

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. The Team 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 Peacekeeping Operations](#) (DPKO), 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.



PHOTO | TOE
The Team of Experts facilitated experience-sharing between Panzi Hospital of the DRC and the Guinean Ministry of Health to treat a group of survivors of the events of 28 September 2009.

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 responsible for conflict-related sexual violence accountable, in full compliance with international due process and fair trial standards. The Team 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.



PHOTO | PHYSICIANS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
Mr. Frederic Batumike stands accused of committing the crime against humanity of 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 deployed to Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Central African Republic (CAR), Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Iraq, Liberia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan (Darfur), South Sudan and Syria. Examples of the Team's work include:

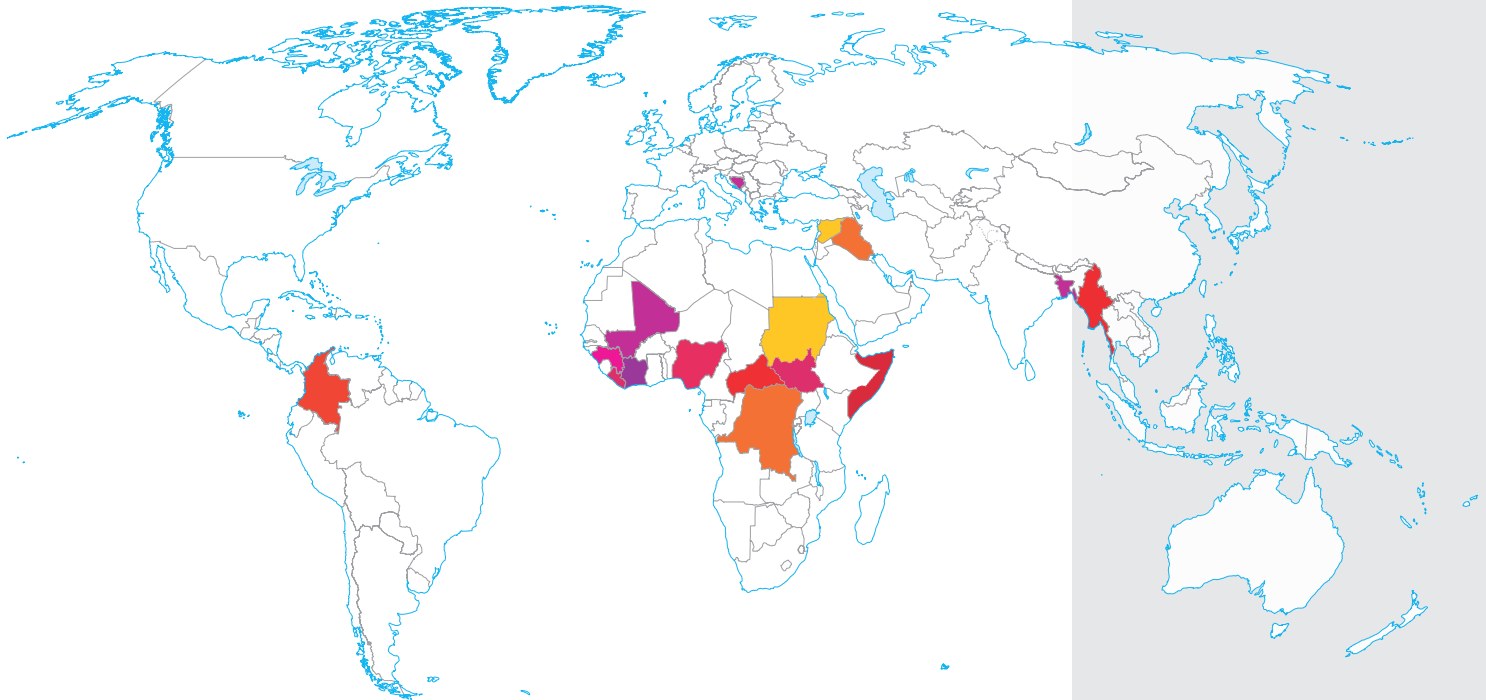
- In the **Central African Republic**, the Team has been working with MINUSCA and UNDP to operationalize a rapid response unit within the police and gendarmerie to investigate sexual and gender-based violence (known as the UMIRR), with strong referral pathways to humanitarian service providers. The Team is ensuring that the UMIRR receives capacity building on investigative techniques and the use of medico-legal and forensic evidence from some of the world's leading experts on investigating sexual crimes, and also benefits from experience sharing with counterparts from other countries in Africa. Beyond the UMIRR, the Team worked closely with GFP partners to establish the Special Criminal Court of CAR (SCC) and develop the Court's Rules of Procedure and Evidence and Witness and Victims Protection Strategy. The Team is continuing to assist the UMIRR and SCC in bringing perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence to justice.
- In **Colombia**, the Team worked with the Office of the SRSO-SVC and UN Women to advocate actively for the inclusion of sexual violence in conflict as a key aspect of the peace and ceasefire agreements between the Government and the FARC-EP (2016) and the ELN (2017). The Team also provided technical advice on Law 1719 on Access to Justice for Victims of Sexual Violence in Colombia (2014).
- 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 sexual crimes. This exercise was conducted jointly with the Government of DRC, MONUSCO, the United Nations country team and civil society organizations, and has resulted in the convictions of both members of armed groups and the Congolese military. 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 on Women and Children (PSEPF) to address conflict-related sexual violence.
- In **Guinea** (Conakry), in collaboration with the Government and OHCHR, the Team deployed a high-level judicial expert to assist the national panel of judges investigating the events surrounding the Conakry stadium in September 2009. This support has led to the indictment of seventeen high-ranking military officials and a former head of state, including for sexual crimes. The Team is now part of the steering committee which was established by the Government to plan for the trials of these individuals.
- In **Iraq**, the Team carried out a technical assessment on the judicial response to conflict-related sexual violence, focusing on the sexual violence committed by the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh). The Team has recently launched a new project to assist Iraqi authorities in investigating and prosecuting sexual violence crimes committed by ISIL.
- In **South Sudan**, the Team continues to work with UNMISS and the United Nations country team to assist the 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. The Team will also continue to support efforts to hold perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence accountable for their 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.

TEAM OF EXPERTS MISSIONS 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.

For further information on the Team's activities, please see its [2017 annual report](#).



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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