International Standards Guiding Gender Inclusion in Myanmar's Peace Process
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This third Policy Brief from the Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process (AGIPP) explains the international norms, standards and laws that comprise the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) policy agenda. The international frameworks covered in this Brief—from human rights treaties to United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs)—have direct and indirect implications for Myanmar’s peace and security processes. The Brief introduces these frameworks and their relevance in Myanmar, specifically in relation to women’s participation and gender inclusion in peace processes.

This Brief builds on AGIPP’s Context Analysis and Recommendations paper, which was the first periodic assessment of the status of women in Myanmar’s national peace process and will be updated annually. Section 1 introduces terms and concepts related to WPS and the recommendations proposed in this Policy Brief. Section 2 surveys the main international standards that provide the legal framework for advancing women’s rights, including the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA). This section also provides analysis of the relevance to and application of these international standards in Myanmar. This includes (i) Myanmar’s participation in CEDAW, (ii) national legislation, focused on the relevance of the ‘National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women’ (NSPAW) (2013-2022), and (iii) gender quotas.

Section 3 lists the eight WPS UNSCRs, discussing their relevance in Myanmar. Section 4 focuses on accountability mechanisms, including an overview of recent advances in the international WPS policy space. In addition, it provides an analysis of CEDAW General Recommendation 30 on Women in Conflict Prevention, Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations (GR30). Two sets of indicators developed in 2010—one by the UN which tracks implementation of all the WPS UNSCRs, and the other by civil society for in-country monitoring—are also considered. Finally, this section outlines National Action Plans (NAPs) on WPS as accountability mechanisms, discusses their limitations and explains why support for existing national policy frameworks is in alignment with international good practice.

This Brief identifies major challenges preventing the realisation of women’s human rights, specifically women’s substantive participation, representation and gender inclusion in Myanmar’s peace process. These challenges include problematic constitutional clauses, a lack of implementation of existing policy frameworks including the NSPAW, the lack of a national legal framework to prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV), and pervasive gender discrimination. Under customary international law, all obligations outlined in this Brief apply to the Government of Myanmar (GoM) as well as to all Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs). Consequently, although EAOs cannot sign international human rights treaties themselves, through their presence in Myanmar—a signatory country—they are bound to these obligations.

2 See Box 3 in this Policy Brief for an analysis of the concepts of women’s participation, representation and inclusion.
3 See Box 1 for a description of customary international law.
4 For further information, refer to Non State Actors (NSA) obligations under International Human Rights.
This paper is relevant to a range of actors, including:

- The Government of Myanmar (GoM);
- The National Reconciliation and Peace Centre (NRPC);
- Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs);
- Members of Parliament at the Union, State and Regional levels;
- Political parties;
- The Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC);
- The Civil Society Forum for Peace (CSFoP);
- The International Peace Support Group (IPSG);
- The Peace Support Group (PSG);
- The Peace Support Fund (PSF);
- The Joint Peace Fund (JPF);
- United Nations (UN) agencies;
- Peace-building and security organisations;
- Women’s groups and organisations working on gender justice, peace and human’s rights;
- The media;
- All other actors involved in Myanmar’s peace process.

Box 1: Key Terms and Concepts

**Norm:** A shared understanding of a standard of appropriate behaviour. In the context of ‘international norms,’ the primary actors are assumed to be states, and ‘appropriate behaviour’ is actions that have been accepted as international law, or accepted as principles such as human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The normative framework of the WPS agenda encompasses these, with attention to the rights of women.

**Normative:** Relates to an ideal standard or model, based on the accepted or correct way of doing something. The ‘normative framework’ of the WPS agenda thus refers to all the accepted standards, laws and policies that outline and guide the correct behaviour of relevant actors, including states, the UN and civil society.

**Standards:** Like norms, but often refers to measures or policies to inform legislation or guide behaviour.

**Soft law:** A spectrum of normative provisions that are not legally binding. It encompasses ‘soft rules’ and norms included in UN declarations, the opinions of UN treaty bodies and rapporteurs, and nonbinding resolutions and recommendations.

**Customary international law:** Norms that have become accepted by states as legal obligations through practice rather than through the adoption of a formal, legally-binding treaty.

**Customary law:** Social and religious rules and practices traditionally used to sanction or recognise relationships between parties—such as marriages—as well as to resolve disputes. Many customary laws are not codified. In Myanmar, many ethnic groups follow their own customary laws. Some countries grant legal legitimacy to traditional or customary law, alongside the law of the state.
**Reparations:** Reparations refer to measures that have been adopted to redress—or compensate—for harms resulting from crimes, injuries, or breaches of state responsibility.

