

UNISMUNC XII



Committee: UN Women

Committee Type: GA

Topic: Addressing Gender-Based
Violence in Conflict Zones

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Conference Schedule:

<i>Opening Ceremonies</i>	<i>8:00 am - 9:00 am</i>
<i>Committee Session I</i>	<i>9:00 am - 1:00 pm</i>
<i>Lunch Break</i>	<i>1:00 pm - 2:00 pm</i>
<i>Committee Session II</i>	<i>2:00 pm - 5:30 pm</i>
<i>Closing Ceremonies</i>	<i>5:30 pm - 6:15 pm</i>

Conference Policies:

UNISMUNC X aims to foster debate, allowing students to explore a range of topics and encouraging collaboration and teamwork among delegates. Be that as it may, UNIS stresses the importance of respectful language as UNISMUNC X will see delegates debating topics that, at times, may be heated or passionate. MUNEX encourages you to remember to stay respectful and mindful of the other students around you. We are so excited about this conference and trust that no issues will arise. The following expectations and policies are designed so that every delegate gets the most out of UNISMUNC.

Attire:

The Dress Code for UNISMUNC is formal Western business attire, and all delegates are expected to comply with this. Exceptions may be made for character purposes in crisis committees at the chair's discretion. If you have an idea for an outfit for a crisis committee that does not fall into the parameters of traditional Western business attire, please ask your chair for permission before wearing the outfit.

Committee Assignments:

Committee assignments will be made on a first-come, first-served basis based on preference as communicated by the delegation's advisors (or individual delegates in the case of independent delegates), in order of receipt of preference. Before being assigned to a committee, payment must be received. If payment is not submitted promptly, delegations face the risk of not receiving committee assignments of their choice.

Expectations in Committee:

As you engage in debates, we ask that delegates maintain politeness and respect at all times. While we recognize that you are representing your country's views, it is essential to express these perspectives without crossing the line into disrespectful or confrontational behavior.

Please respect one another when delegates are giving speeches. Only one delegate may speak at a time during moderated caucuses. To speak during a moderated caucus, you must raise your placard and wait to be recognized by the chair. During speeches, no ad hominem attacks will be allowed; should they occur, the subject will have the right to reply. Remember to be cognizant of your words and actions, and to listen to everyone's views and positions.

The Committee Chairs and Secretariat members are responsible for determining disruptive behavior.

Examples of disrespectful behavior may include but are not limited to:

- Speaking without being recognized,
- Use of cell phones,
- Note-passing unrelated to the committee,
- Use of technology when not allowed,
- Verbal, physical, or sexual harassment of other delegates.

The pre-writing of any resolution/directive clauses, crisis notes, or speeches is strictly forbidden and will be penalized. This does not include opening remarks. This does not include any writing during the lunch break, as UNISMUNC committees standardly operate with 'working lunches'.

UNISMUNC has a zero-tolerance policy for any plagiarism. This includes position papers, speeches, and resolutions. Improper citation of quotes and references may result in disqualification from awards or further disciplinary action at the discretion of the chairs.

Pricing:

Please see the registration section for more information. Details on committee assignments are below.

Spectators:

Please be aware that UNISMUNC X does not allow unregistered spectators. Student spectators are strictly prohibited. All advisors and delegates must be registered and pay the required fee(s).

Non-compliance with this policy will result in exclusion from future invitations. We expect all participating delegations to respect this policy. The Secretariat reserves the right to have any unregistered spectators removed from committee chambers and escorted off the premises if necessary, as they see fit.

Technology:

All crisis committees are strictly no-tech. Neither laptops nor cell phones will be permitted during committee sessions in crisis committees.

General Assembly (GA) committees allow technology exclusively for the purpose of resolution writing. Delegates will be permitted to use their laptops to work on resolutions during unmoderated caucuses and outside of the committee chamber when allowed by the chair. It is, however, not permitted to use technology when a fellow delegate is speaking or during committee chambers during moderated caucuses. This includes your own speeches, so please write any notes by hand or have your opening remarks printed before the conference.

Awards Criteria:

UNISMUNC Chairs, Diases, and, in the case of crisis committees, Crisis Directors will work together to holistically evaluate delegates based on their performance throughout the entire day of debate. This includes:

- speeches given during moderated caucuses,
- performance during unmoderated caucuses (not only making one's voice heard but also including everyone in the discussion),
- writing/presenting resolutions/directions, especially those that pass,
- in crisis committees, as well as the detail and sophistication of crisis arcs.

