

ABOUT THE TEAM OF EXPERTS

The United Nations 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. This resolution recognized that conflict-related sexual violence 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 United Nations Headquarters in New York and deploys regularly to the field in some of the world’s

most challenging contexts. It has a unique “co-lead” structure that includes members from several United Nations entities to enable the United Nations to deliver as one in assisting Member States to address sexual violence in conflict. 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), Under-Secretary-General Pramila Patten, and currently comprises experts from the [Department of Peace Operations](#) (DPO), the [Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights](#) (OHCHR) and the [United Nations Development Programme](#) (UNDP), who each report to both the Team Leader and their respective entities. Team members have expertise in a variety of areas including international

criminal law; human rights; policing and law enforcement; rule of law reform; reparations; transitional justice; and gender equality and non-discrimination.



Ms. Sofia Coelho Candeias, DPO member of the Team of Experts, in Bangui, Central African Republic.

THE TEAM OF EXPERTS APPROACH

The Team works with the consent and cooperation of host governments, with the aim of fostering national ownership and responsibility for addressing conflict-related sexual violence. In some countries, the Team works within the framework of joint communiqués signed by the SRSG-SVC on behalf of the United Nations and the host government.

The Team works alongside national counterparts to strengthen rule of law institutions and enable them to hold individuals accountable for conflict-related sexual violence, in full compliance with international due process and fair trial standards. It takes a survivor-centered approach, which recognizes that survivors of conflict-related sexual violence include women and girls as well as men and boys, and that survivors are often subject to stigmatization by their families and communities, which make survivors

reluctant to report crimes and may also render them vulnerable to further violence. The Team’s areas of work include: (i) criminal investigations and prosecutions; (ii) military justice; (iii) legislative reform; (iv) protection of victims and witnesses; (v) reparations for survivors; and (vi) security sector oversight.

Conflict-related sexual violence has root causes based on, among other factors,

gender inequality and discrimination, political and economic marginalization and lack of respect for other human rights. In this context, the Team assists Member States toward the full compliance of their national and international obligations so that the root causes of conflict-related sexual violence are holistically addressed.



Mr. Frederic Batumike was convicted of crimes against humanity for the rape of 39 children by his militia in Kavumu, DRC in a trial supported by the Team of Experts.

THE TEAM OF EXPERTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Team works closely with a variety of partners to ensure complementarity and sustainability. At country level, it works with United Nations peace operations and country teams as well as civil society/grass roots organizations and academia to ensure that its work is based on survivors’ needs

and utilizes cutting-edge approaches to sexual violence in conflict. At regional level, the Team works with regional and sub-regional organizations including the African Union, the European Genocide Network, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the League of Arab States.

At the global level, the Team works within the framework of the [United Nations Global Focal Point Arrangement for Police, Justice and Corrections in Post-Conflict and Other Crisis Situations](#) (GFP) and with international bodies such as the International Criminal Court (ICC).

EXAMPLES OF THE TEAM OF EXPERTS WORK

Since it became operational in 2011, the Team has been engaged in Central African Republic (CAR), Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Guinea, Iraq, Liberia, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan (Darfur) and Syria. Examples of the Team's work include:

- In the **Central African Republic**, the Team has been working with MINUSCA and UNDP to operationalize a rapid response unit with the police and gendarmerie to investigate sexual and gender-based violence (known as the UMIRR). In 2019, the Team will be deploying a full-time expert based in MINUSCA to provide daily mentoring and capacity support to the investigation and prosecution of sexual and gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence under the jurisdiction under the Special Criminal Court of CAR (SCC). Further priorities for 2019 include advocacy to ensure that the UMIRR is sufficiently funded through the national budget and that cases are transferred from UMIRR to prosecutors are processed appropriately and in a timely manner. Beyond the UMIRR, the Team continues to work closely with GFP partners to support the SCC, including with respect to the Strategy for the Protection of Victims and Witnesses as well as the Prosecution Strategy.
- In **Côte d'Ivoire**, the Team deployed two experts during 2017-2018 to assist the Ivorian armed forces in developing an action plan on preventing and addressing sexual violence, enforcing undertakings signed by senior commanders on the principle of command responsibility, and implementing a revised code of conduct that now specifically includes the prohibition of sexual violence. Such measures have translated into a reduced number of violations attributable to the military. At the same time, none of the sexual violence crimes committed during the 2010-2011 post-election crisis which were investigated by the Cellule Spéciale d'Enquête et d'Instruction have progressed to trial. In November 2018, the Team conducted a technical assessment of the judicial response to these crimes in order to identify impediments to prosecutions, with the aim of exploring possible ways to assist national authorities in overcoming those impediments.
- In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, the Team worked with the Congolese military justice authorities to formulate and implement a case prioritization strategy for the gravest crimes under international law, including conflict-related sexual violence. This exercise was conducted jointly with the Government of the DRC, MONUSCO, the UN Country Team, and civil society organizations. In 2018, this work resulted inter alia, in two important cases. Frederic Batumike, former provincial deputy, was convicted for the systematic rape of children in Kavumu, South Kivu in 2010-2011 and sentenced to life imprisonment. In North Kivu, former militia leader Ntabo Ntaberi Sheka and ex-FDLR commander Serafin Lionceau are now on trial for the mass rape of more than 300 women in Walikale in 2010. The Team has also provided support to mobile court sessions to facilitate access to justice for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence in their local communities. Further, the Team has provided technical advice and resources to the Congolese Special Police for Women and Children (PSPEF) to address conflict-related sexual violence. In 2019, the Team is preparing to deploy an expert to assist national military justice authorities with investigations and prosecutions of alleged perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence subject to the confirmation of funding.
- In **Guinea** (Conakry), the Team continues to deploy a high-level expert as a member of the Steering Committee responsible for organizing the trials of fifteen senior military officials including former President Moussa Dadis Camara, for the killing of at least 157 persons and sexual violence against at least 109 women and girls at the Conakry stadium in September 2009. The Steering Committee, which was established by the Minister of Justice in April 2018, also includes senior Guinean officials and representatives of OHCHR, the European Union and the United States. To date, the Steering Committee has identified the venue for the trials, conducted a security assessment, and mobilized budgetary resources. Prior to the establishment of the Steering Committee, the Team's high-level expert also assisted the national panel of judges appointed to investigate the case from 2012 to 2017.
- In **Iraq**, the Team has initiated a new project to facilitate investigations and prosecutions of "pilot cases" for conflict-related sexual violence by members of the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh) in Iraqi courts. If successful, these "pilot cases" will represent the first time that ISIL perpetrators will be tried for sexual crimes by any court. In 2019, the Team will be embedding a full-time expert with UNDP Iraq to assist national and regional authorities in ensuring that judicial processes are victim-sensitive and carried out in accordance with international standards. The Team is working in close partnership with civil society, victims' organizations and Yazidi refugee communities living in Germany.
- In **Nigeria**, the Team carried out a preliminary assessment in October/November 2018 on the judicial response to sexual violence crimes committed by Boko Haram. The assessment identified various obstacles to the ongoing lack of accountability for these crimes. In 2019, the Team expects to work with the relevant national authorities to address these obstacles and bring perpetrators to justice. The Team also plans to undertake additional assessments with civil society and victims' groups to ensure adequate participation and ownership in judicial processes.
- In **South Sudan**, the Team continues to work with UNMISS and the United Nations 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 sexual violence in conflict. These action plans include specific initiatives to prevent conflict-related sexual violence and promote accountability for such crimes.



THE TEAM OF EXPERTS AND THE BROADER UNITED NATIONS AGENDA

Although the Team focuses on criminal accountability for conflict-related sexual violence, its work has cross-cutting impact that contributes to the broader agenda of the United Nations system.

- Women, Peace and Security:** The Team’s work is anchored firmly in the Security Council’s agenda on women, peace and security. The Team contributes to the implementation of the landmark [Security Council resolution 1325](#) (2000) on women, peace and security which calls on Member States to include women in peace processes, protect

women from human rights violations, eliminate gender-based discrimination and combat impunity for conflict-related sexual violence.

- Sustaining Peace:** The United Nations General Assembly has fully [endorsed](#) Secretary-General Guterres’ three-pillar approach to sustaining peace, which focuses on security, human rights and development. With its innovative co-lead entity structure, the Team unites three of the main United Nations entities engaged in these key pillars to ensure that the United Nations takes

a comprehensive approach to combat impunity for conflict-related sexual violence as part of the sustaining peace agenda.

- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:** The Team assists Member States to reach their targets for the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) by contributing to the implementation of Goal 5 targets on gender equality and Goal 16 targets on peace, justice and strong institutions.

