

CIVIL SOCIETY POSITION PAPER FOR CSW70: STRENGTHENING ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE MECHANISMS FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS IN CRISIS CONTEXTS



BACKGROUND

Forced displacement and other crisis situations create new and heightened risks for women and girls, including those affected by armed conflict, protracted displacement, or forced migration. These risks span restricted access to healthcare, legal aid, livelihoods, psychosocial support, and meaningful participation in peacebuilding and transitional justice processes. Women in the security sector face structural barriers to education, professional advancement, and leadership, while women human rights defenders and civil society organizations encounter growing online harassment, disinformation, hate speech, and digital threats.

According to the [UN Secretary-General's Report on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence \(CRSV\) for 2024](#), over 4,600 survivors experienced sexual violence as a tactic of war, torture, terrorism, and political repression - an increase of 87 per cent between 2022 and 2024. In Ukraine, the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission documented 209 cases in 2024, affecting 156 men, 46 women, 6 girls, and 1 boy, perpetrated by Russian armed forces, law enforcement authorities, and peni-

tentiary staff. Since 24 February 2022, OHCHR documented 484 cases of CRSV by Russian authorities (350 men, 119 women, 13 girls, 2 boys) and 66 cases by Ukrainian authorities (58 men, 8 women)¹.

This position paper contributes to the deliberations of CSW70 by presenting the priorities and recommendations of women-led civil society organizations (CSOs) working in crisis- and conflict-affected contexts. It highlights the urgent need to ensure accessible, gender-responsive, and survivor-centered justice systems, including transitional justice mechanisms, to address structural discrimination and impunity. The paper aims to inform commitments and strengthen accountability for advancing women's rights and gender equality in fragile and crisis settings.

¹ https://ukraine.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2025-07/2025-06-30%20OHCHR%2042nd%20periodic%20report%20on%20Ukraine_1.pdf

TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE: PRINCIPLES AND APPROACHES

o Gender-Responsive and Survivor-Centered Justice

Women-led CSOs in the **ECA region** emphasize that transitional justice must address **the full spectrum of CRSV and gender-based violence (GBV)**, ensure **accountability**, and provide **comprehensive, survivor-centered reparations**, while recognizing that obligations under **CEDAW and the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda** apply to all states, including those not in active war/conflict but affected by regional tensions, migration, peacekeeping, or transnational security challenges. CSOs stress that transitional justice frameworks should integrate commitments from updated global instruments, including **the Pact for the Future (2024), Beijing+30, the Sendai Framework Gender Action Plan, and the UN Convention against Cybercrime (2025)**.

Transitional justice must be **gender-responsive, survivor-centered, inclusive, and forward-look-**

king, fully addressing the **physical, psychological, and structural harm** caused by conflict and violence. It must account for **long-term and systemic damage**, the complexities of **protracted and cross-border conflicts**, and emerging threats, including **digital abuse and climate-related crises**. Central to its effectiveness is the **active involvement of civil society**, particularly **women-led organizations, war/conflict affected women and girls, gender equality experts, and activists**, who play a crucial role in advancing accountability, protection, and sustainable peace.

Only by integrating accountability, participation, and structural reform in line with CEDAW, WPS, Youth, Peace and Security (YPS), and evolving global instruments and transitional justice delivers meaningful, transformative, and sustainable peace for all women and girls.

KEY CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY CSOS REGARDING ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN THE CRISIS CONTEXT