**Non-derogable:** The non-derogable norm in international law is a rule so fundamental to the international legal order that it cannot be set aside or suspended, even upon the express consent of a state. Four non-negotiable rights are recognised under this norm as necessary to uphold even during a state of emergency. These include: the right to life, the right to be free from torture and other inhumane or degrading treatment, the right to be free from slavery or servitude, and the right to be free from retroactive application of penal laws.
SECTION 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Remove reservations to CEDAW and ratify its Optional Protocol to advance women’s rights and gender equality.**
   By maintaining reservations to Article 29 of CEDAW, the GoM severely limits the ability of CEDAW to serve as a redress mechanism for human rights violations. The GoM should instead remove its reservation to Article 29 of CEDAW and ratify the Optional Protocol. Accepting Article 29 would allow two or more state parties to report disputed interpretation and implementation to arbitration. If the dispute is not settled, it can be submitted to the International Court of Justice. The Optional Protocol would enable individuals or groups to submit claims of violations of rights protected under CEDAW, as well as enable the Committee to initiate inquiries into situations of grave or systematic violations of women’s rights.\(^5\)

2. **Amend Articles 232 (Chapter 5), 343 (Chapter 7), 352 and 381 (Chapter 8) and 445 (Chapter 14) of the Constitution.**
   Specific articles of Myanmar’s 2008 Constitution are in direct contravention of CEDAW, constraining women’s rights and the achievement of gender equality. The GoM must remove clauses that exclude women from holding ministerial positions (Articles 232 and 352); grant military personnel immunity from prosecution of war crimes, GBV, and gross human rights violations (Articles 343 and 445); and suspend human rights during times of emergency (Article 381). The Constitution should also explicitly include a legal definition of discrimination against women that conforms to the tenets of CEDAW.

3. **Implement the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women as the starting point to fulfil the GoM’s international obligations and commitments under CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action, and the WPS UNSCRs.**
   The NSPAW is the primary policy framework to advance women’s rights and achieve gender equality in Myanmar. It provides a starting point for the GoM to fulfil its international obligations and address many of the major obstacles preventing women’s full participation in public life, including in the peace process. To implement NSPAW, the GoM must allocate funding, human resources and technical expertise to the ministries responsible for its implementation, and other relevant institutions, and create benchmarks for measuring progress. Furthermore, as committed to by the GoM at the 64th CEDAW Review Session in 2016, plans to review the current NSPAW should be expedited and include the ‘women and conflict’ area of critical concern in their assessment, in line with the tenets of the Beijing Platform for Action.\(^6\)

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4. All EAOs should adhere to international law by signing the Geneva Call Deed of Commitments.

   The Geneva Call Deed of Commitments enable armed groups to pledge respect and adherence to humanitarian norms and be held publicly accountable. There are three Deeds in total. The Karen National Union (KNU) and Chin National Front (CNF) have signed the Deed of Commitment for the Prohibition of Sexual Violence in Situations of Armed Conflict and towards the elimination of gender discrimination. Other EAOs should follow suit and the KNU and CNF fully implement the Deed of Commitment across policy and operational frameworks.

5. Implement a minimum 30% quota to increase women’s participation in political decision-making.

   Given Myanmar’s history of low female participation in public decision-making, without the institution of quotas and affirmative action policies in decision-making bodies and in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), women’s exclusion from the peace process can be expected to continue. As a signatory to CEDAW, the GoM has agreed to institute temporary special measures, including quotas, to increase women’s participation and representation in decision-making bodies at national, regional and local levels. Additionally, in January, 2016 the GoM and EAOs participating in the formal Political Dialogue agreed to institute a minimum 30% gender quota, to elevate women’s participation. The GoM and EAOs should ensure that this quota is adhered to in all future dialogue processes. International donors, as well as international organisations, also have an obligation to implement this quota and ensure the peace actors they support adhere to it.

6. Develop, implement and resource comprehensive legislation to identify, prevent and respond to all forms of violence against women.

   The GoM must ensure that the National Law on Protection and Prevention of Violence against Women (PoVAW) legislation address recommendations outlined in CEDAW General Recommendation 30 (GR 30). The GoM must also agree to adopt laws aligned to global good practice to respond to, prevent and prosecute all forms of VAW by armed actors. Article 4 of the NSPAW offers a strong starting point for realising these commitments. This legislation must be supported by funding for its implementation to ensure that critical support services reach survivors of violence; training is provided to judiciary, police, health and social workers to meet the needs of women who have experienced violence; support is provided to the health, justice, and security sectors to prevent and respond to violence; and technical support is provided to government ministries, security sector institutions and armed groups to interpret and implement the legislation.

7. End impunity for GBV and improve access to justice for survivors through the development of a legal framework and institutional reform in the security and justice sectors.

