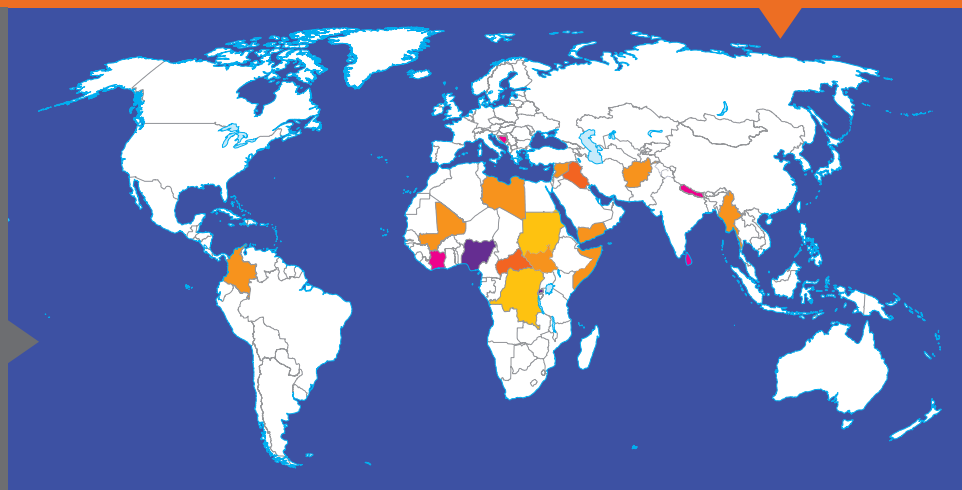


The report highlights patterns of violations, as well as challenges faced and actions taken by States to protect women, girls, men and boys from such violence. To chart the way forward, *each country section includes a targeted, actionable recommendation, building on those made in previous years.*

19
situations
of concern

49
parties
to the
conflict
listed



SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED SETTINGS:

Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan (Darfur), Syrian Arab Republic, and Yemen.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN POST-CONFLICT SETTINGS:

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cote d'Ivoire, Nepal, Sri Lanka.

OTHER SITUATIONS OF CONCERN:

Burundi, Nigeria.

- Across the 19 situations presented in the report, **women and girls are disproportionately targeted** for sexual violence: subjected to rape, gang rape, forced marriage, sexual slavery, and trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. **Structural gender inequalities and discrimination** are at the heart of the differential impact conflict has on women, men, boys and girls. Therefore, prevention of sexual violence requires the **advancement of substantive gender equality** before, during and after conflict. This includes ensuring women's full and effective participation in political, and public life and ensuring accessible and responsive justice and security institutions.
- Conflict-related sexual violence continues to be part of the strategy of conflict, **a tactic of war and terrorism**, with victims targeted on the basis of their actual or perceived ethnic, religious, political or clan affiliation, **a driver and result of forced displacement** - to displace communities, expel an undesirable group, or seize contested land or resources. Refugees and IDPs reportedly suffered sexual violence at the hands of state authorities, armed groups, smugglers, traffickers, and others who control resources and services in humanitarian contexts. Desperate parents resort to **harmful coping mechanisms**, including compelling young daughters into early marriage to reduce the risk of exploitation or to access resources for the family.
- It is essential to note that survivors of sexual violence are not a homogenous group. **Men and boys** also suffer conflict-related sexual violence in the context of detention and interrogation. Incidents include rape, gang rape, forced nudity and other forms of inhumane and degrading treatment. **Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI)** individuals have also been targeted on the basis of their real or imputed sexual orientation or gender identity. In many situations, there are often no legal provisions criminalising the rape of men and boys. Instead, the criminalization of adult consensual same-sex conduct may impede reporting for fear of prosecution. LGBTI survivors are negatively affected by such laws and risk penalties when reporting their experiences.



Key themes and critical dimensions

- The annual report serves not only as a public record of events, but also as a global advocacy instrument for driving the agenda forward. Through successive annual reports compiled since 2009, **a public, historical record has been created for a crime that has hitherto been omitted from official accounts of war and peace.** Over a decade, consistent monitoring and analysis of incidents, patterns and trends of sexual violence in conflict and post conflict situations has cast light on important new themes.



Key themes and critical dimensions

- **Children born of sexual violence** are often stigmatized at birth and may suffer a lifetime of detrimental consequences, such as critical administrative challenges in registering their births, their legal names or their rights to citizenship. In addition to economic difficulties, mothers of those children are often stigmatized by members of their community who view them as “affiliates of the enemy”.
- Victims’ ability to access the justice system continues to be hindered by reporting barriers at both individual and structural levels. Across most situations, these barriers impede victims’ ability to report incidents of rape due to lack of confidence in judicial and non-judicial responses, fear of reprisal, stigma and fear of ostracization. Despite increased attention of the international community to ending impunity for sexual violence crimes, **accountability remains elusive**.

Key Recommendations

- Strengthen prevention by **reinforcing compliance of the 47 state and non-state parties** listed by the Secretary General in his annual report with UN Security Council resolutions and international human rights and humanitarian law.
- Ensure the **strategic alignment** of efforts to address sexual violence **with efforts to prevent violent extremism** and to counter terrorism, and ensure that national action plans on women, peace and security and on preventing violent extremism are complementary.
- To **ensure criminal accountability of perpetrators**, increase support to national authorities in situations of concern in their efforts to reform laws and enhance investigation and prosecution; enact victim and witness protection laws and provide legal aid for survivors.
- To foster a **survivor-centred and holistic concept of justice and accountability**, support States in making judicial and/or administrative reparations available to victims of conflict-related violence as part of their right to obtain prompt, adequate and effective remedies and give due consideration to the **establishment of a survivors’ fund**.
- Delivery of **multisectoral assistance for all survivors of sexual violence**, including the clinical management of rape, medical, psychological and legal services, including comprehensive sexual and reproductive care such as access to emergency contraception and safe termination of pregnancy and HIV treatment, as well as reintegration support for survivors, including shelters, where appropriate, and economic and livelihood programmes.

Progress

- Increased national ownership and leadership through inclusion of issue of sexual violence in peace agreements and ceasefire verification frameworks, and the signing of **Joint Communiqués and Frameworks of Cooperation** by Governments, Regional Organizations and human rights treaty bodies as a basis for joint action with the United Nations to prevent and address conflict-related sexual violence.
- As an outcome of the annual report, **the Security Council adopted resolution 2467 on 23 April 2019** further strengthening the normative framework on women, peace and security and sexual violence in conflict and reinforcing justice and accountability and a survivor-centered approach in all aspects of prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence.

Ten years after the establishment of the mandate by the Security Council, the key recommendations represent a platform for a comprehensive and multisectoral response to prevent and address the scourge of conflict-related sexual violence.



10 years **OSRSG-SVC**
OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON
SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT

