



Security Council

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Identical letters dated 30 July 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I am pleased to transmit for your attention the concept note on the briefing on women and peace and security entitled “Sustaining women and peace and security commitments in the context of accelerated drawdown of peace operations”, to be convened on 7 August 2024 by Sierra Leone in its capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of August 2024 (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Michael Imran **Kanu**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



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Concept note for the Security Council briefing on women and peace and security entitled “Sustaining women and peace and security commitments in the context of accelerated drawdown of peace operations”, to be held on 7 August 2024

I. Background

Peacekeeping is one of the most effective tools available to the United Nations in the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security and plays a crucial role in creating conditions for stability and lasting peace. United Nations peacekeeping has been found to play a positive role on advancing gender equality while research shows that the presence of United Nations peacekeeping structures can contribute to avoiding renewed militarization in post-conflict societies and to improving gender equality over a period of 5 to 10 years.

United Nations mission transitions have emerged as a central focus of attention with several drawdowns, reconfigurations and accelerated closures of United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions in recent years.

Since 2014, the United Nations system has managed 10 transitions¹ in eight country settings. United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions are mandated by the Security Council to implement the Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security.² United Nations operations are instrumental in facilitating women’s leadership and agency, including participation in peace negotiations, mechanisms for the implementation of peace agreements, national dialogues and elections. They support human rights monitoring, with a special focus on violations of women’s rights and responding to attacks on women’s rights defenders.

Women participate in activities led by United Nations missions across all areas of mandate delivery, such as security sector reform, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, or community violence reduction and benefit from quick impact projects, from building centres for women’s organizations to furnishing schools for girls.

Accelerated drawdowns, reconfiguration and exit of United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions, may pose increased risks for women and girls. Situations where the United Nations missions are closed without planned transition have a potential to both jeopardize hard-won peace gains and important contributions to gender equality and women and peace and security agenda, and can leave women and girls in potential danger from the lack of protection from

¹ These include the closure of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) and the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB) in 2014, the United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire (UNOCI) and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) in 2017, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in 2018, the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) in 2019, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in 2020, the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) in 2020, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) in 2023 and the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) in 2024.

² Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security include [1325 \(2000\)](#), [1820 \(2008\)](#), [1888 \(2009\)](#), [1889 \(2009\)](#), [1960 \(2010\)](#), [2106 \(2013\)](#), [2122 \(2013\)](#), [2242 \(2015\)](#), [2467 \(2019\)](#) and [2493 \(2019\)](#).

sexual and gender-based violence, conflict-related sexual violence and attacks on women human rights defenders and peacebuilders. When the resources allocated to running these missions are not transferred to the United Nations country team or national actors, interventions targeting women and girls and the institutional knowledge of the situation of women and girls in these contexts may also experience a sharp decline. The Security Council has invited more than 300 women from civil society to brief the Security Council since 2004, and more than 90 per cent of them since 2017. A number of the women briefers have spoken about the risks associated with accelerated drawdowns.

United Nations Security Council resolutions [2242 \(2015\)](#) and [2594 \(2021\)](#) highlight the need for comprehensive gender analysis and technical gender expertise throughout the transition process, and call for ensuring women's full, equal and meaningful participation in all sequenced stages of the mission. Resolution [2594 \(2021\)](#) further places particular emphasis on the importance of ensuring that gains made on gender equality and women and peace and security are highlighted and sustained throughout transition planning efforts and requests the Secretary-General to ensure that women's needs are fully integrated in all stages of a mission's mandate and transition.

The briefing will focus on the impact that the drawdowns, reconfigurations and accelerated withdrawals of the United Nations missions have on women and peace and security. The meeting is an opportunity for all Member States to share specific insights and examples on:

- (a) How they are supporting women's leadership and agency through their full, equal and meaningful participation in political, peacebuilding and other processes in a transition process and beyond;
- (b) Measures taken to support protection from sexual and gender-based violence;
- (c) Measures for consideration by the Security Council and the international community that will ensure that the gains made on gender equality are not reversed after the departure of United Nations operations.

II. Guiding questions

The following questions will help to guide the debate and we encourage Member States to address them in their statements:

- (a) How can the Security Council best support sustainable United Nations mission transitions that include sufficient time to transfer tasks to the Government, United Nations country team and civil society organizations, and ensure that the transitions are guided by gender-responsive conflict analysis and take into account the needs of women and girls?
- (b) How can women's leadership and agency and the civic space for women remain secured in advancement of their full, equal and meaningful participation in politics, peacebuilding and other processes as a priority during and after the transition process?
- (c) How can the Security Council and the international community ensure women's protection from sexual and gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, during the transition processes and in the new post-transition contexts, as well as ensure sufficient resources and capacity for women's protection?

(d) How can the United Nations and the international community best support women civil society representative's participation in the transition processes?

(e) How can the Security Council and other mechanisms still monitor the situation of women and girls in these contexts?

(f) What can the international community do to prevent a sharp drop in funding and interventions on gender equality and women and peace and security after the departure of a United Nations mission?

(g) How does your country specifically plan to support the women and peace and security agenda after the withdrawal of United Nations missions?

III. Format, briefers and participation

The Security Council will be briefed by:

- The Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), Sima Bahous;
 - The Assistant Secretary-General for Africa;
 - Civil society representative.
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