   The continued impunity for GBV perpetrated by armed actors, as well as the lack of transparency in military courts, is a violation of UNSCR 2122 as well as international humanitarian law. The GoM should therefore develop a legal framework to facilitate access to justice for the survivors and victims of GBV. Effective implementation of such a law will require dedicated resources and technical expertise for improving justice mechanisms for

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7 For further information on the Geneva Call in Myanmar, see: www.genevacall.org
8 These and other specific recommendations are outlined in AGIPP. (2015).
9 As above.
women, including the investigation, prosecution and punishment of perpetrators—civilian and military. Violence against women by armed actors should also be addressed in all transitional justice procedures.  

8. Prevent and respond to GBV through implementing and monitoring the NCA.
To fulfil their obligations under CEDAW and WPS UNSCRs to prevent and respond to GBV, the GoM, along with the EAOs must ensure that the implementation and monitoring stages of the NCA include provisions addressing GBV. The international community must also ensure that efforts to prevent and respond to sexual violence in conflict areas are coordinated to support emerging and existing GBV response systems, rather than creating parallel or separate response systems. In addition, all actors must broaden the NCA's narrow focus on sexual violence (against women and children), which is seen in Chapter 3 Article 3(m) on protection of civilians, as this excludes many forms of GBV.  

9. Women’s rights organisations must receive increases in long-term, core and predictable funding and technical assistance to support organisational capacity.
In line with UNSCR 2122, the international community must commit to providing long-term and dedicated funding to women’s rights organisations across the country. Increased funding and technical assistance is required to strengthen the advice, advocacy and services these organisations provide. Such funding is necessary to address the needs of women and girls, and to ensure women’s active participation in conflict resolution, mediation and peace-building efforts. In line with recommendations from the UN Women Global Study on the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, the GoM, donors and international community should also consult with civil society—particularly women’s rights organisations—to receive regular briefings and advice.  

10. A minimum of 15% of all peace-building funding must be targeted at advancing gender equality.
Limited funding to implement UNSC Resolutions restricts the advancement of women’s rights in conflict settings and the achievement of inclusive peace processes. In the same vein as the Peace Support Fund (PSF) practice in its first phase, all donors in Myanmar should implement the 2010 UN standard, which calls for a minimum of 15% of all peace-building support targeted to advance gender equality, and should encourage all peace and security organisations to do the same. Furthermore, AGIPP encourages all donors to share data on the funding they have benchmarked for supporting women’s participation and gender equality.

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gender inclusion in the peace process. To this end, the JPF has committed to operationalise a minimum 15% allocation of its funding toward gender inclusion. Concurrently, peace actors should improve the mainstreaming of gender equality in the other 85% of peace-building support, along with systems to track, monitor and evaluate these targets—as recommended in the 2015 Global Study. Finally, commensurate with UNSCR 1889, a dedicated budget and adequate funding for the implementation of the NSPAW must also be guaranteed by the GoM.

11. Ensure expert advice on gender equality and WPS across all peace and security sector institutions.

Recruiting experts on gender, peace and security is essential for operationalising global WPS standards and commitments in Myanmar. There is a need amongst all actors working on peace-building, conflict, security and humanitarian issues to build effective capacity to undertake gender and conflict analysis, to develop and deliver training and research that takes account of gender dynamics. This is crucial not only for the GoM, EAOs, the UN, donors, and multilateral institutions but also international and national peace-building and security sector organisations.15 The GoM should also appoint expert staff to advise on gender issues within security sector, justice, and economic development institutions to ensure that women’s human rights concerns are identified and addressed.

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15 This was one key recommendation in UN Women (2015). This supports the recommendation in AGIPP (2015) to ensure gender power analysis is consistently included in the peace process.
SECTION 2. CEDAW AND THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979)\textsuperscript{16}

Often referred to as the ‘international bill of rights for women’, CEDAW is a comprehensive and binding international human rights treaty. It establishes principles and provides guidance on the advancement of gender equality. Countries that ratify CEDAW agree to take concrete steps to create or modify legislation and policies to improve the status of women, and tackle underlying social and political inequalities that perpetuate unbalanced gender power relations. CEDAW focuses on three main areas: civil rights and the legal status of women, reproductive rights, and cultural factors influencing gender relations. Currently, 186 states are party to the Convention, including Myanmar, which acceded to it (with reservations) in 1997.\textsuperscript{17}

Under the terms of CEDAW, state parties are assessed every four years on their progress in upholding the standards set out in the Convention, by a group of experts known as the CEDAW Committee.\textsuperscript{18} As part of this review process, states submit a report on their compliance with CEDAW. Civil society organisations are also invited and encouraged to submit independent ‘shadow reports’ on the country’s compliance with CEDAW. Although it originally did not directly address the way conflict undermines women’s rights, CEDAW stresses the importance of women’s participation and leadership, which is the foundational concept of the WPS agenda.\textsuperscript{19} Furthermore, General Recommendation 30 on Women in Conflict Prevention, Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations (GR 30) extended states’ accountability specifically in relation to the WPS agenda. GR 30 clarifies state accountabilities and obligations under the Convention and provides authoritative guidance on concrete measures to ensure states are protecting and advancing women’s human rights. This is discussed further in Section 4 (accountability mechanisms).