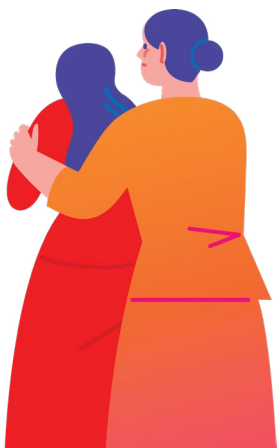
- **Persistent impunity** for CRSV and gender-based violence (GBV) in both conflict and post-conflict contexts.
- **Structural and protracted forms of violence**, including domestic, psychological, economic, and digital violence, are not adequately recognized.
- **Shrinking civic space**, restrictive legislation, and anti-gender movements undermine accountability efforts and threaten the work of women human rights defenders.
- **Lack of gender-disaggregated data, survivor-centered services, and long-term psychosocial support** limits effective redress.
- **Marginalization of displaced women, refugees (in particular young women and girls) and those in protracted or repeated displacement**, whose needs are often invisible in justice mechanisms.
- **Weak integration of gender analysis** in early warning, humanitarian response, peace negotiations, and recovery efforts.
- **Insufficient funding for women's and youth's organizations**, which are critical actors in documentation, survivor support, legal aid, and community reconciliation.

o **Shifting the Shame and Stigma to the Perpetrator**

Survivor-centered and trauma-informed judicial procedures are essential, including options for confidential or remote testimony, appropriate protective measures, and safeguards to prevent secondary victimization. Such measures uphold the “do no harm” principle, ensuring survivors’ dignity, safety, and empowerment. UNSC Resolutions affirm zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse, emphasizing that survivors, including youth and younger generations affected by CRSV, must be at the heart of accountability efforts.

States are encouraged to ensure that all justice actors - judges, prosecutors, law enforcement, forensic specialists, medical personnel, and social workers - receive mandatory, specialized training in trauma-informed, survivor-centered approaches, including awareness of the unique needs of children, adolescents, and intergenerational survivors. Guidance from the ICC Policy Paper on Sexual and Gender-Based Crimes (2014) and UN Security Council Resolution 2467 (2019) reinforces the need to strengthen national capacities for effective CRSV response.

Member States should establish clear, coordinated standard operating procedures for reporting, investigation, evidence collection, referrals, confidentiality, and courtroom protection. These measures create predictable and safe pathways to justice consistent with international norms, best practices, and the needs of all generations of survivors, ensuring that accountability mechanisms address both immediate and long-term impacts of conflict-related sexual violence.



The Ljubljana – The Hague Convention on International Cooperation in the Investigation and Prosecution of the Crime of Genocide, Crimes against Humanity, War Crimes and other International Crimes (adopted on 26 May 2023, in Ljubljana, Slovenia, by delegates from 79 states) encourages States, where relevant, to work toward more harmonized procedures for mutual legal assistance, cross-border evidence sharing, and coordinated investigative measures in relation to serious international crimes. Clear standards for evidence preservation, transfer, and secure handling; effective measures for the protection of victims and witnesses; and strengthened cooperation within joint investigative efforts, with a view to enhancing accountability and fulfilling international commitments, are important.

o **Partnership with Civil Society** - the critical role of civil society, including women’s organizations, women human rights defenders, and community-based groups, in preventing and responding to CRSV and in supporting survivors’ access to justice and reparations should be recognized. Member State should meaningfully engage with and support civil society actors in the design, implementation, and monitoring of reparations programs, recognizing their expertise, community trust, and close engagement with survivors of CRSV.

o **Children Born of War (CBOW)** - CSOs express concern that children born of war continue to face stigma, discrimination, legal invisibility, and long-term psychosocial impacts. It underscores the importance of comprehensive, long-term measures to address these challenges and encourages States to consider recognizing CBOW as a distinct category within reparations frameworks. Such measures may include ensuring access to legal identity and documentation, social protection schemes, healthcare, education, and sustained psychosocial support, in order to address structural inequalities and intergenerational harms.

o **Diverse and Inclusive Reparations for CRSV Survivors** - it is important to recognize that survivors of CRSV are not a homogeneous group and encourages States to adopt reparations and support programs that reflect the diversity of survivors’ experiences.

