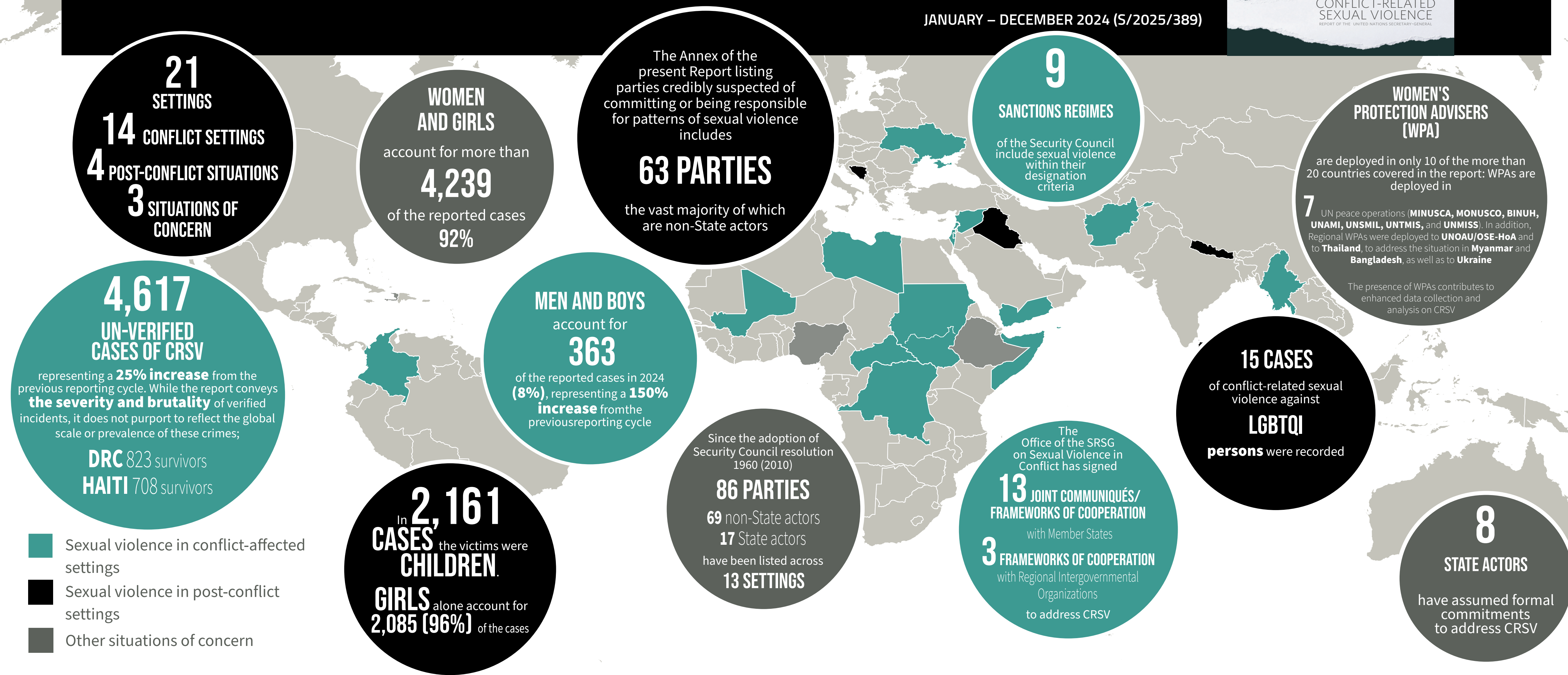


16TH REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL ON CONFLICT-RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE

JANUARY – DECEMBER 2024 (S/2025/389)



KEY THEMES

SUSTAINING THE DELIVERY OF LIFESAVING SERVICES TO SURVIVORS OF CRSV AMID CONFLICTS

The reporting period was marked by widespread patterns of CRSV, amid record levels of displacement, rising militarization and shrinking civic space. Despite mounting needs, **humanitarian access was significantly curtailed** by parties to conflict, while threats and attacks against **humanitarian workers, UN personnel and human rights defenders** reached an unprecedented level. The **proliferation** and widespread availability of **small arms and light weapons** continued to fuel sexual violence.

Survivors were rarely able to reach healthcare providers during the crucial 72-hour window when lifesaving, specialized services for the clinical management of rape, including post-rape kits and HIV prevention treatments, are most effective. **Stigma**, rooted in harmful social norms, continued to result in the socioeconomic exclusion and impoverishment of survivors. Against this backdrop, withdrawals and drawdowns of a number of UN peace operations have led to security vacuums and the diminished capacity of the UN to support stakeholders in addressing sexual violence in regard to investigations, reporting, and assistance to survivors.

Sexual violence remains a chronic feature of the **political economy of war**, disproportionately affecting the lives and livelihood activities of women and girls. Non-State armed groups, including those under sanctions enacted by the Security Council, continued to use sexual violence to consolidate their control over territories and lucrative natural resources. Women and girls perceived to be associated with rival armed forces or criminal organized groups were targeted with rape and other forms of sexual violence in the CAR, the DRC, and Haiti.

