

ABOUT THE TEAM OF EXPERTS

The United Nations (UN) Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict (the “Team”) was created by [Security Council resolution 1888](#) (2009) to assist national authorities in strengthening the rule of law, with the aim of ensuring criminal accountability for perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). This resolution recognized that CRSV is a threat to peace and security, and that Member States affected by conflict need assistance to address impunity in order to prevent and deter future violations.

The Team is the only dedicated Security Council mandated entity to provide this type of support on a global basis.

The Team is based at the UN Headquarters in New York and deploys regularly to some of the world’s most challenging contexts. It has a unique “co-lead” structure that includes members from several UN entities to enable the UN to deliver as one in assisting Member States to address CRSV. The Team is led by a Team Leader who reports to the [Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict](#) (SRSG-SVC),

and currently comprises experts from the [Department of Peace Operations](#) (DPO), the Office of the [United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights](#) (OHCHR), the Office of the SRSG-SVC and the [United Nations Development Programme](#) (UNDP), who each report to both the Team Leader and their respective entities.



IMPACT OF COVID-19

GIVEN THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND MEASURES TAKEN AROUND THE WORLD, INCLUDING WORLDWIDE TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS, THE TEAM OF EXPERTS, IN LINE WITH THE GUIDANCE OF THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL, AND RELEVANT HOST COUNTRY RESTRICTIONS, HAS SINCE MID-MARCH PUT A HOLD ON ITS TRAVEL.

However, to ensure business continuity and continue to meet the support needs of survivors and Member States, the Team of Experts is utilizing a variety of tools to continue to collaborate with colleagues and partners both at headquarters and field levels. The Team of Experts will continue to review the status of its activities regularly, taking into account the health and safety considerations of its members, as well as those of its national partners and communities it supports.

It is anticipated that COVID-19 may have a detrimental impact on all aspects of the rule of law response, including accountability for CRSV. This may entail limitations on the availability and capacity of law enforcement and judicial authorities to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate crimes of sexual violence. States of emergencies and other restrictions on movement, amongst other COVID-19 measures, are also likely to negatively affect victims’ access to justice, further exacerbating existing structural, institutional and sociocultural barriers to reporting such crimes, and may result in increased cases of sexual and gender-based violence including CRSV. In this context, there will be an increasing need to invest in addressing the accountability gap for CRSV.

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PHOTO | IRIN



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GUINEA



In Guinea (Conakry), the Team of Experts continued to play a critical role in supporting national authorities to ensure accountability for the human rights violations that took place at the stadium in Conakry on 28 September 2009, in which at least 157 people were killed, and at least 109 women and girls were raped and subjected to other forms of sexual violence. The Team support included the continued deployment of a senior judicial advisor to Conakry, who actively contributed to the preparation and follow-up of the deliberations of the Steering Committee and its Technical Follow-up Committee put in place to organize the trials for the 28 September 2009 events. In addition to ensuring coordination and support by UN, Member States and civil society for the work of the Steering Committee, the Team

of Experts has continued to engage with a number of stakeholders at regional and international levels to advocate for political, financial and logistical support for the trials.

These efforts contributed to a renewed political commitment towards accountability by Guinean senior officials. In January 2020, during the Universal Periodic Review on Guinea at the Human Rights Council in Geneva, the Guinean Minister of Justice emphasized the unequivocal will of the President and his Government to hold the trials, indicating that they could start in June 2020. The Team is following-up on this commitment as dates may be impacted by the current national context and delays resulting from the impact of COVID-19 on the functioning of rule of law institutions.

IRAQ



In Iraq, the Government of Iraq entered a period of uncertainty including countrywide protests and fighting within its borders. Despite this challenging context, the Team of Experts continued to advocate for the prosecution of sexual violence crimes in Iraqi national courts under sexual violence qualification and not simply as terrorism crimes. The Government of Iraq has

signaled that it seeks to reinvigorate all aspects of the 2016 Joint Communiqué between the United Nations and the Government of Iraq on the Prevention and Response to CRSV. With respect to justice issues, the Team of Experts has been working with the senior women protection advisor of UNAMI and with the Iraqi government to reinvigorate this process.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE CRIMES BY DAESH MUST BE CHARGED SPECIFICALLY AS ACTS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

JUSTICE FOR DAESH VICTIMS

NIGERIA



In Nigeria, the Team of Experts participated in an expert panel to launch the new UNODC Nigeria Training Module on Gender Dimensions of Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism. In addition, the Team of Experts participated in two

trainings organized by UNODC with the Nigeria Association of Women Judges and the National Security Agency on the investigation and judicial response to CRSV.

SOUTH SUDAN



The Team of Experts continued to work with UNMISS and the UN Country Team to assist the South Sudanese armed forces and the police to develop and implement action plans in compliance with international humanitarian law and Security Council resolutions on CRSV. The Team also supported SPLA-IO in developing an action plan in line with its 2014 unilateral communiqué on preventing CRSV in South Sudan. The adopted action plan includes pillars on mainstreaming

sexual violence in new security arrangements under the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan; prevention of sexual violence in SPLA-IO; accountability for crimes of sexual violence; and communication on addressing CRSV. This initiative helped to identify potential priority areas of UN engagement and formed a basis for coordinated engagement with SPLA-IO.

IN ADDITION, IN MALI, THE TEAM AND MINUSMA ARE PLANNING TO ORGANIZE A WORKSHOP IN 2020 TO OFFICIALLY PRESENT AND ANALYZE WITH THE NATIONAL AUTHORITIES THE FINDINGS OF A JOINT ASSESSMENT ON THE BACKLOG OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE CASES IN THE MALIAN JUSTICE SYSTEM COMMITTED DURING THE OCCUPATION OF THE NORTHERN REGIONS OF THE COUNTRY BY TERRORIST GROUPS. IN MYANMAR, THE TEAM OF EXPERTS CONTINUES TO ADVOCATE FOR ACCOUNTABILITY FOR CRSV AND ENGAGE WITH THE RELEVANT NATIONAL AUTHORITIES IN LINE WITH THE MANDATE OF THE TEAM OF EXPERTS AND THE JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ SIGNED WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF MYANMAR.