This includes women, men, girls, boys, LGBTQI+ persons, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of marginalized communities who may face distinct harms and barriers to justice. It further encourages the development of tailored measures, such as access to medical and psychosocial services, legal assistance, social protection, and livelihood opportunities, aimed at promoting gender equality, addressing intersecting forms of discrimination, and supporting transformative and survivor-centered justice.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

○ *Accountability and Justice:*

- » **Recognize the full spectrum of harms**, including domestic, psychological, economic, digital, and intergenerational violence linked to conflict, displacement, and militarization.
- » **Acknowledge all conflict actors as potential perpetrators** of CRSV and GBV.
- » **Ensure comprehensive investigations**, prosecution, and punishment of CRSV and GBV, integrating trauma-informed, survivor-centered procedures.
- » **Guarantee safe, accessible, and anonymous complaint mechanisms** in armed forces and security institutions, with protection from retaliation.
- » **Strengthen the role of NHRIs and Ombudspersons** in monitoring violations, advising on reparations, and documenting cases, including extraterritorial abuses.
- » **Create digital access-to-justice pathways** and strengthen forensic capacity for tech-enabled violence, in line with the new UN Cybercrime Convention.

○ *Survivor-Centered Justice and Reparations* - CSOs call for a **holistic, long-term approach** that includes:

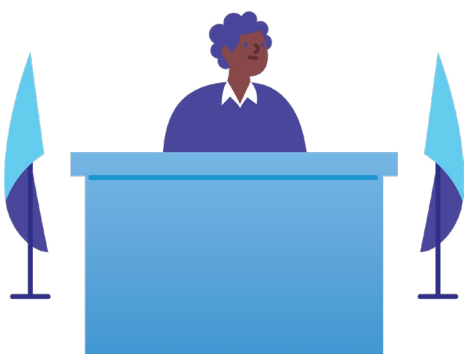
- » Ensure **access to legal aid, medical care, psychosocial support, shelters, and protection from stigma for all survivors**, including children and youth affected by conflict.
- » Recognize **children born of war as a distinct category** entitled to tailored reparations.
- » Design **differentiated reparations and support programs** for women, men, boys, girls, LGBTQI+ persons, and other marginalized groups.
- » Implement **long-term mental health and rehabilitation programs** for survivors and former combatants/veterans to help break cycles of violence.
- » Establish **integrated referral pathways that connect medical, legal, social, and psychological services**, actively involving youth in program design, delivery, and monitoring to enhance relevance and sustainability.

○ *Inclusion and Role of Women's CSOs:*

- » **Institutionalize participation** of women-led civil society in transitional justice mechanisms, national action plans, and monitoring bodies.
- » **Remove legal and administrative barriers** restricting CSO access to funding, digital security, and international cooperation.
- » Establish **rapid response mechanisms** for activists facing reprisals, including legal, financial, and emergency protection.
- » Ensure CSOs, including youth-led groups, actively participate in **the documentation of violations, early warning systems, monitoring of peace dialogues, and provision of services to survivors**. Engaging youth alongside women and other marginalized groups strengthens inclusivity, enhances community trust, and builds sustainable capacities for prevention, protection, and peacebuilding.

○ *Transitional Justice for Displaced, War/Conflict-Affected Women and Veterans*

- » Explicitly **include internally displaced women, women in protracted displacement, those who fled without legal status, and women veterans of war**, who often face overlapping legal, social, and health-related vulnerabilities.
- » Ensure **equal access to healthcare, legal aid, livelihoods, education, and MHPSS**, recognizing the chronic trauma, stigma, physical injuries, and long-term insecurity experienced by both displaced women and women veterans. This should include specialized rehabilitation, disability support, and services addressing conflict-related sexual violence affecting veterans.
- » Acknowledge and **address the barriers women veterans face** within justice systems, including challenges in obtaining recognition of veteran status, disability benefits, reparations, and accountability for violations committed against them during service or captivity.
- » Strengthen **support for civil society legal clinics and community-level services** that work with displaced women and women veterans, providing tailored legal assistance, documentation support, and referrals to health, psychosocial, and livelihood programmes.
- » Promote **inclusive transitional justice processes** that ensure the participation of displaced women and women veterans in truth-seeking, reparations, institutional reform, and decision-making mechanisms, reflecting their distinct experiences and rights.