Relevance in Myanmar:

2.1 Myanmar’s implementation of CEDAW

The GoM acceded to CEDAW in 1997 with reservations to Article 29 and the Optional Protocol (see Box 2 outlining these reservations).\textsuperscript{20} Article 29 provides that the International Court of Justice

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{16} The full text of CEDAW can be found here: www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm.
\item\textsuperscript{17} A summary of Myanmar’s CEDAW accession and ratification can be found here: asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/focus-areas/cedaw-human-rights/myanmar.
\item\textsuperscript{18} The CEDAW Committee is one of ten committees of experts established to assess states’ implementation of specific UN human rights treaties. For the current composition of the Committee see: www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CEDAW/Pages/Membership.aspx
\item\textsuperscript{19} UN Women. (2015). op. cit.
\item\textsuperscript{20} The full text of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women can be found here: www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/protocol/text.htm.
\end{itemize}
may resolve disagreements that cannot be settled at the state level. The Optional Protocol provides opportunities for individuals or groups from the state party to submit complaints directly to the CEDAW Committee on claims of rights violations protected under the Convention. In addition, the Protocol authorises the CEDAW Committee to initiate investigations of mass violations of women’s human rights in the country. CEDAW obligations are non-derogable, which means that the GoM may not suspend or limit the rights protected under CEDAW even in times of emergency or violent armed conflict. By maintaining reservations, the GoM severely limits the ability of CEDAW to serve as a redress mechanism for rights violations. This is coupled with a general lack of legislation criminalising gender-based crimes.

Box 2: Myanmar’s reservations to CEDAW

1. Article 29
"Any dispute between two or more State Parties concerning the interpretation or application of the present Convention which is not settled by negotiation shall, at the request of one of them, be submitted to arbitration. If within six months from the date of the request for arbitration the parties are unable to agree on the organisation of the arbitration, any one of those parties may refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice by request in conformity with the Statute of the Court.

Each State Party may at the time of signature or ratification of the present Convention or accession thereto declare that it does not consider itself bound by paragraph 1 of this article. The other State Parties shall not be bound by that paragraph with respect to any State Party which has made such a reservation.

Any State Party which has made a reservation in accordance with paragraph 2 of this article may at any time withdraw that reservation by notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations".21

2. CEDAW Optional Protocol
“The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women specifies the communications procedure, which gives individuals and groups of women the right to complain to CEDAW about violations of the Convention, and the inquiry procedure, which enables CEDAW to conduct inquiries into grave or systematic abuse party to the Optional Protocol”.22

The GoM has submitted country reports to CEDAW three times: the first report in 1999, a combined second and third periodic report in 2007, and a combined fourth and fifth report in 2015.23 In addition, the Women’s League of Burma (WLB) submitted shadow reports in 2000, 2008 and 2016.24 Highlighting numerous CEDAW articles, these shadow reports noted, with concern, the GoM’s continuous refusal to recognise the serious and systemic gender discrimination occurring in the country. Upon receiving the Government’s, and any other reports, the CEDAW Committee

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21 The full text of CEDAW can be found here: [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm).
carries out an assessment, resulting in a report. The Concluding Observations on Myanmar’s CEDAW review in 2016 contains recommendations for action which the GoM is obliged to implement within the next four years. Implementing these recommendations should be carried out in cooperation with civil society organisations that can support the GoM to make progress towards achieving CEDAW compliance.

During the 2016 CEDAW review cycle, the WLB, the Women’s Organisation Network (WON) and the Gender Equality Network (GEN) submitted shadow reports covering a wide range of CEDAW articles and themes.\(^{25}\) The Women’s League of Burma, in its report, addresses Articles 1-6, 10, 12, 14 and CEDAW GR 19, 30 and 33. The Gender Equality Network’s report addresses CEDAW Articles 1-5, 7 and CEDAW GR 19 and 33. The report prepared by the Women’s Organisation Network addresses Articles 7, 12 and 14. Relevant themes included:

- The need for a national CEDAW compliant definition of discrimination;
- Legislative and policy measures prohibiting discrimination;
- Strengthened institutional mechanisms to advance women’s rights;
- Adoption of temporary special measures;
- Addressing stereotypes that impede the realisation of rights;
- Measures to address structural barriers to women’s participation in political life including in the peace process;
- Addressing inadequate knowledge of rights;
- Amending ineffective legal frameworks for women’s access to justice and rectifying insufficient support services of GBV survivors, as well as strengthening access to health care, education and justice with special attention to rural and violence affected areas.

The CEDAW Committee’s Concluding Observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Myanmar noted that there remains a lack of clarity on the applicability of the Convention in the state party, as well as lack of visibility of the Convention among the public via the media. The Committee stated concern that the Constitution does not include an effective guarantee of substantive equality. The Committee therefore recommended that Myanmar “a) Fully domesticate the provisions of the Convention; b) Intensify existing programmes to raise awareness of the Convention and the Committee’s General Recommendations and of women’s human rights among relevant stakeholders, including government officials, parliamentarians, the legal profession, law enforcement officers and community leaders; and c) Adopt a national action plan on the implementation of the Committee’s present concluding observations with clear targets and indicators to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of progress”.\(^{26}\)

2.2 National Legislation in Myanmar

Drawn from both colonial and traditional norms, practices and sources, many components of Myanmar’s legal framework are not compatible with—or are in direct violation of—CEDAW.\(^{27}\) The foundational legislation in Myanmar that concerns crimes of violence and the punishments associated with them is the Penal Code of 1860. It defines ‘women’ as being female persons of


any age (s. 10), contains few provisions that specifically address GBV, and does not recognise the rights of victims to legal recourse or reparations. Furthermore, the Penal Code criminalises the act of intentionally aborting a pregnancy, except for the purpose of saving the life of the woman (s. 312A)—a law that directly contradicts CEDAW. The conceptual differences between the Penal Code and the framework of CEDAW cannot be understated.

Additionally, the Laws on the Protection of ‘Race and Religion’, which were passed in Myanmar in February 2015 further violate international law. Aimed at ‘preserving race and religion,’ these laws have been widely described as “discriminating against Muslims and other non-Buddhist groups by, in part, reinforcing traditional gender stereotypes” and perpetuating false and harmful perceptions of religion and outdated gender norms. The controversial ‘Buddhist Women’s Special Marriage Bill’ also constitutes a violation of several international laws, including Articles 12 and 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which guarantees privacy and non-arbitrary interference in family matters and the right to marry with full and free consent, respectively. It also directly contravenes CEDAW Article 16(b), which promotes the rights of women to choose a spouse and freely marry on an equal basis with men, amongst others.

Moreover, numerous aspects of Myanmar’s 2008 Constitution directly contravene the mandate of CEDAW. Drafted by the military government and enacted by a widely discredited referendum in the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis, the Constitution contains several clauses that constrain women’s rights and gender equality. These include:

- **Appointment of Union Ministers:** Chapter 5, Article 232 (A) states, “[t]he President shall appoint Union Ministers using the following methods to assess their qualifications: Obtain a list of suitable Defence Service personnel, nominated by the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services for the Ministry of Defence, Home Affairs, and Border Affairs.” This clause indirectly excludes women from holding three salient ministerial portfolios in Myanmar, since these positions are constitutionally mandated as being suitable only for military personnel. Structural limitations on the participation of women in the military mean that the prospective ministers who are purportedly eligible for these ministerial positions will automatically be men.

- **The adjudication of military justice:** Chapter 7, Article 343 (B) states, “[t]he decision of the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services is final and conclusive...” According to this clause, in all matters concerning the military the Commander-in-Chief’s decisions are deemed final and conclusive, precluding judicial oversight of the military’s actions. Furthermore, this clause grants military personnel subsequent immunity from civilian

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31 White, C. (2015); Universal Declaration of Human Rights, supra note 52, Arts. 12 & 16(1)

32 CEDAW, Arts. 16(b).


34 As above Ch. 7, Art.343.
jurisdiction to prosecute the perpetrators of war crimes, GBV, and gross human rights violations. Not only does this clause exempt military personnel from being tried in a civilian court, it also guarantees that GBV victims have no legal means of seeking justice for crimes committed against them.

- “Men-only” positions: Chapter 8, Article 352 states that though there may be no discrimination “on the basis of race, birth, religion or sex,” … “nothing in this Section shall prevent appointment of men to the positions that are suitable for men only”. This clause offers no information as to what criteria constitutes discrimination—making it extremely difficult for women to bring to court allegations of having been discriminated against. Furthermore, and above all, the clause means that any position can be deemed off-limits for women that it is perceived to be more suitable for men.

- Suspension of rights during times of emergency: Chapter 8, Article 381 states, “[e]xcept in the following situations and time, no citizen shall be denied redress by due process of law for grievances entitled under law: (a) in time of foreign invasion; (b) in time of insurrection; (c) in time of emergency”. This has been widely interpreted as barring the investigation or prosecution of crimes committed in areas affected by violent conflict, including GBV perpetrated by state actors against women from ethnic minority groups.