Letter From Chair:

Greetings Delegates,

My name is Milla Jätfors, and I am so excited to welcome you to UNISMUNC XII and serve as your chair for this year's UN Women General Assembly. I am a junior in high school and have been involved in Model UN since the sixth grade, when I was living in my home country, Sweden. Model UN has allowed me to express myself for many years, and through many, many conferences, I have learned that change is possible, and that our generation bears the responsibility to implement it.

Aside from chairing Model UN, you can find me behind a book, playing guitar, at the gym, record shopping, writing for my film column in a teen-run magazine, or reviewing films on Letterboxd. I am president of the Film Club, president of the Speech and Debate Club, Director General of Conferences of Model UN, and serve as student council representative in my grade.

Volunteering with youth theatre productions, whether stage-managing or working directly with the children, has provided me with roughly 400 hours of community service. I also run a fundraising campaign with my friend for the National Foundation for Cancer Research to help fund research and a world without cancer. At school, I helped run a bake sale through which we raised over \$2000 for the UNICEF Gaza Fund.

I founded a workshop initiative titled Speakers of the Future, where we organize and lead workshops for local middle schools to foster confidence in public speaking, freedom of expression, and international understanding; we even introduce them to Model UN! I am also very politically active, especially online, where I advocate for feminism and a world free of gender-based discrimination, so this committee topic is very fitting.

With increasing global tensions, the severity of gender-based violence in conflict zones becomes all the more important a topic to discuss, and I hope you, as committee members, think critically and creatively about resolutions that could be implemented to minimize sexism and uplift the rights of women globally. I can't wait to see what you all bring to the committee!

Regards,

Milla Jätfors

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email 28mjaetfors@unis.org

A Brief Overview of the Committee:

UN Women, or the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, was founded by the United Nations General Assembly in July 2010 to address challenges related to gender equality within the United Nations. These issues included a lack of promotion of gender equality, negligence towards addressing sexism worldwide, a lack of proper funding, and no appointed organization dealing with activities related to women, gender-based violence, and gender equality. With the formation of UN Women came a monumental transition of the United Nations to focus on the empowerment of women. Through its creation as part of the UN reform agenda, UN Women came with greater impact due to the larger and more focused allocation of resources towards the cause.

UN Women combines intergovernmental oversight via its Executive Board, coordination with UN partners, and localized field operations that prioritize women's security and rights in unstable and conflict-affected countries. The Executive Board consists of 41 Member States elected by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for three-year terms and supervises operational activities. They approve strategic plans, review budget allocations, and adhere to UN General Assembly mandates. UN Women also coordinates with other agencies within the United Nations, such as UNDP, UNFPA, and UNICEF, to allocate combined resources towards field initiatives, policy drafting, and resource mobilization.

The committee focuses largely on field presence in conflict-affected states, implementing the Women, Peace, and Security agenda (such as UN Resolution 1325) to protect women. Focusing on local issues and decentralized regional offices, UN Women partners with local women's civil society groups to deliver humanitarian aid and prevent sexual violence. To expand to the topic of the committee for UNISMUNC XII, the mandate of UN Women, with the help of protection, survivor support, monitoring, supporting, and so much more, works especially to eradicate gender-based violence (GBV) in conflict zones, a topic that is only increasing in prevalence in recent years.

It is vital to note that UN Women has no enforcement or peacekeeping authority. Despite this, they have the power to advocate for policy changes to the General Assembly, set global standards on gender equality, provide technical and financial assistance to countries in need, allocate resources, and most importantly: work with other nations to fight gender inequality.

Committee Procedure:

Moderated Caucuses are structured discussions where delegates sign themselves up to give short, regulated speeches. The speaking time and topic of discussion are set when the motion is proposed, and delegates take turns to speak.

Unmoderated Caucuses are divided between a regular unmoderated caucus and a gentleman's unmoderated caucus where everybody remains seated. A regular unmoderated caucus entails a period free of structured, regulated debate, where delegates can mill about the committee and work with their blocs.