THE TEAM OF EXPERTS AND THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Since the Security Council created the Team of Experts in [resolution 1888](#) (2009), it has adopted additional resolutions which have included references to the Team of Experts:

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 Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict and 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”.

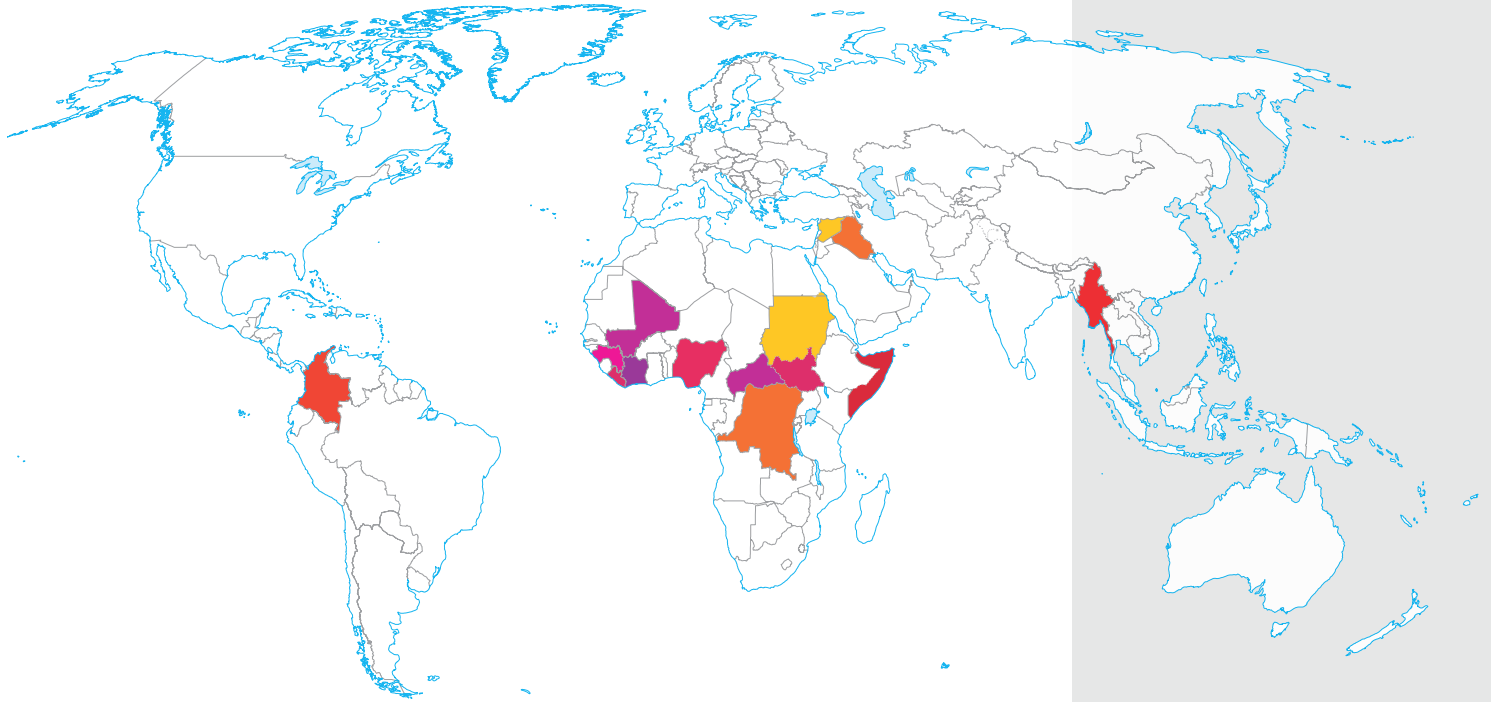


SRSR Pramila Patten briefing the Security Council on South Sudan in December 2018.

In December 2018, the Security Council adopted [resolution 2447](#) (2018) which “requests the United Nations to emphasize prevention and response to conflict related sexual and gender-based violence and support to victims,

including [...] with the consent of the host government, 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.”

TEAM OF EXPERTS ENGAGEMENTS SINCE 2011



Addressing Sexual Violence in Conflict Globally

RESOURCES FOR THE TEAM OF EXPERTS

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.

The Team greatly appreciates the generous contributions currently being provided by Belgium, Estonia, Finland, France, Japan, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

For further information on the Team's activities, please see its [2017 annual report](#) which was published in April 2018.



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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 Resilient nations.*