMISS has taken measures to mitigate these threats, such as patrolling high-risk zones and facilitating the supply of firewood and fuel. UN agencies, including UNFPA, UNICEF and UNHCR, have made efforts to ensure that women have a voice in the management of PoC sites, as well as distributing dignity kits and installing solar lighting in isolated areas.

50. Outside of the current conflict dynamics, sexual violence continues to be reported during inter-communal clashes, particularly in Lakes State, where incidents of rape including gang-rape have been perpetrated by SPLA soldiers, Dinka youth, and armed cattle-keepers, including White Army elements. The South Sudan National Police Service (SSNPS), the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), SPLA Nuer deserters and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) are among the perpetrators. Both major parties to the conflict that erupted in December 2013 have committed to refrain from "any acts of rape, sexual abuse and torture" in the *Cessation of Hostilities Agreement* signed on 23 January 2014. The Government signed a Joint Communiqué to address CRSV with my Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict on 11 October 2014 during her visit to South Sudan. This agreement includes measures such as the issuance and enforcement of clear orders through military and police chains of command prohibiting sexual violence, accountability mechanisms, exclusion of perpetrators from the security forces and from amnesty provisions, and enhanced multisectoral services for survivors. In December 2014, opposition leader Dr. Riek Machar issued a communiqué in which he committed to undertake similar measures.

### ***Recommendation***

51. I urge the parties to the conflict to adopt action plans to implement the commitments made under their respective Communiqués. I call upon the Government of South Sudan to address the negative impact of customary law on women's rights and to reflect international human rights standards in national law. I also encourage the African Union to make public and act upon the report of its Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan.

### **Sudan (Darfur)**

52. Conflict-related sexual violence, including rape, attempted rape, abduction for the purposes of sexual exploitation, indecent assault, sexual humiliation and serious injuries or killings following rape, remains a dominant feature of the conflict in Darfur. In 2014, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) documented 117 incidents involving 206 victims, as compared with 149 cases involving 273 victims in 2013. Victims ranged in age from four to 70 years; 204 of the victims were female and two were male (boys). In two incidents, six women were killed in connection with attempted rape and 30 percent of the recorded rape survivors sustained serious physical injuries. The United Nations also documented one case of a child conceived following rape, which resulted in the marriage of the victim (aged 14) to the perpetrator as a form of traditional settlement. These numbers must be interpreted against the backdrop of a highly insecure environment beset by access restrictions.

53. Serious allegations were levelled against the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) regarding a mass rape of some 200 women and girls in Tabit, northeast of El Fasher, North Darfur, over a period of 36 hours beginning on 30 October 2014. Despite several attempts by UNAMID to access the area, Government authorities granted access on only one occasion (9 November). The presence of SAF and Military Intelligence, observed during interviews with members of the community, may have influenced their reticence to speak. The Government subsequently launched its own investigation and the Special Prosecutor for Darfur, who visited amid a large Government presence, reported to OHCHR in December that the allegations could not be substantiated.

54. The highest number of cases of sexual violence was recorded in January, February, April and August, corresponding to periods of massive civilian displacement driven by military and search operations launched by the Government against villages suspected of sympathizing with opposition groups, as well as during clashes between Government forces and armed groups. In South Darfur on 27 and 28 February, in 10 separate incidents, women were subjected to sexual violence as they fled for safety following attacks on Hijer, Um Gunya and surrounding villages by armed elements believed to be members of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Several other incidents of sexual violence were reportedly committed by members of the RSF following their deployment to Darfur.

55. Most sexual assaults (71 percent), affecting 147 victims, occurred while women and girls were carrying out essential sustenance and livelihood activities, such as farming and the collection of grass and firewood, often in isolated areas. Twenty-eight victims were attacked in their homes, inside or in the vicinity of IDP camps. The proliferation of small arms in IDP settlements, as well as towns and villages, contributed to the prevalence of sexual violence: in 60 percent of all reported cases involving 119 victims the alleged perpetrator(s) were armed. The majority of perpetrators were described by victims and witnesses as being armed men from Arab tribes, targeting non-Arab women, with accounts indicating that the perpetrators sought to humiliate victims and their families, to reinforce a sense of powerlessness. In 27 cases, the alleged perpetrators were identified as members of the Government's security and law enforcement apparatus.

56. Of 63 incidents reported to the Sudanese Police (53 percent of the cases documented), UNAMID has seen investigations initiated in 20 cases to date, with 14 arrests made and, in two cases, trials completed resulting in convictions. In terms of legal redress, underreporting of cases is the first hurdle in the fight against impunity, owing to the limited reach of law enforcement and justice institutions. Only 63 cases (53 percent) were reported to the police, 44 cases (38 percent) went unreported, and three cases (5 percent) were settled traditionally. Even where cases are reported, there is generally a lack of action on the part of the authorities to bring perpetrators to justice. In 12 cases (10 percent), victims pointed to the absence of police as a reason for non-reporting; in 16 cases (14 percent) victims cited a lack of trust and confidence in the authorities; and in 6 cases (5 percent) victims said they did not report the incident because of the social stigma associated with sexual violence and for fear of reprisal attacks by the alleged perpetrator. For example, on 2 March in El Geneina, West Darfur, UNAMID monitored the trial of a man accused of stabbing a woman to death on 25 September 2013 for having filed a case of attempted rape against him. Moreover, where cases concern national security forces, immunity from prosecution for acts committed in the course of operational duties has provided a basis for delaying and denying justice. On 18 September, a Sudanese Court in El Fasher convicted a man for raping a UNAMID police officer on 10 April 2014.

57. In a series of constructive steps, Sudan amended section 149 of its Criminal Act (1991) to more clearly define the crime of rape and align it more closely with international standards. The Minister of Interior committed to deploy at least six women police investigators to West Darfur to investigate sexual violence cases. In East Darfur, a State Committee on GBV was established in March. The Government has conducted joint protection patrols with UNAMID in East and

Central Darfur States. In South Darfur, a Joint Government of Sudan/United Nations Early Warning and Intervention Committee was established in December and is expected to identify imminent threats to civilians and measures to mitigate them, including sexual violence. The *Early-Warning Indicators of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence* have been adapted to the situation in Darfur and proven useful in informing such strategies.

58. The United Nations has also provided technical and financial support to Sudanese institutions, including the GBV State Committees. Community Police trained by UNAMID have played an important role in improving the protection of IDPs. United Nations agencies have trained medical personnel on the clinical management of rape, with UNFPA making PEP kits available to victims via the Ministry of Health. UNFPA further supported the construction and rehabilitation of women's centers across Darfur, to enable women to access psychosocial support in a context where services have been disrupted or rendered inaccessible.

### ***Recommendation***

59. I call upon the Government to grant the United Nations and its humanitarian partners unfettered access for monitoring and the provision of assistance to people in need. Given the grave concern over sexual violence in Darfur for more than a decade, I encourage the Government to engage with my Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict to develop a framework of cooperation to comprehensively address the issue.

## **Syrian Arab Republic**

60. Sexual violence against women, girls, men and boys has been a characteristic of the Syrian conflict from its inception. It has been most commonly reported in the context of house searches, hostage-taking, in detention and at checkpoints. In interviews with female refugees in neighbouring countries, fear of rape is cited as a major factor influencing their flight from Syria. However, it is extremely difficult to obtain reliable data on CRSV due to prevailing insecurity, the fear of stigma and reprisals, the lack of specialized, safe and confidential services and challenges in accessing services where they are available.

61. Since mid-2014, there has been a significant increase in reported cases of sexual violence perpetrated by terrorist groups, in particular ISIL. During its August 2014 attack on Sinjar in northern Iraq, ISIL abducted hundreds of Yezidi women and girls. Some of these abductees were taken into Syria and "sold" in markets across Ar-Raqqa, to be used as sex slaves. Reports also indicate that forced marriage to foreign fighters, has become increasingly common in ISIL-controlled territory. This phenomenon has also been observed in IDP settings and neighbouring countries, where refugee communities have resorted to measures such as child marriage, removal from schools and physical confinement to "protect" daughters and wives. In many countries of the region, the Penal Code includes marriage as a form of "reparation" for rape survivors, and some settings have seen a significant increase in polygamy since the crisis. On 27 April, UN Women launched a report on GBV amongst Syrian refugees in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, which found increased levels of sexual harassment and commercial sex in and around camps. Similar reports were received concerning the plight of Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries.

Women and girls, as well as LGBTI individuals, have been subjected to sexual assault and harassment at checkpoints controlled by armed groups and in the context of detention.<sup>5</sup>

62. In 2014, the United Nations continued to receive reports of sexual violence committed by the Syrian Armed Forces, as well as by pro-government militias. For instance, the International Commission of Inquiry on Syria reports that women, men and children have been subjected to rape and sexual humiliation by members of pro-government forces during arrest and detention.<sup>6</sup> The United Nations has supported the Ministry of Social Affairs to establish a Women and Child Protection Unit to respond to SGBV.

### ***Recommendation***

63. I acknowledge the Government's invitation to my Special Representative to visit Syria, and call upon the authorities, in the context of such a visit, to agree on specific measures to prevent sexual violence including by security forces. I condemn the use of sexual violence by ISIL and all other parties listed in the Annex of this report, and call on them to immediately cease such violations and allow unfettered access for the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

## **Yemen**

64. The escalation of armed conflict, political instability and lawlessness in Yemen led to the internal displacement of 148,108 individuals over the course of 2014. The majority of those displaced were women and children, who faced increased vulnerability to SGBV. A marked increase in violence against women has been observed in conflict-affected areas, with the most prevalent manifestations being rape, sexual assault and early marriage. A disturbing link exists between the presence of armed groups and an increase in early and forced marriage, resulting in the sexual abuse of some of the poorest and most vulnerable girls in society. Many of these girls become pregnant and some have reported being abandoned along with their children when fighters have fled from government forces in the course of military operations.