- Immunity for government officials: Chapter 14, Article 445 states, “[n]o proceeding shall be instituted against the said [previously-ruling] Councils or any member thereof or any member of the Government, in respect of any act done in the execution of their respective duties”. Article 445 thereby guarantees that the large number of crimes committed by state actors—including GBV—will go unpunished. This group is widened to include former heads-of-state, through the January 2016 ‘Presidential Security Bill’, effectively denying justice for women and girls who are victims of these crimes, and further ensuring a culture of military impunity in Myanmar.

The ability for the GoM to amend the Constitution to advance women’s rights and gender equality is constrained by many factors. Among them are Article 109, which allocates 25% of parliamentary seats in both Pyithu Hluttaw and the Amyotha Hluttaw to the military. In addition, Article 436 stipulates that Constitutional amendment requires more than 75% approval. Moreover, the military has the power to single handedly veto any constitutional amendment—including those that would reduce their influence and privileges. Whilst standing in the way of Myanmar’s transition to democracy, the military could also block efforts to amend the Constitution in ways that advance gender equality.

2.3 Quotas
As noted previously, all signatories to CEDAW agree to institute temporary special measures, including quotas, to increase women’s participation in public life. General Recommendation 5 on Temporary Special Measures issued in 1988 (GR5) encourages the use of quotas in education,

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35 As above Ch. 8, Art.352.
36 As above Ch. 8, Art. 381
37 As above Ch. 14, Art. 445
politics, employment and the economy.\textsuperscript{39} In addition to enabling women to exercise their rights to participate in public decision-making, gender quotas are one strategy for enabling a fairer opportunity to secure a gender-inclusive peace process, as an increase in women’s participation can affect what, and how, decisions are made. International evidence clearly shows that countries with gender quotas in their peace agreements typically proceed to have electoral quotas.\textsuperscript{40}

**Relevance in Myanmar:** Despite CEDAW commitments, and despite having the lowest rates of female political participation in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and a near absence of women within the formal peace process, the GoM has failed to institute a quota system or any other mechanism to increase women’s participation in decision-making bodies.\textsuperscript{41} In relation to the peace process, peace actors at the first Union Peace Conference (UPC), held in January 2016 agreed “to enable at least 30% participation by women at different levels of political dialogues according to the Framework for Political Dialogue of Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA)”.\textsuperscript{42} At this first UPC, only 7% of the invited delegates were women.\textsuperscript{43} By the second UPC—also called the 21st Century Panglong Conference—in August 2016, an estimated 13% of the overall participants were women, demonstrating incremental progress toward fulfilling the agreed-upon quota.\textsuperscript{44} Notably, the highest rate of women’s participation was seen among the EAOs, with approximately 20.5% of their delegates being women (36 women out of a total 175 delegates). Whilst this demonstrates an improvement following the first UPC, it is still short of a minimum 30% quota.

One of the factors influencing this shortcoming involves the planning procedures of the UPC. In the lead-up to the second UPC—the first formal opportunity to implement the gender quota—a limited number of women participated in the planning committees, well below the minimum of 30%. For instance, at the time, only two out of 11 staff of the National Reconciliation and Peace Center (NRPC) were women; the Preparatory Committee was comprised of 15 men; and the Preparatory Sub-Committees to liaise with NCA signatories and non-signatories included only two women out of 15 members, and one woman out of nine members, respectively. Of the 90 delegates in Union-level ceasefire implementation committees in 2016, only three were women.\textsuperscript{45} EAOs had only one woman on the Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team (NCCT), and when the Senior Delegation was established, only two out of 15 members were women. Following the signing of the NCA, the signatory EAOs count three women with decision-making roles across key peace process mechanisms.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{39} For full text see: [www.refworld.org/docid/52dcfeb84.html](http://www.refworld.org/docid/52dcfeb84.html)

\textsuperscript{40} Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process. (2015).

\textsuperscript{41} Macgregor, F. (2015). “Women MPs up, but Hluttaw still 90% male.” Myanmar Times. 19 March.


\textsuperscript{44} AGIPP estimates that there was approximately 13% participation of women at the 21st Century Panglong Conference. This is an observation only, as official statistical data are hard to verify. Lists of participants are not available, and participants changed over the five-day meeting.

\textsuperscript{45} The 16-member Joint Implementation Coordination Meeting (JICM) and the 26-member Union Level Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee (JMC- U) are exclusively male, whilst the Union Peace Dialogue Committee (UPDJC (1)) includes 3 women amongst its 48 members.

\textsuperscript{46} According to Saw Hare Sai of the EAO Coordination Team, these include Dr. Naw Kapaw Htoo (Peace Process Steering Team) and Saw Mra Raza Linn from (Peace Process Working Team) and Yebaw Mi
Women’s participation in State level structures also shows little improvement. For example, the Joint Monitoring Committees (JMCs), which are currently being formed across ethnic States, show low levels of women’s participation. While Myanmar sees an opportunity to utilise CEDAW commitments, including through the NSPAW, to set standards for quotas across many areas of public life and in the current peace process, this opportunity has yet to be realised on national and State levels.47

**Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)**48

Adopted at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) set forth state commitments to enhance women’s rights. The BPfA remains the most comprehensive global policy framework aimed at advancing gender equality, development and peace. It identifies 12 ‘critical areas’ ranging from poverty and education, to violence against women, armed conflict and power in decision-making. Aspects of BPfA are reflected in the UNSCRs on WPS; however, it places greater emphasis on demilitarisation and fostering a culture of peace, making explicit links between the achievement of gender equality and a sustainable peace.49

The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) reviews the BPfA at five-year intervals.50 Whilst the Political Declaration made at the most recent global review of BPfA (‘Beijing +20’ in 2015) did not make direct reference to the WPS agenda, the Agreed Conclusions from CSW 58 (2014) and CSW 60 (2016) made strong references to WPS.51 Among other things, these agreements urge states to ensure the effective participation of women and girls at all levels of decision-making and at all stages in peace processes and mediation efforts, conflict prevention and resolution, peace-keeping, peace-building and recovery. They also encourage states to end impunity by ensuring accountability and punishing perpetrators of the most serious crimes against women and girls under national and international law.

**Relevance in Myanmar:** In 2013, the Myanmar National Committee for Women’s Affairs, chaired by the Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR), launched the ten-year National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (NSPAW).52 The NSPAW is based on CEDAW principles and the 12 BPfA priority areas, and provides a framework for addressing key issues faced by women in Myanmar. The drafting of NSPAW was a consultative process in which civil society worked closely with the UN and the MSWRR. Notably, critical area five of the BPfA on ‘Women and Armed Conflict’ was replaced in the NSPAW with a broader category titled, ‘Women

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49 These links were also discussed in the 2015 Global Study on the implementation of UNSCR 1325, UN Women (2015).
50 Additional information on the CSW and related processes and outcomes is available at [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/index.html](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/index.html). Subsequently, there have been four high-level reviews of the initial BPfA: Beijing + 5 review (2000); Beijing + 10 review (2005); Beijing +15 review (2010); and Beijing + 20 (2015). These have reviewed national and international developments against the initial 12 critical areas, in addition to identifying areas of concern requiring further attention. The report of the Beijing +20 review can be accessed from: [www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/02/beijing-synthesis-report](http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/02/beijing-synthesis-report).
and Emergencies’, suggesting a reluctance to directly address human rights violations committed against women in armed conflict and women’s roles in conflict prevention, resolution and peace-building. NSPAW has many areas of relevance to the WPS agenda, including: addressing violence against women (theme 4), women and emergencies (theme 5), women and decision-making (theme 7), institutional mechanisms (theme 8), and women and human rights (theme 9).

Myanmar expressed its commitment to implementing the BPfA through NSPAW at the 60th CSW (2016) by stating that the country is “stepping up its efforts to advance their (women’s) rights and participation in the country’s political and administrative arenas”, as part of its commitments to implement Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, more than two years after its launch there still exists no implementation plan or dedicated budget, and the process of translating policy into tangible action has been slow. Through the NSPAW, the GoM has the potential to address many of the major obstacles preventing the full participation of women in public life, including in the peace process. At a minimum, to advance implementation, budget allocations for Ministries engaged in work central to NSPAW goals, including the Ministries of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Education, and Health must be made. These budgets and work plans must address both the specific activities of the Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement under the NSPAW, but also secure high level commitment from other Ministries, including Ministry of Home Affairs (for example) to mainstream the needs of women specifically in their programmes, policies and laws. The UN indicators on Women, Peace and Security (2010) is one useful tool that could help the GoM operationalise the NSPAW.

Implementation support is underway. For example, the UN Family Planning Agency (UNFPA) together with Department of Social Welfare (DSW) has provided capacity building training to the government ministries, to understand the GoM’s commitment on NSPAW as well as the CEDAW concluding recommendations. UNFPA co-lead a Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Sectoral Working Group, to implement the NSPAW, as well as coordinated technical and financial support. UNFPA also supported the DSW on the Prevention of Violence against Women law drafting process to support the Government to implement actions under the Priority Area of Women and Violence under the NSPAW. In addition, UNFPA is working towards rolling out monitoring of GBV in areas of humanitarian response through service providers to support better quality data on GBV and to enable more effective and targeting programming support.
Box 3: Defining participation, representation and inclusion

Understanding the differences between women’s participation, representation, and inclusion is essential to advancing the goal of gender inclusion in peace-building. As highlighted in AGIPP’s first Policy Brief: *Women, Peace and Security Policymaking in Myanmar*, these concepts are often conflated or used synonymously.