○ *Gender-Sensitive Early Warning and Prevention:*

- » Develop **gender-sensitive early warning and rapid response systems that incorporate intergenerational and intersectional perspectives**, linking clear indicators to real-time monitoring and actionable response.
- » These systems should actively integrate **data and insights from grassroots women, youth, displaced communities, and local CSOs** to detect and respond to escalating risks, including domestic violence, trafficking, militarization, and digital threats.
- » Embedding these mechanisms within **national WPS and YPS frameworks**, as well as **disaster risk reduction strategies**, ensures proactive, inclusive, and context-sensitive prevention that prioritizes the safety and agency of those most affected by conflict and crises.

○ *Integrating Transitional Justice into Peace Processes:*

- » Transitional justice must be **fully integrated into peace processes** to ensure sustainable and inclusive outcomes.
- » Women's **meaningful participation**, including from the inclusive intersectional and intergenerational perspectives, should be ensured at all levels of peacebuilding, from **Track 1 (formal negotiations) to Track 1.5 (mixed official-civil society) and Track 2 (informal dialogue)**.
- » Mediators and international facilitators must apply **gender-sensitive mediation standards** and include explicit gender provisions in all peace agreements.
- » Peace processes should mandate the **active involvement of grassroots women's organizations, youth representatives, internally displaced persons, and border-area communities** in the design, negotiation, and implementation phases, ensuring that the voices of those most affected by conflict and displacement shape durable and equitable solutions.

○ *Emerging Dimensions of Justice:*

- » Civil society underscores the importance of integrating **new and evolving forms of harm** into transitional justice frameworks. This includes **digital and AI-facilitated violence**, such as deepfakes, spyware, and gendered disinformation, which disproportionately affect women, youth, and activists.
- » **Climate and environmental justice** must be recognized as part of the lasting impacts of conflict, with intergenerational consequences for communities.
- » Justice mechanisms should also address cultural **heritage protection**, including education in the mother tongue and the facilitation of **community mediation**, ensuring that both current and future generations benefit.
- » Finally, **economic justice** is essential, including equitable access for women and youth to livelihoods, financial services, and recovery programs, ensuring long-term stability and resilience for affected populations.

CASE STUDIES: KOSOVO'S² AND UKRAINE'S PATHWAYS TO SUPPORTING CRSV SURVIVORS

Kosovo's Model for Supporting CRSV Survivors - in a landmark move, Kosovo established the Commission for the Verification and Recognition of Sexual Violence Victim Status in February 2018, enabling survivors of CRSV to access official reparations for the first time. Backed by a dedicated government budget since 2017, survivors recognized as civilian victims of war receive monthly financial compensation, making Kosovo a global leader in sustained support for CRSV survivors. To ensure access, four specialized women's organizations were authorized to guide applicants through the process. Over 1,800 survivors have

been granted official status to date. UN Women played a key role in advocating for the 2014 law that recognized CRSV survivors and continues to support these efforts. In 2024, 25 years after the war, Kosovo adopted its first Transitional Justice Strategy (2024–2034), which prioritizes gender-sensitive measures and long-term justice for survivors, setting a powerful example for other post-conflict settings.



² All references to Kosovo should be understood to be in compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

KEY ASPECTS OF TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE STRATEGY (2024–2034):

- Approved: June 13, 2024, by the Government of Kosovo.
- Guiding Principles: Victim-centered, comprehensive, gender-sensitive, and compliant with international law.
- Goals – to provide recognition to victims and serve justice, enhance trust in institutions and promote the rule of law and foster reconciliation and prevent future violations.
- Pillars: Aligned with the UN Secretary-General’s guidance, covering criminal justice, truth-seeking, reparations, and guarantees of non-recurrence/institutional reform.

KEY INITIATIVES & COMPONENTS:

- Victim-Centered Approach: Focuses on victims’ needs for recognition, justice, and redress.
- Institutional Strengthening: Training for justice sector professionals (judges, prosecutors, police) via the Academy of Justice.
- Truth & Memory: Includes initiatives like the “Kosovo Memory Book” to document war victims and aims to replace casualty figures with names, supported by the War Crimes Research Institute.
- Reparations & Memorialization: Focus on repairing damage and building memorials, such as for children killed in the war.
- Accountability: Supports war crimes investigations (e.g., through the War Crimes Department).