Some actions that are carried over from the usual committee procedure:

- Point of Order
- Point of Information
- Appeal to the Chair
- Suspension of Debate
- Adjournment of Debate
- Closure of Debate
- Roll Call Vote
- Set the Speaker's Time

Written Papers:

Resolutions: A piece of writing that outlines possible solutions to a problem and allows the committee to take action. Hopefully, towards the end of the committee, blocs will work together to write a resolution that can be debated and possibly passed.

Working Papers: The drafts of resolutions, i.e., resolutions before they are voted on by the committee – committee blocs work together to write these, brainstorming and fully outlining detailed solutions to the issues at hand. Then, they are voted on and formally become resolutions.

Topic Background:

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in conflict zones refers to harmful acts directed at an individual based on their gender. These acts during war are severely exacerbated by the collapse of law and security. It includes and encompasses the following issues: Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV), which is rape, sexual slavery, forced pregnancy, and more, weaponized by members of war; forced marriage, human trafficking, and exacerbated domestic violence.

In 2025, the United Nations warned that over 676 women and girls live within 50 kilometers of an extremely deadly conflict. Existing gender inequality is intensified by war due to a heavily worsened social structure and collapsing resources for women. At extreme rates, women and girls living in or close to a conflict zone are displaced, unable to receive healthcare or attend school or work, face alarming acts of sexual and physical violence, live in poverty without proper access to food or water, and face irreversible trauma.

Throughout history, GBV has existed to victimize women and vulnerable groups. During WWII, the Japanese military began forcing thousands of women into sexual slavery in occupied territories, an act they termed “comfort women.” This is an early example of extreme state-organized sexual violence. Decades later, during the ethnic cleansing efforts of the Bosnian War (1992-1995), an estimated 20,000-50,000 women, the majority of whom were Bosniak Muslims, were raped under a systematically prejudiced campaign. By 1998, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia recognized the rape as an unacceptable crime against humanity. In 1994, during the Rwandan Genocide, sexual violence was weaponized on an inordinate scale against ethnic Tutsi women. The 1998 International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda’s Akayesu decided to hold individuals individually accountable under international law for committing acts of genocide through rape. These brief examples are simple proof to demonstrate that sexual violence in conflict zones is not coincidental to war, but is operated and employed as a strategic tool.

Though men and boys can be targeted by violence with respect to conflicts, women and girls remain the most severely victimized demographic. Women make up the vast majority of cases of sexual violence, domestic abuse, and other gender-based discrimination. Women living in or close to active conflict zones are far more likely to be subject to GBV due to a variety of structural and situational factors. It is the result of collapsing and weak law enforcement, judicial

injustices, and health systems set up without the best interests of women. Not only do these factors intensify violence against women, but they actively prevent women from gaining support and justice from other survivors. Overcrowded camps, informal settlements, and unsafe border crossings are also results of female mass displacement that further expose women and girls to many forms of trafficking, perpetrators of violence, and exploitation.

To broaden this issue to the present day, patriarchal norms and values, as well as consequences of occupation, have led to a 32% increase in GBV reported in Gaza from January through March 2026, according to UNFPA Palestine, a number that is made up mostly of physical and domestic violence rather than sexual violence due to stigma and fear of retaliation. In many current conflicts, armed personnel and an increasing number of state armed forces use sexual and physical violence against women to punish populations, encourage displacement, or obtain information, with an unfortunate impunity for these actions the reality for millions of women living in active conflict zones.

Legal and international frameworks have been put into place to avoid such situations; however, in practice, enforcement of this has been lacking. Examples of legal attempts to protect women are the Fourth Geneva Convention and its Additional Protocols of 1949, which attempted to prohibit sexual violence, mandating separate living spaces for detention, as well as prioritizing caretaking of mothers, as well as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and CEDAW General Recommendation 30 that establishes global standards in relation to women's rights, conflict prevention, and post-conflict resource allocations. A more concrete international standard set stems from the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, served by 18 full-time judges, which recognizes sexual trafficking, slavery, rape, unwilling prostitution, forced pregnancy, and forced sterilization as humanitarian crimes, and even as genocidal acts, depending on the context.

