

High-Level Event on Occasion of the 2026 United Nations Security Council Open Debate on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence

Combatting Trafficking for the Purposes of Sexual Exploitation by Armed and Terrorist Groups: Closing Information Gaps and Strengthening Cooperation to Promote Accountability for Survivors

*Conference Room 11, United Nations Headquarters, New York
Tuesday, 7 July 2026 – 3-4:30 (EDT)*

[RSVP Link](#)

Background:

In 2016, the Security Council adopted its first resolution specifically addressing trafficking in persons – critically underscoring its linkages with conflict-related sexual violence, as well as terrorism and other transnational organized criminal activities. Resolution 2331 (2016) followed successive reports of the Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV), which had highlighted clear trends and patterns of sexual violence and exploitation occurring alongside abduction and trafficking in persons in conflict areas, perpetrated by organized criminal networks and armed groups.

Among the most egregious episodes documented has been the pattern of sexual violence, slavery, abduction and human trafficking instituted by ISIL (Da'esh) following its seizure of Mosul in June 2014. Against this background, the Security Council through resolution 2331 (2016) emphasized that sexual violence can form part of the strategic objectives and ideology and used as a tactic of certain terrorist groups. Beyond recruitment and financing, sexual violence can also be used to punish or control communities, displace populations from strategically important zones, extract information from detainees, and advance ideology which includes the suppression of women's rights and the use of religious justification to codify and institutionalize sexual slavery. The Security Council condemned violations by Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab, the Lord's Resistance Army, and other groups, and particularly the sale or trade in persons perpetrated by ISIL (Da'esh), highlighting that any persons or entities who transfers funds to the group in connection with such

acts would be eligible for sanctions designation by the Security Council sanctions committee concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individual and entities.¹

Through resolution 2331 (2016), as well as subsequent resolutions, the Council has called for a broad range of prevention, monitoring and response measures by Member States, United Nations entities, regional bodies and other actors and emphasized the importance of their coordination in this regard. The Council noted the particular importance of data collection, including through the Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements (MARA) on sexual violence, as well as preservation for evidence to facilitate eventual accountability processes. Beyond the 1267 Sanctions Regime, the Security Council also expressed its intention to integrate issues of trafficking in persons and sexual violence in conflict into the work of its sanctions' committees more broadly, including through reporting by their associated expert groups, and to consider targeted sanctions for perpetrators.

Despite this strong normative and legal framework, the Office of the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict (OSRSG-SVC) has continued to receive alarming reports of sexual violence in connection with trafficking of women and girls, including by armed groups and Security Council sanctioned entities. The latest Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (S/2026/321) notes, inter-alia, that abduction and sexual violence formed part of a broader pattern of attacks by armed groups in remote areas in Burkina Faso, Mali and Mozambique, with girls as young as 11 forced into sexual slavery and repeated rapes in captivity, leading to unwanted pregnancies. Jama'at Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin perpetrated rape, including the rape of at least 100 women and girls, and other forms of sexual violence in remote areas in Burkina Faso and Mali. In South Sudan, abduction and sexual slavery continued to be used as collective punishment of rival communities, provoking displacement; in Libya, transnational traffickers and armed groups continued to perpetrate sexual violence, including rape and sexual slavery with impunity, primarily against migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons. These are but some of the harrowing examples faced by survivors, and – as with CRSV data more broadly – likely represent only a fraction of actual violations.

Efforts to document sexual violence, including in connection with trafficking, continue to face significant challenges, including due to stigma, fear of reprisals and other barriers to reporting. Displacement amidst insecurity creates both exacerbated risk of trafficking, as well as obstacles in monitoring such violations. Global trends, including UN mission drawdowns and transitions, resource constraints and humanitarian access restrictions further limit prevention and response efforts. As a result, survivors of sexual violence continue to face obstacles in accessing services and justice and accountability measures envisioned under international law.

In 2018, the Security Council notably imposed sanctions on several leaders of human trafficking networks in Libya, including in connection with sexual exploitation. A 2024 update resolution recognizes that sexual and gender-based violence including rape, enslavement of persons, and cases of abduction and trafficking in persons may be eligible for designation on the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions List – paving the way for continued response through the 1267 Sanctions Regime. However, sanctions otherwise appear to be an underutilized tool. This event will therefore

¹ Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida, and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities.

also provide an opportunity to assess potential gaps and opportunities to better utilize this instrument to combat trafficking in persons for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

Objectives:

The objective of the event is to continue to raise awareness and deepen collective understanding of the nexus of CRSV and trafficking in persons, including in the context of violent extremism, to inform more effective prevention and response measures. A key focus will be on ways to strengthen cooperation between Member States, the UN and civil society to close information gaps to enhance prevention, response and accountability, including through targeted sanctions.

Guiding questions:

- What lessons have been learned in identifying, monitoring and addressing trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation? Where are the priority blind spots or challenges, and how can these be best addressed? How can the perspectives of survivors be effectively integrated into these processes?
- How has trafficking in persons for the purposes of sexual exploitation been considered within the work of Security Council sanctions committees and their expert monitoring groups? How can sanctions be better leveraged to address such violations and abuses?
- What best practices have emerged over the past decade for collaboration between the UN, Member States, and civil society in preventing and responding to these crimes? Who are other key stakeholders? What role can non-traditional partnerships play, for example with the private sector and financial institutions?

Participation:

The event will convene participants from Member States, the UN system and civil society, in order to harness a broad range of perspectives and enhance strategic coordination and response to address conflict-related trafficking for sexual exploitation. Participation at the level of Permanent Representative or Deputy Permanent Representative is encouraged.

Programme:

Time	Session and Speakers
15:00-15:05	Event opening by the Moderator, Ms. Chloe Marnay-Baszanger
15:05-15:10	Opening statement by H.E. Ms. Judith Suminwa Tuluka, Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
15:10-15:25	Opening remarks by H.E. Ms. Pramila Patten, Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict

	Opening remarks by H.E. Ms. Sandra Jensen Landi, Deputy Permanent Representative of Denmark to the Security Council
15:25-15:35	Statements by Member State Co-Sponsors • H.E. Ms. Sanita Pavluta-Deslandes, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Latvia to the United Nations • Ms. Isis Jaraud Darnault, Political Coordinator, Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations
15:35-16:10	Panel Discussion – “Perspectives from the Field” • Mr. Matteo Pasquali, Deputy Representative, UNODC Liaison Office in New York • Ms. Sheila Beedwanttee Keetharuth, Senior Women’s Protection Adviser, UNMISS (<i>via VTC</i>) • Ms. Niemat Ahmadi, Founder, Darfur Women Action Group • Ms. Sue Eckert, Expert, Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team pursuant to resolutions 1526 (2004) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities • Ms. Siobhán Mullally, Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children Moderator: Ms. Chloe Marnay-Baszanger
16:10-16:25	Interventions from the floor (including Q&A)
16:25-16:30	Closure by Moderator, Ms. Chloe Marnay-Baszanger

Social Media:

A live webcast will be available at: <https://shorturl.at/eo0F2>

The event will also be promoted through social media and participants are welcome to post on their accounts tagging the SRSG-SVC’s Office: @endrapeinwar

We are on X, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

Please use our official hashtag: #EndRapeInWar