Ukraine - on 20 June 2024, Ukraine ratified and on 17 July became the 125th State Party to the Rome Statute, bringing Ukraine under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (with a 7-year opt-out for war crimes), established a dedicated war crimes unit, and passed the landmark legislation by Parliament in November 2024, designed to provide legal recognition and

interim support for survivors of CRSV. The laws strengthen protections for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence by offering temporary compensation, improving access to services, and enhancing the handling of such cases within the legal system. However, broader reforms in the justice sector are still needed.

JUSTICE FOR SURVIVORS: STRENGTHENING PREVENTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR CRSV

To close the justice gap for survivors of CRSV and prevent future violations, urgent, coordinated action is required. A zero-tolerance approach must be upheld by all conflict parties and the international community.³

This includes:

- Strengthening survivor-centered prevention and response systems, ensuring access to essential services, especially in conflict and displacement settings.
- Improving access to justice through legal reforms, institutional capacity-building, and the expansion of legal aid.
- Protecting women human rights defenders and ensuring gender-sensitive judicial processes.
- Expanding data collection to better inform policies that address the specific needs and safety of women and girls.
- Integrating CRSV prevention into all peace and security efforts, including humanitarian responses and national action plans.
- Ensuring accountability through comprehensive prosecution mechanisms and systematic documentation of CRSV cases.

[The Sarajevo Pledge](#), adopted at the WPS International Conference in Bosnia and Herzegovina in June 2025, calls for comprehensive, survivor-centered approaches to justice, protection, and prevention in conflict contexts. It emphasizes that justice must begin with belief in survivors, amplifying their voices and demonstrating solidarity, while ending impunity for CRSV through strong national legislation, survivor-centered transitional justice, and regional cooperation. Survivors must have access to legal recognition, reparations, psychosocial care, medical support, safe housing, and economic assistance, with particular attention to children born of wartime rape and other marginalized groups. Justice systems should be survivor-focused, accessible, and staffed by trained personnel, while survivors are actively involved in all stages of policy, program design, and peacebuilding processes. The pledge also highlights the need for institutionalized gender-responsive early warning mechanisms, sustained multi-year funding for women-led and local organizations, and cross-border collaboration to address emerging threats, including online gender-based violence. Awareness campaigns, commemoration initiatives, and the preservation of survivor testimonies are essential to combat stigma, foster supportive communities, and ensure intergenerational understanding. Together, these measures advance accountability, protection, and empowerment, reinforcing the critical role of women and civil society actors in building sustainable peace.

³ [Women leading through crisis: A gender snapshot on peace and humanitarian action in Europe and Central Asia](#), 31 October 2025

WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY AGENDA IN CRISIS CONTEXTS

The WPS agenda is not only a framework for women's rights; it is a strategic, integrated, and indispensable approach for transitional justice, crisis response, peacebuilding, and sustainable security. Comprehensive implementation of these approaches ensures that women's experiences, needs, and contributions are central to achieving lasting justice and peace.

o *Key Approaches for Transitional Justice in WPS Frameworks*

The WPS agenda is essential in crisis contexts because its four deeply interlinked pillars - **prevention, protection, participation, and relief & recovery** - if implemented simultaneously represents an integrated approach that addresses inequalities, safeguards women's rights, empowers women and marginalized youth, and mitigates human insecurity arising from conflict, displacement, environmental degradation, climate change, and technology-based threats. Comprehensive WPS implementation strategy allows to ensure inclusive and evidence-based actions at all stages from design to monitoring and evaluation.

Effective transitional justice requires **proactive prevention and protection measures**. Women's representation must be strengthened at all levels of the security sector, and their voices amplified in humanitarian response, peacebuilding, and crisis management. Sustainable funding, targeted policy tools, and practical solutions are essential to address the multidimensional challenges faced by women in crises.