Team of Experts

THE TEAM OF EXPERTS IS TEN YEARS OLD!

LOOKING BACK AND MOVING FORWARD

TO COMMEMORATE THE TEN-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF ITS ESTABLISHMENT, THE TEAM HAS PARTNERED WITH THE JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE TO PUBLISH AN UPCOMING SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE JOURNAL, TO BE RELEASED IN JUNE, ON JUSTICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT: PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES IN NATIONAL EFFORTS TO ADDRESS IMPUNITY.

The publication aims at promoting documented reflections on the unique challenges in advancing accountability and justice for victims and survivors of CRSV through national justice institutions. It will offer its readers a unique tour of the history, growth, and the jurisprudential landscape of national

prosecutions for CRSV over the past decade, through articles by practitioners, academics, and policymakers. The Team is looking into the possibility of organizing a symposium around the publication, COVID-19 restrictions permitting, gathering the authors, experts and practitioners for a lively exchange.

2020-2024 JOINT PROGRAMME

IN DECEMBER LAST YEAR, THE CO-LEAD ENTITIES AGREED ON A NEW FIVE-YEAR JOINT PROGRAMME FOR THE TEAM OF EXPERTS TO GUIDE ITS WORK AND FACILITATE THE MOBILIZATION OF RESOURCES.

This new joint programme builds on the work of the past 10 years, the recommendations of the 2018 mid-term review as well as extensive consultation with partners. It offers a new vision for the future work of the Team premised on the assumption that strong political will to pursue justice; improved technical and operational capacity of national rule of law institutions and actors; and enhanced cooperation, coordination, coherence and knowledge among actors will enable effective, victim-sensitive criminal proceedings for CRSV in line with international standards, resulting in increased accountability for such crimes and ultimately contribute to long-term peace, security and development. A copy of the joint programme is available at <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/CSV00>



PHOTO | TEAM OF EXPERTS

TEAM OF EXPERTS

“SMALL BUT MIGHTY”

“The Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, [...] carries out vital work on the ground to combat impunity and support women, men, girls and boys who have survived sexual violence.”

Permanent Representation of Luxembourg to the United Nations Open Debate on SVC, 23 April 2019.

“The Team fills a gap in prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence that is not easily found elsewhere in the UN on the ground. When this is combined with operational flexibility, the value added of the Team is clear. At the field/national level, the Team’s status as an HQ entity with links to the co-entities at HQ level as well as access to the UN’s most senior leadership including the Secretary-General through the SRSG-SVC provides leverage and weight to its efforts. Several interlocutors expressed the view that at the field level the Team was perceived by partners as operationally very strategic and politically savvy.”

Team of Experts’ independent mid-term review, 2018.

WHILE THE TEAM REMAINS A SMALL TEAM, IT HAS BEEN REPEATEDLY CONSIDERED TO PROVIDE A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO EXISTING RULE OF LAW INITIATIVES WITH VERY SPECIFIC EXPERTISE ON CONFLICT-RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE BY ITS CONSTITUENTS, DONORS, AND BENEFICIARIES.

THE TEAM OF EXPERTS AND THE SECURITY COUNCIL

SINCE THE SECURITY COUNCIL CREATED THE TEAM IN RESOLUTION 1888 (2009), IT HAS ADOPTED ADDITIONAL RESOLUTIONS WHICH HAVE INCLUDED REFERENCES TO THE TEAM

- In resolution 2106 (2013), the Security Council “encourages concerned Member States to draw upon the expertise of the United Nations Team of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1888 (2009) as appropriate to strengthen the rule of law and the capacity of civilian and military justice systems to address sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations as part of broader efforts to strengthen institutional safeguards against impunity.”
- In resolution 2331 (2016), the Security Council “takes note with appreciation of the efforts undertaken by the [...] Team of Experts on Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict to strengthen monitoring and analysis of sexual violence in conflict, including when associated with trafficking in persons in armed conflict and post-conflict situations, used as a tactic of war and also as a tactic by certain terrorist groups”.
- In resolution 2247 (2018), the Security Council “requests the United Nations to emphasize prevention and response to conflict related sexual and gender-based violence and [...] assist national authorities to strengthen the rule of law, for instance through the work of the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict.”
- In resolution 2467 (2019) the Security Council “stresses the critical role of the domestic investigation and judicial systems of Member States to prevent and eliminate sexual violence in conflict and to ensure accountability for those responsible, and requests relevant United Nations entities including the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict established pursuant to resolution 1888 (2009) to support national authorities in their efforts in this regard.”

RESOURCES

The Security Council mandated in resolution 1888 (2009) that the Team make use of existing human resources within the UN system as well as voluntary contributions. Since it became operational in 2011, the Team has been funded exclusively through voluntary contributions. In order to sustain its work, adequate human and financial resources are essential. The Team welcomes contributions from Member States, private philanthropic foundations and individuals to its new five-year plan.

The Team greatly appreciates the generous contributions provided by Belgium, Estonia, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom.



The Team constantly seeks to broaden its partnership and support basis. For further information on the Team's activities, please see the 2018 annual report at <https://cutt.ly/MyxVpqb>

To contribute to the work of the Team of Experts, contact directly the Team Leader, Ms. Chloe Marnay-Baszanger marnay-baszanger@un.org and TOE-ROL-SVC@un.org

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