65. Yemen continues to attract thousands of refugees fleeing conflict in the Horn of Africa and Syria. UNHCR has reported sexual violence by trafficking gangs, often affecting women who may already have fled the trauma of CRSV in their country of origin. Sexual violence is also reportedly perpetrated upon arrival, particularly along the Red Sea Coast, where smugglers and traffickers kidnap migrants and hold them for ransom. Few medical professionals in Yemen are trained to provide support to sexual violence survivors and there are no national guidelines on the clinical management of rape. Efforts to pursue justice are complicated by the lack of a clear legal definition of sexual violence and the codification of rape as adultery in Yemeni law, which shields the perpetrators at the expense of the victims.

### ***Recommendation***

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<sup>5</sup> On 30 April 2014, the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces and the Free Syrian Army adopted a Communiqué to Eliminate Sexual Violence, in which they commit to issue command orders, investigate abuses and designate a high-level representative to oversee implementation.

<sup>6</sup> Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, 5 February 2015 (A/HRC/28/69).

66. I urge the authorities to undertake legislative reform as a basis for addressing impunity for sexual violence, ensuring services for survivors and aligning the minimum legal age of marriage with international standards. I further call on the authorities to engage with local community and faith-based leaders to address SGBV and discriminatory social norms.

## **B. Addressing sexual violence crimes in post-conflict settings**

### **Bosnia and Herzegovina**

67. Twenty years after the end of the war, conflict-related sexual violence remains a sensitive political issue, with slow progress made in establishing a comprehensive support system for survivors. The Government has recently expressed its intention to address CRSV, but has focused primarily on prosecution rather than the broad range of needs. The absence of services extends to children born of wartime rape, who face particular risk of stigma, abandonment, rejection and low socio-economic status. The stigmatization and economic marginalization of rape survivors themselves remains a concern. The UNCT in Bosnia and Herzegovina has launched a joint project to tackle the legacy of CRSV. This project seeks to improve redress for survivors by mapping needs and capacities, improving access to justice and services, and reducing stigma. The Peace Support Operations Training Centre, with support from UN Women, continues to provide pre-deployment training on CRSV for armed forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region. The inclusion of a specific objective on CRSV in the *Second National Action Plan for the Implementation of SCR 1325* is a positive development, which lays the foundations for enhanced service-delivery to survivors.

#### ***Recommendation***

68. I urge the relevant authorities to harmonize legislation and policies to recognize the rights of survivors of CRSV to reparations and to allocate a specific budget for this purpose. I further call upon the authorities to protect and support survivors participating in judicial proceedings through, *inter alia*, referrals to free legal aid, psychosocial and health services, as well as economic empowerment programs.

### **Côte d'Ivoire**

69. In 2014, UNOCI documented 325 cases of rape, with 230 of the incidents committed against minors aged between 2 and 17 years, including one boy. Fifty-seven of the incidents were gang-rapes, which tend to be committed during carjacking or in private homes during armed robberies. The presence of criminal elements across the country, combined with incomplete DDR, weak law enforcement and the absence of a regularly functioning high court, puts women and children at risk. The risks are greatest in the western and northern parts of the country, which have the highest concentrations of ex-combatants. For instance, sexual violence remains high in Bouaké, where many ex-combatants who are motorcycle, bus and taxi drivers have been involved in robbery and rape at gunpoint. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons exacerbates insecurity. The national DDR process, with support from UNOCI, has

integrated gender training into its re-socialization camp for former combatants in an attempt to mitigate the threat of sexual violence. During the period under review, 20 members of the *Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire* (FRCI), one policeman and nine ex-combatants were reportedly involved in rape incidents, though only three have since been arrested.

70. Where alleged perpetrators have been prosecuted, sexual violence offences are often reclassified as the lesser charge of indecent assault (“*attentat à la pudeur*”) in order to be processed promptly by first instance courts. Serious crimes are normally tried by criminal courts (*Cours d’Assises*); however these are facing a severe backlog. In a positive development, on 18 March, the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Public Liberties issued Ministerial circular 005 informing law enforcement officials that a medical certificate (which typically costs USD100) is no longer a pre-requisite to opening a rape investigation. This removes a significant barrier to justice. Since February 2013, Côte d’Ivoire has embarked upon a process of legal reform, including to expand its restrictive definition of sexual violence (currently limited to rape) and to clarify the elements of sexual violence offences to harmonize its Criminal and Civil Codes with international standards. In addition, the Government has drafted a specific law on the protection of victims and witnesses. The Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission submitted its report in December 2014, in which it documents grave violations committed between 1990 and 2011, including sexual violence, and recommends accountability measures.

71. On 21 July, FRCI launched a Committee of National Experts on CRSV, recalling the *Declaration of Commitment* made at the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict held in June. This Committee has developed an *Action Plan for the FRCI* on addressing sexual violence. More than 900 members of the FRCI have been trained on GBV to date, as well as over 300 police officers and gendarmes. In November 2014, 20 women cadres from the national police participated in a seminar on female leadership organized by UNPOL, which focused on strengthening their role in the fight against GBV. The United Nations country team is also supporting the national police to establish specialized units and gender desks. In September 2014, the Government of Côte d’Ivoire officially launched a *National Strategy to Combat GBV*, with support from UN Action and coordinated by UNFPA.