Transitional justice efforts must be grounded in **mandatory localization to ensure genuine national and local ownership**. Active engagement of grassroots activists, local authorities, and women-led civil society organizations allows strategies to respond effectively to immediate and emerging risks, including conflict, violence, and environmental crises. Involvement of local actors enhances relevance, effectiveness, and measurable impact, ensuring that transitional justice processes reflect community needs and realities.

Women - peace activists, human rights defenders, and civil society leaders - play a central role in transitional justice and peacebuilding. Strengthening their empowerment through resources, leadership opportunities, and crisis communication support enables meaningful participation in recovery, justice mechanisms, and decision-making, even under volatile conditions. Recognizing and amplifying women's contributions is critical for resilience, sustainable peace, and the legitimacy of transitional justice processes.

o *Addressing Diverse and Evolving Risks*

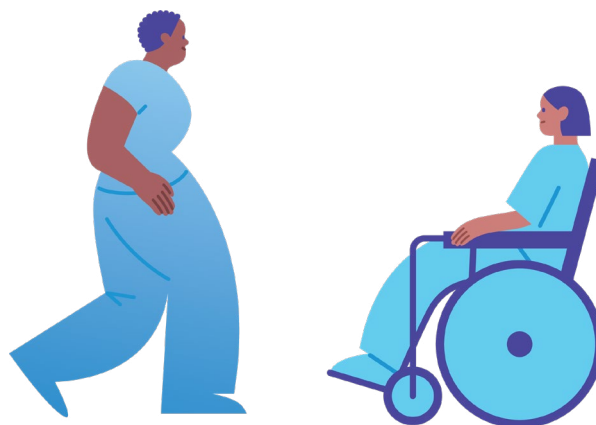
Transitional justice under the WPS framework must adopt **inclusive, intergenerational, and context-sensitive approaches that actively engage women at all stages - from design to monitoring and evaluation**. This ensures comprehensive protection, empowerment, and participation for all women affected by conflict, displacement, and crisis, strengthening both justice outcomes and societal resilience.

Transitional justice approaches must address the diverse and evolving risks faced by women in crisis contexts, including:

- » **Displacement and Depopulation:** Women and girls from displaced or forcibly migrated communities face heightened risks. Programs must be inclusive, intergenerational, and responsive to differentiated needs. Engagement of women in diaspora is essential to amplify the perspectives of those affected by conflict.
- » **Security Sector Risks:** Women in the security sector often encounter structural barriers to equal participation. Expanding access to education, professional advancement, and leadership roles strengthens inclusive and effective security institutions.
- » **Cybersecurity and Digital Threats:** Women human rights defenders and CSOs are increasingly targeted by online harassment, disinformation, and hate speech. Protective measures

in digital spaces are crucial to maintain their safety and ability to engage.

- » **Veterans and Conflict-Affected Women:** Women veterans and those affected by conflict or displacement face overlapping legal, social, and health challenges. Transitional justice mechanisms must ensure access to healthcare, legal aid, livelihoods, psychosocial support, and meaningful participation in peacebuilding and justice processes.



RISING MILITARY SPENDING AND ESCALATING RISKS

Across the ECA region, military expenditures have risen sharply. Between 2020 and 2024, military spending more than tripled, from USD 32.8 billion to USD 101.6 billion (in constant 2023 prices). As a share of GDP, regional military expenditure nearly doubled, from 2.3 per cent to 4.7 per cent. The most dramatic increases were seen in Eastern Partnership countries, particularly Ukraine, where military expenditure surged from 4.4 per cent to 34.5 per cent of GDP. Other significant increases were recorded in Belarus (military spending at 50.7 per cent of total government expenditure), Armenia (18.3 per cent), Azerbaijan (15.2 per cent), and Ukraine, where military spending accounted for a staggering 54 per cent of total government expenditure in 2024. In contrast, military expenditure relative to GDP declined in Central Asia (from 1.0 per cent to 0.6 per cent) and Türkiye (from 2.2 per cent to 1.9 per cent), while it rose modestly in the Western Balkans (from 1.7 per cent to 2.1 per cent).