Displaced and refugee women and girls were exposed to heightened risks of sexual violence, notably in Burkina Faso, the DRC, Haiti, Libya, Mozambique, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan. Sexual violence perpetrated by State and non-State actors propelled displacement and fueled protracted crises where the persistence of these violations in areas of origin prevented returns. **Food insecurity** increased the risk of exposure to sexual violence and remained a concern, particularly in the DRC.

Abduction and trafficking in persons, including by elements under sanctions enacted by the Security Council, continued in several conflict-affected settings, including Burkina Faso, Mozambique, Nigeria, and the Sudan. Some abductions endure for years, leaving survivors with long-term health and psychological impacts.

CRSV was **perpetrated in detention, including as a form of torture**, reportedly in Israel and the State of Palestine, Libya, Myanmar, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen. CRSV in detention was used to humiliate and extract information primarily from men and boys, but also women and girls. Humanitarian access to prison sites was severely constrained, impeding monitoring of violations.

The level of compliance by parties to conflict with existing normative frameworks and obligations remained low, calling for enhanced coherence between the Annex of the annual Report of the Secretary-General on CRSV and the practice of sanctions regimes in imposing targeted and graduated measures.

PROGRESS & CHALLENGES

ENCOURAGING JUDICIAL DEVELOPMENTS DESPITE PREVAILING IMPUNITY

In **Colombia**, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (SJP) issued 15 decisions related to CRSV, including in Macro Case 07, attributing responsibility for child recruitment, sexual violence, and other crimes to six former FARC-EP Secretariat members. Concerning Macro Case 11 on sexual and gender-based violence, the SJP carried out an accreditation campaign that comprised psychosocial support and risk mitigation measures for victims, resulting in the registration of 127 individuals as victims.

In the **Central African Republic**, the Special Criminal Court implemented reparations, disbursing some \$32,000 to victims of the Lemouna and Koundjili attacks on 21 May 2019.

In the **DRC**, judicial authorities prosecuted sexual violence crimes and convicted 15 members of the Armed Forces of the DRC, including one high-ranking officer, two members of the National Congolese Police, and 19 members of non-State armed groups, including the ADF, CODECO and Mai-Mai Raia Mutomboki factions.

In **Iraq**, under the Yazidi Survivor's Law, the Directorate for Survivors Affairs referred 189 survivors to mental health and psychosocial support in 2024. As of December 2024, a total of 2,276 applications under the YSL were approved, with 1,155 for Yazidi, Turkmen, Shabak, and Christian survivors of sexual violence as beneficiaries. In August, the Kurdistan Regional Government began disbursing a complementary monthly allowance of approximately \$100 to Yazidi survivors of Da'esh, including of sexual violence crimes.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- » Call upon all parties to conflict **to immediately cease all forms of CRSV** in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions and international humanitarian law, and provide the UN and humanitarian actors with unhindered humanitarian access to conflict-affected areas.
- » Adopt a **survivor-centered approach to preventing and addressing CRSV** that empowers survivors by prioritizing their rights, specific needs and aspirations, and promote an enabling environment for survivors to seek support on a non-discriminatory basis, including through scaled-up funding for gender-based violence services, including HIV prevention, healthcare, safe termination of pregnancy, psychosocial and legal services, and reintegration measures.
- » Address **chronic funding shortfalls** by providing predictable funding to the CRSV Multi-Partner Trust Fund to support the work of UN Action in delivering multisectoral services, and the work of the Team of Experts in the areas of justice and accountability.
- » Give due consideration to examining the **risks for civilians in detention settings** of violations of international law, including CRSV, and solicit further relevant information on the latter from relevant UN entities in order to deepen the evidence-base for action.
- » Ensure that **mandate authorizations and renewals of peace operations** integrate measures to prevent protection gaps, including during mission drawdowns and withdrawals, and dedicated operational provisions on addressing CRSV, including the retention and accelerated deployment of women's protection capacities to UN peace operations and Resident/Humanitarian Coordinators Offices.
- » Ensure that sexual violence is **systematically monitored and incorporated as a stand-alone designation criterion for targeted sanctions**, while ensuring that sanctions committees have expertise on CRSV, and consider applying sanctions to persistent perpetrators who have appeared in the Annex of the annual Report for five or more years without taking remedial or corrective action.

16TH REPORT OF THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL ON CONFLICT-RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE



The United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict (UN Action) network coordinates the work of 27 UN entities. In 2024, UN Action galvanized a groundbreaking initiative for survivors in Ukraine, involving six UN entities collectively delivering holistic recovery services. Survivors now benefit from improved access to medical care, educational and employment opportunities, and financial aid, with online psychotherapy provided to those displaced by conflict.



In 2024, the Security-Council-mandated Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict continued to assist national authorities in twelve countries to strengthen rule of law institutions to enhance accountability for CRSV, including in the DRC, CAR, Colombia, Guinea, South Sudan, and Ukraine.



OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON
SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT

<http://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/>



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