### ***Recommendation***

72. I urge the Government of Côte d’Ivoire to ensure the effective implementation of its *National Strategy to Combat GBV* and *Action Plan for the FRCI*, and call on the international community to support these efforts. It is critical to accelerate DDR and strengthen law enforcement to ensure that ex-combatants who have been reintegrated into the transport sector do not pose a risk to women and girls reliant on these services. The Government and the international community must ensure monitoring and awareness-raising to mitigate the possibility of a recurrence of sexual violence in the context of the presidential elections in October 2015.

## **Liberia**

73. Twelve years after the end of the civil war, sexual violence continues to present a significant threat to the physical security of women and children across Liberia. The social

breakdown that occurred during 14 years of brutal conflict, in which sexual violence was rampant, has left a profound imprint on Liberian society, especially as the issue was not addressed during the peace process. The rape of minors is the most frequently-reported incident of SGBV. Available information also points to a disturbing trend of increasing sexual violence committed by minors. Official data from the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection for 2014, records 1,392 incidents of SGBV nationwide, with the majority documented in Montserrado County where the most services and reporting structures exist. Of these, 626 were cases of rapes, with 605 of the victims being under 18. Data from nine “one-stop centers” records 1,162 cases, of which 965 were rapes, 27 were gang-rapes and 85 were sexual assaults. The Government of Liberia/UN Joint Programme on SGBV, established in 2008 with support from UN Action, has made commendable progress in strengthening the criminal justice system; building the capacity of health and psychosocial service-providers, as well as the police through the expansion of the Women and Child Protection Section of the Liberian National Police; and raising awareness at community-level to challenge harmful traditional beliefs and practices that perpetuate impunity and victim-blame. Regrettably, as a result of the Ebola virus epidemic, many SGBV treatment facilities have closed and are not prioritised for re-opening.<sup>7</sup>

### ***Recommendation***

74. I call on the Government of Liberia to continue its critical efforts to combat SGBV including through the Government/UN Joint Programme, even in the context of recovery from the Ebola virus epidemic.

## **Nepal**

75. Survivors of sexual violence during Nepal’s civil conflict have not yet been officially recognized as “conflict-affected persons”, which limits their access to the Government’s Interim Relief Programme. As a result of their exclusion, there have been no dedicated services for survivors, though some support has been secured through peacebuilding and development projects. In terms of ongoing institutional reforms, there are as yet no safeguards to prevent individuals accused of human rights violations from being retained and promoted within the security forces. One of the key obstacles to addressing the legacy of CRSV in Nepal is the lack of comprehensive documentation on its scope and character. In April 2014, the Parliament of Nepal adopted the *Act on the Commission on Investigation of Disappeared Persons, Truth and Reconciliation, 2071*, which established two Commissions: the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Commission of Inquiry on Disappearances. This Act acknowledged rape and other forms of sexual violence as “serious violations of human rights”. The Minister of Foreign Affairs participated in the June 2014 Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, where he stressed that Nepal had adopted a zero-tolerance policy on SGBV. Nevertheless, challenges to accessing justice remain. For example, the 35-day statute of limitations for the filing of a rape complaint has not yet been amended, despite the 2014 Supreme Court verdict that there should be no statute of limitations for international crimes.

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<sup>7</sup> Anecdotal evidence suggests that sexual violence may have increased in Ebola-affected post-conflict settings such as Liberia and Sierra Leone, owing to the closure of social institutions, structures and schools, placing girls at heightened risk. At the same time, access to sexual and reproductive health services has drastically diminished.

### ***Recommendation***

76. I encourage the Government to ensure that survivors of CRSV are recognized under the law as “conflict victims”, which will enable them to access services, judicial remedies and reparations. I further call for all parties involved in the transitional justice process to ensure that the rights and needs of sexual violence survivors are addressed in institutional reforms and that these crimes are excluded from amnesties and statutes of limitations.

### **Sri Lanka**

77. In the five years since the end of armed conflict in Sri Lanka, the Government has committed to supporting the resettlement and reintegration of civilians displaced by the violence, and has made considerable progress in this regard. However, one of the major unaddressed issues is impunity for CRSV. The Government has adopted a zero-tolerance policy on SGBV and committed to take stringent action in response to such crimes, including discharging and prosecuting offenders from the security forces. However, there are indications that abduction, arbitrary detention, torture, rape and other forms of sexual violence have increased in the post-war period. Notably, Tamil women and girls have reported sexual abuse in the context of the ongoing militarization of their areas of residence. Allegations of sexual violence by the Sri Lankan security forces against members of the Tamil community in the closing months of the war and in the post-conflict period have been extensively documented, but rarely addressed. Testimony of women released from detention in 2014 indicates that acts of sexual torture were accompanied by racial insults and specifically directed against individuals perceived as having been linked to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

### ***Recommendation***

78. I call upon the newly-elected Government to investigate allegations of sexual violence, including against national armed and security forces, and to provide multi-sectoral services for survivors, including reparations and economic empowerment programmes for women at risk (such as war widows and female heads of households).