Most relevant to this committee's topic is October 2000's UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which established the WPS agenda and the first recognition by the Security Council of the correlation between violence against women and conflict. This resolution advocated for more work pertaining to this issue, with greater measures to focus on peace processes and reconstruction for the women of conflict zones. The United Nations Secretary-General reports to the UN Security Council on the WPS agenda and conflict-related GBV annually to track progress. This has been followed by other related resolutions: June 2008's

Resolution 1820 was the first resolution to recognize rape and other sexual assault as a war tactic and an international threat to peace and safety; September 2009's Resolution 1888, which appointed a Special Representative for Sexual Violence in Conflict; December 2010's Resolution 1960, which set up a system for monitoring; and April 2019's Resolution 2467, which requested the Secretary-General's current annual reports on conflict-related GBV.

The need for immediate action and the scale of this issue is stark on a global level. In 2024 alone, the UN Special Representative's 16th annual report on CRSV recorded 4,600 cases in just one year, a 25 per cent increase in cases compared to the year before, and a 50 per cent increase over the year before that. 92% of documented survivors were women and girls, though the report stresses the true global total is almost certainly far higher, given underreporting driven by stigma, fear of reprisal, and lack of access to services, with a 35% spike in sexual violence against girls. Victims, highly likely a fraction of all true cases, ranged from 1 to 75 in age. These figures represent only what could be verified through UN monitoring systems in the 21 countries currently on the Security Council's agenda, with the true global total, representing conflicts outside of said framework, understood to be significantly higher.

As will be discussed in the committee, the continued, and indeed increasingly accelerating, level of GBV in conflict, more than two decades after the first introduction of the WPS agenda, raises critical and essential questions about how to enforce existing commitments on politics, funding, accountability, and both region-wide and local solutions to protecting victims. The next section will examine how this plays out in a couple of the current conflicts around the world.

Current Situation:

The focus of this committee lies on the fact that implementation of these international laws remain gapped and heavily needs improvement. Due to cultural and societal stigma and norms, perpetrators of sexual assault rarely face the justice they deserve, leaving survivors with insurmountable trauma and unsafety. Furthermore, funding for survivor-based approaches and persecution remains acutely under-resourced, with budgeting, management, and implementation complications. As of current, gender-based violence is weaponized in conflict zones to terrorize, displace, and control civilian populations. To exemplify these issues, read the following case studies for context.

Case Study #1: Sudan

Sudan has become what the UN and many humanitarian organizations deem the world's most severe and systematic GBV crisis. Since fighting between Sudanese Armed Forces and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) erupted in the nation in April 2023, the country has claimed the attention and worries of humanitarians around the world. In April 2025, Amnesty International reported that RSF warriors have assaulted and gang-assaulted women and girls as young as fifteen across Sudanese states. Sexual slavery, rape, abuse, and torture have been recorded, and according to the human rights group, this pattern warrants the classification as likely war crimes and a possible crime against humanity. The number of women and girls who might be subject to sex based violence, as well as broader GBV, has, since the outbreak of conflict, almost tripled in amount, reaching 12.1 million women and girls mid-2025. UN officials even describe an 80% rise in that at-risk population each year. In accordance with UN Women's December 2024 gender alert and its subsequent follow-up in 2026, survivors are described with experience dealing with kidnapping, physical abuse, and sexual assault whilst fleeing conflict zones or working in an attempt to find sustenance. Access to essential healthcare and support is collapsing due to continuous conflict, blockades, and displacement. More than 4.3 million women and girls remain displaced within Sudan as of 2025, with violations working with near-total impunity.

Case Study #2: Myanmar (Rohingya Crisis)

Throughout the 2017 Myanmar Tatmadaw “clearance operations” against the Rohingya, targeting women’s bodies was considered to many the essential instrument of ethnic cleansing and genocide. The crisis led to some 700,000 Rohingya fleeing into Bangladesh after systematic gang rape, mass rape, sexual servitude, and genital mutilation, often killing survivors and witnesses afterward. While international legal bodies like the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court attempt to bring accountability, female survivors in refugee camps at Cox’s Bazar are still facing trauma with no opportunities to acquire justice, medical help, or any mental health treatment for the sexual violence undergone. Additionally, other minority women, along with Rohingya women inside Myanmar, are still at greater danger of being sexually abused in conflict relation with the military junta following the 2021 coup. Roughly 59,000 women and girls are estimated to have experienced sexual violence since August 2017, with only 6%-7% of these survivors estimated to have sought medical care after the acts of assault, according to the United Nations Population Fund.