This surge in military expenditure risks diverting critical public resources away from essential development and social services, particularly those targeting gender equality and women's empowerment. Without corrective action, this could reverse hard-won gains in women's health, education, and economic participation across the region.

Additionally, a number of member states in the region have begun formally withdrawing from long-standing international treaties, particularly

in response to shifting security dynamics. Key examples include:

- » The EU itself notified its intention to withdraw from the Energy Charter Treaty in mid-2024, with the withdrawal formally taking effect one year after notification.
- » Lithuania officially exited the Convention on Cluster Munitions on 6 March 2025, citing Russia's use of such weapons in Ukraine and changing regional threats .
- » In 2025, several EU/NATO members (Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland) have moved to withdraw from the Ottawa Treaty (Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention) being driven by the perception that existing treaty constraints limit defensive flexibility.
- » Ukraine, which ratified the Ottawa Convention in 2005, announced in mid-2025 that it would withdraw.
- » Of the 61 UN General Assembly resolutions on disarmament and weapons issues, 23 resolutions recognize the **gender dimensions** of weapons or call for involving women equally in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control processes.⁴

⁴ https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/facts-and-figures/facts-and-figures-women-peace-and-security#_edn30

There is an urgent need for robust public oversight and inclusive participation through engaging civil society, women, youth, and local communities in monitoring, policymaking, and implementation not only enhances transparency and accountability but also strengthens the prevention of armed violence and human insecurity. Inclusive approaches ensure that arms control measures are responsive to the needs of all affected populations and contribute to sustainable peace and security.



INTEGRATING SMALL ARMS CONTROL IN WPS FOR TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

Undercontrolled small arms and light weapons significantly increase the risk of violence, particularly in post-conflict and transitional settings, undermining the safety of women, girls, and communities. UN data reveals that 70 to 90 per cent of [sexual violence incidents in conflict settings involve the use of weapons](#).

The global context for arms control/disarmament is increasingly challenging. Trends such as rearmament, blurred civilian-military technology lines, rising militarization and arms expenditures, and some States retreating from disarmament commitments (e.g., landmine and cluster munition treaties) coincide with growing resistance to gender equality and reduced funding for gender-focused work. Small and medium States are emerging as leaders in linking WPS with arms control, demonstrating commitment to preventing roll-backs and preserving rules-based international norms. While global consensus on WPS has weakened, regional cooperation has gained momentum. These national and regional examples illustrate that integrating arms control into WPS NAPs can effectively prevent conflict, reduce violence, and promote inclusive, sustainable peace.

In this environment, integrating arms control and disarmament into WPS National Action Plans (NAPs) is a strategic necessity, not merely technical, to intersect with arms control and WPS pillars:

- » Participation: Women's meaningful engagement in disarmament and arms control diplomacy strengthens accountability and decision-making at all levels.
- » Prevention: Implementing arms control measures reduces armed violence in communities and mitigates risks of post-conflict insecurity.
- » Protection: Restricting gun ownership for perpetrators of domestic or intimate partner violence enhances the safety of women and girls.
- » Relief & Recovery: Integrating gender perspectives into post-conflict mine action, demobilization, and disarmament programs supports recovery and prevents further harm.

Recent NAPs increasingly address internal and transnational security challenges, including arms trafficking and technology-facilitated GBV, highlighting the relevance of arms control in both conflict and peacetime contexts. Of the 113 WPS NAPs adopted by June 2025, 38 plans (34 per cent) include references to arms control, ammunition management and disarmament in their monitoring frameworks.⁵

Coordination with broader policies, such as GBV prevention and regional disarmament strategies, strengthens WPS implementation. **Effective small arms control is critical for transitional justice and sustainable peace. Linking disarmament to WPS pillars helps prevent violence, protect survivors, empower women in decision-making, and foster long-term recovery in post-conflict settings.**

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