## **C. Other situations of concern**

### **Nigeria**

79. One of the most alarming episodes of 2014 was the abduction on 14 April of 276 girls from a Government Secondary School in Chibok, Borno State, by Boko Haram. This incident must be viewed in the context of over six years of insurgency in northern Nigeria, characterized by consistent human rights violations, including abduction and sexual abuse by Boko Haram. In addition, the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in the northeast has resulted in large-scale displacement, which according to humanitarian workers and displaced civilians has led to rape and child trafficking during population flight and in IDP camps. However, as the

Nigerian Police Gender Unit notes, SGBV is rarely reported due to fear of stigmatization and prevailing cultural beliefs.

80. In Borno State, Boko Haram has abducted women and girls, often forcing them into marriages that entail repeated rape. These marriages are sometimes proposed as a form of “protection” from rape by other members of the group. Abducted girls who refuse marriage or sexual contact within marriage have faced violence and death threats. Forced marriage, enslavement and the “sale” of kidnapped women and girls are central to Boko Haram’s *modus operandi* and ideology. As part of the counter-insurgency response, the Government has deployed a joint task force comprising military, police, immigration and intelligence officers. Vigilantes, referred to as the “civilian joint task force”, have also emerged to protect their communities from insurgents. All counter-insurgency operations should take into account the security of women and girls.

### ***Recommendation***

81. I encourage the Government to implement its *National Action Plan on SCR 1325* to ensure that women’s protection concerns are mainstreamed throughout its security operations. I also call upon the authorities to guarantee security in and around IDP camps and to extend medical and psychosocial services to high-risk areas.

### **III. Sexual violence perpetrated in the context of rising violent extremism**

82. The confluence of crises wrought by violent extremism has revealed a shocking trend of sexual violence employed as a tactic of terror by radical groups. Egregious forms of CRSV have been perpetrated by extremist groups in Iraq, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia and Syria, including rape, sexual slavery, forced marriage, forced pregnancy and forced abortion, including as a form of religious and ethnic persecution. Conflict environments that are conducive to extremism, such as Libya and Yemen, will also require close attention.

83. The patterns highlighted in this report demonstrate that sexual violence is not incidental, but integrally linked with the strategic objectives, ideology and funding of extremist groups. It is used to advance such tactical imperatives as recruitment; terrorizing populations into compliance; displacing communities from strategic areas; generating revenue through sex trafficking, the slave trade, ransoms, looting and the control of natural resources; torture to elicit intelligence; conversion and indoctrination through forced marriage; and to establish, alter or dissolve kinship ties that bind communities.

84. Sexual violence by extremist groups arises from discrimination and dehumanization based on gender, sexual orientation, ethnic, political or religious identity, in particular the subordination of women and girls. Indeed, the same ideology and objectives that motivate Boko Haram to abduct women and girls in Nigeria, also spur ISIL to enslave women and girls in Syria and Iraq. Common to such cases is the assault on women’s rights and bodies that presages the advance of extremist groups. As these groups harbour state aspirations, the control of women’s reproductive capacity is vital to nation-building and to raising a generation in their own image. For this reason, “marriage bureaux” have been established in areas under ISIL control, to

encourage women to marry fighters, and “bride prices” have been paid by armed groups in Yemen on behalf of fighters. Modern communications technology has been exploited in the service of an ideology at odds with the modern world: social media has converted brutality into a form of propaganda to incite, radicalize and attract recruits.

85. Countering extremism, and the flow of funds and fighters to these groups, must include efforts to empower women and address the spectrum of sexual violence crimes that extremist groups propagate. At the same time, deeper community engagement and consultation will be required, including with traditional and religious leaders who must help to break the silence on sexual violence and re-direct the shame and stigma to the perpetrators. Classical counterterrorism efforts have been notoriously gender-blind. However, the Security Council meeting on Foreign Terrorist Fighters, held in September 2014, marked an emerging recognition that members of extremist groups enslave, rape and forcibly marry women and girls, resulting in Resolution 2178 (2014) which calls for the empowerment of “youth, families and women” as part of an overarching strategy to prevent the spread of terror. It is critical for the international community to deepen its information-base on the nature, scope and objectives of sexual violence carried out by radical groups, in order to define appropriate interventions, in consultation with women and affected communities. At the same time, counterterrorism measures by Governments, security forces and allied groups, must respect fundamental human rights and the commitments pledged by states to end sexual violence in conflict. Moreover, the surge in violent extremism and the urgency of addressing it do not negate the need for sustained resolve and resources to combat protracted CRSV in other settings of concern.

#### **IV. Engagements by the network United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict (UN Action)**

86. In 2014, UN Action, an interagency network chaired by my Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict engaged in a number of strategic initiatives to improve system-wide coordination, knowledge-building, advocacy and technical country-level support. To bolster capacity on the ground, UN Action has committed catalytic funding for Women’s Protection Advisers in the DRC and Côte d’Ivoire. In Côte d’Ivoire, a new national strategy to combat GBV was launched during a UN Action interagency mission in September 2014. On the eve of this launch, a media sensitization workshop with local journalists was held in Abidjan, culminating in the creation of a network of journalists against GBV to help disseminate key messages and amplify UN Action’s *Stop Rape Now* campaign. Building on this experience, UN Action is developing guidance on the safe and ethical reporting of sexual violence in conflict-affected settings, as part of a broader strategy to mobilize the media in countries of concern.

87. In 2014, UN Action produced a number of tools and knowledge products to improve practice in the field. It published a new *Guidance Note on the Intersections between the Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements (MARA) and Gender-based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS)*, with a view to improving the way data are gathered and reported to the Security Council, while safeguarding the rights and protection needs of survivors. In addition, UN Action has supported the development and dissemination of a *Guidance Note of the Secretary-General on Reparations for Conflict-Related Sexual Violence*, and policy briefs on psychosocial and mental health interventions.

88. The scenario-based pre-deployment training for peacekeepers, which UN Action pioneered in 2010, continues to be rolled out in peacekeeping training centres to improve the operational readiness of military and police peacekeepers to react swiftly and appropriately to CRSV. DPKO/DFS *Specialized Training Materials on Prevention and Response to CRSV for Military Components* address CRSV at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. Several training and Training of Trainers (TOT) sessions took place in 2014, namely in Bangladesh for the deploying contingent to MINUSCA and MONUSCO, and a pilot TOT for newly-deployed and re-hatted MINUSCA military and police commanders.

89. To enhance prevention capabilities in mission settings, the framework of early-warning indicators of CRSV developed by UN Action has been adapted and used in several settings, including Côte d'Ivoire, the DRC, South Sudan and Sudan (Darfur). Technical support at country level was provided for the continued roll-out of the *Guidance for Mediators on Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ceasefire and Peace Agreements*, including through the training of envoys, mediators and mediation experts. In 2014, the number of ceasefire agreements that include specific provisions on CRSV continued to increase, with two new agreements signed (for CAR and South Sudan).

90. In November 2014, UN Action and the Government of Switzerland co-hosted the third annual meeting of donors and parties engaged in the CRSV agenda, attended by 19 governments, which aimed to strengthen strategic partnerships and define joint, coordinated actions in priority countries. UN Action also works in partnership with the UK Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative, contributing substantively to the *International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict*.

91. All of these activities are supported by voluntary contributions to the United Nations Action Multi-Partner Trust Fund, which fosters joint action across the spectrum of United Nations entities and encourages transparency and cooperation in the spirit of “delivering as one”.

## **V. Engagements by the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict (TOE)**

92. The Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict was mandated by SCR 1888 (2009) to support national authorities to strengthen the rule of law in order to address this crime. The Team reports directly to my Special Representative and is composed of experts from DPKO, UNDP and OHCHR. In addition to this core capacity, the TOE maintains a roster of experts with a broad range of specialization to support national authorities. The TOE assists national authorities in developing a more structured justice and security sector response to CRSV, often on the basis of political commitments secured at the highest levels by my Special Representative.

93. The TOE assists national institutions in the following thematic areas: criminal investigations and prosecution; collection and preservation of evidence; military justice system investigation and prosecution; criminal law reform and procedural law reform; protection of victims, witnesses and justice officials; and reparations. The TOE promotes south-south

cooperation, enabling countries facing CRSV to learn from each other's experiences, and is currently compiling good practices in this regard.

94. In 2014, the TOE provided technical assistance for the creation of a rapid response unit in CAR composed of trained gendarmes and police officers, to improve investigation. The Team also provided inputs to the draft Law on the Creation of a Special Criminal Court to ensure that it has jurisdiction over crimes of sexual violence. The TOE provided input to the ground-breaking Law 1719 on Access to justice for victims of sexual violence in Colombia, and will continue to work with the authorities, including by facilitating the sharing of good practices with other countries. In Côte d'Ivoire, the TOE helped to strengthen the justice pillar of the *National Strategy to Combat GBV* that was adopted in September 2014. The Team also facilitated experience-sharing between Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone, and supported the development of an action plan by the FRCI, which covers prevention, capacity-building and deterrence.

95. In the DRC, the TOE has supported the Government to implement its commitments under the 2013 Joint Communiqué and provided advice to the Government on the draft law on mixed courts. It has also assisted the Office of the Personal Representative of the President on Sexual Violence and Child Recruitment (OPR) to formulate a plan of operation, which includes accountability for a number of emblematic sexual violence incidents (Walikale, Bushani and Mutongo). The TOE is also providing technical advice to the DRC on implementing reparations programs for survivors. It supported the FARDC to develop a landmark action plan to prevent sexual violence, which was launched in August 2014. In cooperation with UNDP, the TOE has contributed to the monitoring of sexual violence cases, and has provided technical assistance to the Senate's Special Commission on Sexual Violence, to bolster its law-making and oversight role.

