



**League of Arab States  
General Secretariat**

**Memorandum of Understanding  
between the League of Arab States and  
the United Nations Office of the Special Representative  
of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict**

**1. Framework**

The United Nations Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG-SVC) and the League of Arab States (LAS), building on the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 56/40, the outcomes of the 12<sup>th</sup> General Cooperation Meeting between the LAS and the United Nations, the recommendation made by the Arab Women Committee during its last session held in early 2015 to encourage reinforcing collaboration between the Women Family and Childhood Department of the LAS and the Office of the SRSG-SVC, as well as on prior positive collaboration, and in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013) and 2122 (2013) and CEDAW General Recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations, agree to sign a Memorandum of understanding to collectively address conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) in the Arab region. This agreement is also informed by the Middle East and North Africa Strategy that is in the process of being prepared by the Office of the SRSG-SVC, the Team of Experts on Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, and United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict (UN Action). The parties also acknowledge the need to ensure coordination at regional and sub-regional level and look forward to the possibility of experience sharing on CRSV with other regional and sub-regional organizations as well as with other relevant institutions.

**2. Actions**

Under this agreement, the Office of the SRSG-SVC and the LAS will generate and mobilise political commitment to combat CRSV through the following actions:

**2.1** Cooperating in advocacy efforts for the implementation of key UN resolutions and LAS instruments on addressing sexual violence, including the Cairo Declaration for Women in the Arab Region: the post 2015 Development Agenda, the Regional Strategy on the Protection of Arab Women: Peace and Security (2012) and the Regional Action Plan on the Protection of Arab Women: Peace and Security (2015). Cooperation will also extend to the development of more specific instruments as may be deemed relevant by the parties;

**2.2** Ensuring that protection and empowerment of women is consistently included as a central consideration in any regional and national counter-terrorism and counter-violent extremism strategy;

**2.3** Advocating for the integration of CRSV prevention safeguards and concerns in mediation and conflict-resolution efforts in LAS countries, and ensuring the participation of women in such efforts;



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**2.4** Cooperating in advocacy efforts with Member States of the LAS to increase accountability through investigation and prosecution of sexual violence crimes;

**2.5** Supporting the efforts of the LAS to establish specific mechanisms to mitigate the disproportionate impact of conflict on women and girls, with particular attention to the protection and humanitarian needs of IDPs and refugees, including in urban settings, while taking also into account the host population needs;

**2.6** Cooperating to enhance and disseminate knowledge and research on different aspects of CRSV with particular attention to forced marriage, sexual slavery, sexual exploitation, as a basis for policy making and action;

**2.7** Promoting, as a basis for advocacy and action at all levels, more systematic monitoring, reporting and documentation on CRSV in line with international standards, including awareness of CRSV concerns during refugee registration; and support capacity building of NGOs and other actors including governmental actors on monitoring, reporting and documentation of CRSV incidents;

**2.8** Supporting efforts to enhance protection and mitigating sexual violence risks through legislative and policies reform;

**2.9** Working together to involve political and religious leaders at the highest levels and other personalities as Champions on eradicating sexual violence in conflict, and counter the use of religion as a basis or as a justification for sexual violence crimes;

**2.10** Promoting, through the engagement of national, regional and international media, joint messaging on situations of concern involving the use of sexual violence as a tactic of war and terrorism;

**2.11** Collaborating in the development, harmonization and standardization of training materials to enhance the capacity in the region to address sexual violence; and provide specific support to strengthen health, criminal justice and national security systems to prevent and respond to CRSV;

**2.12** Cooperating in the mobilization of resources to support the implementation of agreed actions to prevent and respond to CRSV in the region and abroad within LAS members' political, humanitarian, peace and security agenda;

**2.13** Working to enhance the capacity of civil society organizations to deepen their knowledge of and engagement in CRSV prevention and response;

**2.14** If the need arises and when possible, facilitating access of the SRSG-SVC to parties to conflict credibly suspected of committing acts of CRSV to seek commitments for prevention and response, in line with UN Security Council resolutions 1888 (2009), 1960 (2010), and 2106 (2013).



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**3. Implementation/Renewals**

To facilitate this agreement, the Office of the SRSG-SVC and the LAS will each designate institutional focal points through whom communication may be channeled. In addition, the LAS and the Office of the SRSG-SVC agree to develop an implementation plan that will be renewed every two years, around key priorities mentioned in this framework. A review of priorities and initiatives will take place on a regular basis to ensure that the plan adequately reflects rapidly evolving situation on the ground.

**4. Focal Points**

Under this Framework, the Office of the SRSG-SVC consider the Social Affairs Sector of the LAS and particularly its Women, Family and Childhood Department as its primary interlocutor when dealing with CRSV in the Arab region, and the LAS consider the Office of the SRSG-SVC as its primary interlocutor within the United Nations (UN) system on issues related to CRSV.

**5. Mediation**

In case of disputes arising from the application, implementation or interpretation of this Framework, the Parties shall settle the dispute amicably by negotiations.

**6. Amendments**

This Framework agreement may be amended upon mutual consent by both Parties.

**Termination**

This Framework may be terminated by either of the parties, following two months prior written notification. In the event of a renunciation of the Framework, the obligations of the Parties with regard to on-going projects shall continue to be honored in accordance with the provisions of this Framework until their completion.

**7. Entry into force**

This Framework shall enter into force on the date of its signing by the Office of the SRSG-SVC and LAS.

**8. Versions**

The Arabic and English versions of this framework are both considered official.

**Signatories:**

For the United Nations Office of the Special  
Representative of the Secretary-General on  
Sexual Violence in Conflict

H.E. Zainab Hawa Bangura  
Special Representative

For the League of Arab States

H.E. Dr. Nabil Elaraby  
Secretary-General

Date:

2016/03/29

Date:

29/03/2016