Synthesis

These cases demonstrate that GBV in conflict is neither incidental nor geographically limited; it occurs across fundamentally different political and geographical contexts as a strategic tool for oppression, fear, and displacement. Survivors deal with a lack of access to healthcare and justice, must deal with horrid impunity for assaulters and perpetrators of violence, are isolated from humanitarian aid, and are underserved time and time again. Today, over two decades from the adoption of Resolution 1325, our world stands at a global low. These patterns keep repeating, and it will be the central challenge of the committee to come up with the right way to help women around the world.

Bloc Positions:

Note that several states could reasonably fit into multiple blocs, and that several states may not align with their respective region.

Western Bloc

United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, France, EU Member States, Australia

Generally, Western states position themselves as leading supporters and sponsors of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. In this bloc, one can expect to sponsor WPS-related Security Council resolutions and be an adamant funder of survivor support through programs like the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. Countries within the Western Bloc view international accountability as a necessity and prioritize the systematic integration of gender perspectives into security operations to combat GBV and conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). However, this bloc faces credibility challenges: multiple Western states are major exporters of arms to conflicts with prevalent CRSV, and rhetorical support has not always fully aligned with funding by the countries. Note: **Russia/CIS-aligned countries** are not ideologically aligned with these ideals.

African Bloc

Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Egypt, Rwanda

One of the most comprehensive legal frameworks on GBV is the African Union's 2003 Maputo Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa. Additionally, the African Union has its own WPS agenda Continental Results Framework to implement stronger security for the women of Africa. In practice, however, implementation of said policies in the present is very weak. Active conflict settings (Sudan, eastern DRC, the Sahel), insufficient regional peacekeeping resources, and direct state perpetration of GBV are examples of this. The UN Population Fund reported over 80,000 documented rape cases across eastern Congo between January and September 2025, a 32 percent increase over the same period the previous year, a number expected to be higher due to cases not being reported. The African bloc will likely emphasize the need for increased international funding and support, while also recognizing the progress necessary to move forward to legal accountability.

Middle Eastern Bloc

Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates

Middle Eastern states are directly affected by GBV linked to a variety of social issues and instability. The Syrian and Yemeni civil wars, ISIS atrocities in Iraq, and mass displacement

across the region are hinders of progress. It is important to note that state positions vary considerably within the bloc. Some states emphasize humanitarian improvement and refugee protection, while others disagree with CEDAW and WPS actions on cultural or religious grounds, wanting to preserve Islamic legal traditions. Roughly half of the Arab countries have legal establishments to minimize violence against women; within this bloc, consider the history and current issues of your country to decide on further steps.

Latin American Bloc

Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Chile, Argentina

The Latin American Bloc, often perceived as less relevant, brings the first binding regional treaty to address violence against women in the world: the 1994 Belem do Para Convention. The region experienced issues related to GBV through organized crimes and the displacement of women. Additionally, migration issues, specifically in Central America and post-conflict Colombia, bring complications to the progress of women's rights and safety within conflict zones. In this bloc, you will likely support and advocate for WPS language and survivor accountability, and may even suggest addressing GBV linked to forced migration, an issue relevant to the region, rather than only armed conflict.

Asian Bloc

Myanmar, Japan, South Korea, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, The Philippines

This bloc ranged greatly ideologically. Japan and South Korea have strongly supported the WPS agenda and CRSV funding for survivors. States with refugee populations, on the other hand, such as Bangladesh with the Rohingya peoples in Cox's Bazar, will prioritize displacement crises and burden-sharing of relevant issues. Policymakers often view conflict-related SGBV as a secondary issue to traditional security concerns, even though SGBV exacerbates broader state instability. These differing positions within the bloc should be addressed in the committee to move further with improving the well-being and safety of women globally and region-wide.

Questions to Consider:

- How can accountability for conflict-related gender-based violence be addressed without infringing on state sovereignty?
- What role should UN Women play in supporting survivors versus prosecuting perpetrators?
- How should cultural and religious differences be navigated in drafting universal protections?
- What funding mechanisms could sustainably support survivor services in active conflict zones?
- How will the committee address systematic sexual violence, forced marriage, or reproductive harms as military or political tactics by armed groups?
- How will you protect witnesses and victims who report abuses in active conflict zones?
- Are current funding levels for UN Women sufficient to support humanitarian aid packages in refugee camps and conflict areas?

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