96. As a result of technical support from the TOE to the Guinean Panel of Judges, 12 military officers, including senior officers, and a gendarme have been indicted for crimes allegedly committed during the events of 28 September 2009, including sexual violence. A judicial expert deployed by the TOE continues to assist the Panel in investigations and case-building. The expert also assists in relation to safeguards for the security of victims and witnesses, reparations, judicial cooperation with neighbouring countries, as well as in the planning of the forthcoming access to mass graves. The TOE deployed to Liberia in July 2014 to contribute to the review of the Government/UN Joint Program on SGBV and to assist in defining recommendations on how to address remaining challenges.

97. In coordination with the United Nations in Somalia, the TOE assisted the Government in drafting its national action plan on combatting sexual violence, which constitutes a road map for the prevention and response to crimes of sexual violence. In addition, the TOE has contributed to strengthening the provisions of the draft *Sexual Offenses Bill*, which is due to be discussed by the parliament. In South Sudan, the TOE laid the groundwork for the Joint Communiqué signed between the United Nations and the Government in October 2014, and is working with the Government and UN system to develop an implementation plan. In the context of the Framework of Cooperation between the OSRSG-SVC and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), signed in December 2014, the TOE has worked with the Kampala-based ICGLR Training Facility on Sexual Violence to conduct training for police from ICGLR

countries on the use of forensic evidence. The TOE collaborates with a number of other institutions such as Justice Rapid Response and the UK PSVI, and contributed to the development of the *International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict*.

## **VI. Recommendations**

98. The information presented in my report underscores the need to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in order to address the root causes of CRSV, transform harmful social norms and counter the rise of extremism. The following recommendations outline critical prevention and response measures to combat CRSV. In their implementation, I continue to emphasize the need for national ownership, leadership and responsibility. The United Nations stands ready to support national authorities in their efforts.

99. I urge the Security Council to:

(a) Recognize that in addition to being employed as a tactic of war, as per resolution 1820 (2008), sexual violence can also constitute a tactic of terror. Accordingly, efforts to prevent and address sexual violence should be closely and strategically aligned with efforts to prevent violent extremism;

(b) Fully integrate the issue of CRSV into the work of relevant Security Council Sanctions Committees, including the Al-Qaida Sanctions List, as part of the designation criteria for the imposition of targeted measures;

(c) Continue to employ all means at its disposal to influence parties to conflict to comply with international law, including referring matters to the ICC. Referrals should apply to individuals who commit, command or condone (by failing to prevent or punish) sexual violence, in line with the modes of liability under international criminal law;

(d) Give due consideration to the risk factors and warning signs of sexual violence in its monitoring of the security situation in conflict-affected countries, particularly in relation to elections, civil strife and mass population movements, such as forced displacements or expulsions;

(e) Use its periodic field visits to focus attention on CRSV concerns and to solicit the views of affected communities, women's civil society organizations and associations of survivors, as appropriate.

100. I encourage Member States, donors and regional organizations to:

(a) Support the delivery of multisectoral assistance for sexual violence survivors, including the full range of sexual and reproductive health services, HIV awareness and response measures, psychosocial, legal and livelihood support, ensuring differentiated and appropriate responses for children and male survivors. Reintegration support, including shelters and economic livelihood programmes, should be made available to individuals released from contexts of abduction, forced

marriage, trafficking and sexual slavery, as survivors and their families often face social and economic marginalization;

(b) Support the United Nations to engage in dialogue with both State and non-State parties to elicit protection commitments to prevent and address CRSV and to help ensure compliance with these commitments, as well as supporting engagement with faith-based leaders to counter religious justifications for violence and reduce the stigma faced by survivors;

(c) Continue to emphasise the central role of civil society, including women's organizations, in community-level prevention, protection and support, as well as journalists and human rights defenders who report on and respond to these traditionally hidden crimes and can play a pivotal role in changing social norms, attitudes and behaviours;

(d) Support the accelerated deployment of both Women's Protection Advisers (WPAs) and Gender Advisors in priority settings, in order to facilitate the full implementation of all resolutions on CRSV and Women, Peace and Security, including by ensuring that these posts are reflected in the regular budgets of United Nations missions. Given the scope of work under both portfolios, it is critical that these functions remain distinct and complementary;

(e) Provide adequate and timely funding to ensure that ceasefire and peace agreements comprehensively address CRSV and are effectively implemented including by: supporting the deployment of gender expertise to mediation teams and monitoring mechanisms; deployment of both female and male observers; and training of monitoring teams on how to effectively monitor for CRSV. In addition, ensure that women have the opportunity to meaningfully participate in all ongoing peace processes, including in relation to CAR, Libya, Mali, Myanmar and South Sudan;

(f) Explicitly reflect the need to address CRSV in all justice, security sector reform and DDR initiatives, including as they relate to corrections and police capacity;

(g) Continue to support the use of innovative operational tools developed by UN Action partners, including *Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence: An Analytical Inventory of Peacekeeping Practice*, the *Matrix of Early-Warning Indicators of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence* and guidance on ethical data collection and strengthening medico-legal services. Adopt national and regional early-warning systems in conflict-affected areas that are attuned to gender dynamics and signs of impending, ongoing or escalating sexual violence, and refer to the United Nations *Guidance Note on Reparations for Conflict-Related Sexual Violence* in the design, development and implementation of reparations programmes;

(h) Encourage troop- and police-contributing countries to increase the number of women deployed to peacekeeping operations and to systematically integrate the DPKO/DFS training materials on CRSV into their pre-deployment training;

(i) Encourage private sector actors to make specific commitments, including to undertake due diligence to ensure that materials sourced for their production processes do not fund armed groups that perpetuate conflict and conflict-related sexual violence;

(j) Give due consideration to accepting conflict-related sexual violence as a form of persecution that can ground the recognition of refugee status for individuals affected or under threat, as sexual violence is not only a risk faced by displaced persons but also a tactic that has been used to induce displacement;

(k) Fulfil the political commitments and pledges made at the historic Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict convened by the Government of United Kingdom in June 2014, as well as the *Communiqué for the Call to Action on Protecting Women and Girls in Emergencies* adopted in November 2013;

(l) Continue cooperation with regional and sub-regional organizations, including the sharing of experiences and information. I encourage regional and sub-regional bodies to establish concrete mechanisms to prevent and respond to CRSV, specifically its cross-border dimensions, and note that such efforts may be advanced through the appointment of a dedicated high-level envoy within their secretariats;

(m) Ensure that all efforts to document and investigate sexual violence are guided by the principles of security, confidentiality, anonymity and informed consent.

101. In line with my emphasis on fostering national ownership, I urge Member States to draw upon the expertise of the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law/Sexual Violence in Conflict, to support them in building the capacity of civilian and military justice systems, as part of broader efforts to strengthen institutional safeguards against impunity. I urge donors to ensure sustainable funding for this valuable resource.

102. I urge all Member States to support the efforts of United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict and its Multi-Partner Trust Fund, particularly for the development and implementation of comprehensive national strategies to prevent and address CRSV in a coordinated and holistic manner.

## **VII. Parties credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for acts of rape or other forms of sexual violence**

103. The annex to the present report, based on currently available information, contains a list of parties credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for patterns of rape and other forms of sexual violence in situations of armed conflict on the Security Council's agenda. It does not purport to be a comprehensive list of perpetrators, but includes those on whom credible information is available. It should be noted that the annex does not list countries as such; the names of countries appear only in order to indicate the locations where offending parties are committing relevant violations.

*Note:* an asterisk (\*) indicates that the party has committed to adopt specific measures to address CRSV.

## **Annex**

### **Parties in the Central African Republic**

1. Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)
2. Ex-Séléka forces
3. Anti-balaka forces, including associated elements of the armed forces of the Central African Republic
4. Révolution et Justice
5. Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafricain

### **Parties in Côte d'Ivoire**

1. Ex-militia groups, including:
  - (a) Alliance patriotique de l'ethnie Wé,
  - (b) Front pour la libération du Grand Ouest,
  - (c) Mouvement ivoirien de libération de l'ouest de la Côte d'Ivoire
  - (d) Union patriotique de résistance du Grand Ouest
2. Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI)\*

### **Parties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

1. The following armed groups:
  - (a) Alliance des patriotes pour un Congo libre et souverain;
  - (b) Allied Democratic Forces - National Army for the Liberation of Uganda;
  - (c) Forces pour la défense du Congo;
  - (d) Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda;
  - (e) Front de résistance patriotique de l'Ituri;
  - (f) Lord's Resistance Army;
  - (g) Mai-Mai Cheka/Nduma Defence for Congo;
  - (h) Mai-Mai Kifuafua;
  - (i) Mai-Mai Simba/Morgan;
  - (j) Mai-Mai Simba/Lumumba;
  - (k) Nyatura armed group;
  - (l) Raia Mutomboki.
2. Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC)\*
3. National police of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

### **Parties in Iraq**

1. Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)

### **Parties in Mali**

1. Mouvement National pour la Libération de l'Azawad (MNLA)
2. Ansar Dine
3. Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO)
4. Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)

**Parties in Somalia**

1. Al-Shabaab
2. Somali National Army (SNA)\*
3. Somali National Police Force (SNPF)\* and allied militia
4. Puntland Military

**Parties in South Sudan**

1. Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)
2. Justice and Equality Movement (JEM)
3. Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition (SPLA/AiO)\*
4. Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA)\*
5. South Sudan National Police Service\*

**Parties in the Syrian Arab Republic**

1. Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant ISIL
2. Other armed groups in contested areas such as Raqqa, Al Hasakeh, Damascus, Rif Damascus, including:
  - (a) Al Nusra Front;
  - (b) Liwa Al-Islam;
  - (c) Aknaf Bait al-Maqdes;
  - (d) Ansar Bait Al-Maqdis;
  - (e) Harakat Ahrar Ash-Sham al-Islamiyya.
3. Government forces including the Syrian Armed Forces, intelligence services, and pro-government forces including the National Defence Forces militia.

**Other parties of concern on the agenda of the Security Council**

1. Boko Haram