*Representation* is a quantitative category, whilst *participation* incorporates a deeper qualitative involvement in a social and policy context. Women’s *participation* in peace processes—as in any area of governance and public life—is a key human right reflecting the principle of gender equality. Meaningful participation must include women’s ability to make meaningful contributions to policy and politics. Such participation emerges when women’s presence reaches a ‘critical mass’—often regarded to be around 30%—which is why the Beijing Platform for Action set this as the minimum amount quotas should start from.

The concept of *inclusion* (or ‘presence’) also refers to women’s ability to access peace processes—whether this be in high-level negotiations or in other spaces in which the brokering of decisions around peace and security takes place. *Gender inclusion* relates to analysis and policies that lead to gendered outcomes: decisions and actions that factor in the different needs and realities for everyone inclusive of gender identities.53 Women’s participation is a necessary but insufficient condition for gender inclusion. The nature and quality of women’s participation is pivotal, as is the recognition that women alone are not responsible for ensuring gendered outcomes—men are responsible too.

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53 This includes men, women, boys, girls and transgender and intersex people.
SECTION 3. THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS ON WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY

On October 31st 2000, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted UNSCR 1325. It was the first time that the UNSC acknowledged the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women and girls and the connection between gender equality and women’s participation in international peace and security. As the founding resolution of the WPS framework, UNSCR 1325 was the result of decades of civil society advocacy and activism based on the conviction that peace is only sustainable if women are fully included, and that peace is inextricably linked with equality between women and men. It has since galvanised global, national and local efforts and, since its adoption, seven subsequent resolutions have been passed. Together they make up what is referred to as the WPS ‘normative framework’. A summary of these WPS resolutions is outlined in Box 4.

Box 4: Summary of UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resolution 1325 (2000)</th>
<th>Addresses the impact of conflict on women and recognises the contribution of women in preventing and resolving conflict and their role in maintaining international peace and security.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resolution 1820 (2008)</td>
<td>Recognises conflict-related sexual violence as a tactic of war used by warring parties to achieve military or political end and resulting in impunity, which requires specialised military and police responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution 1888 (2009)</td>
<td>Provides for more effective implementation of Resolution 1820, including by establishing a Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict to provide high-level leadership, and establishing Women’s Protection Advisers within peace-keeping missions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution 1889 (2009)</td>
<td>Focuses on post-conflict peace-building, includes a strategy for increasing the number of women participating in peace talks, and calls for the development of global indicators to measure the implementation of Resolution 1325 by the UN and Member States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution 1960 (2010)</td>
<td>Reaffirms the earlier commitments required to address sexual violence in conflict and mandates the creation of tools to combat impunity by listing perpetrators and establishing monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Resolution 2106 (2013): Requests all actors, including the Security Council, to do more to implement earlier resolutions and to combat impunity for perpetrators of sexual violence in conflict. Acknowledges the importance of civil society, including women’s organisations, in preventing and responding to sexual violence in conflict.

Resolution 2122 (2013): Sets in place stronger measures to improve women’s participation and representation in conflict resolution, especially through leadership positions. Reaffirms that gender equality is central to achieving international peace and security. Sets out the need for humanitarian aid to ensure access to the full range of sexual and reproductive health services, including for pregnancies resulting from rape.

Resolution 2422 (2015): Requests States to increase resourcing for WPS, including through humanitarian assistance. Sets out the need to integrate countering violent extremism into the WPS agenda, as well as women’s role in the prevention of illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons. Calls for women’s rights to be a central concern at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)\textsuperscript{55}

UNSCR 1325 addresses not only the impact of war on women and girls, but also the critical role women can play in conflict management, conflict resolution, and ensuring sustainable peace. Specifically, it calls for the increased representation and substantive participation of women and gender inclusion at all decision-making levels in the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict. It calls on all actors, state and non-state, involved in the resolution of violent conflict, to implement measures to end GBV and impunity for perpetrators, and to integrate a gender perspective into peace-keeping missions. Furthermore, it outlines the importance of providing training on gender and women’s rights to military observers, police, human rights and humanitarian personnel. Importantly, UNSCR 1325 also specifically calls for the inclusion of women at all levels of decision-making during peace negotiations. The four pillars underpinning UNSCR 1325 are: prevention, participation, protection and relief and recovery.

Relevance in Myanmar: The participation pillar of UNSCR 1325 has salience in Myanmar. As previously outlined in Section 2.3, the parties to Myanmar’s peace process have failed to develop policies enabling women’s substantive participation. Whilst the proposal for a 30% quota for women’s inclusion in the Political Dialogue is a positive step, numerous structural and practical barriers remain. For the quota to have an impact, a host of enabling policies and practices need to be in place. These may include gender caucuses in the peace process, parliament and civil society networks enabling the formulation of gender inclusive policy positions; men consciously sharing political space with women; institutional gender equality strategies, and more. Acknowledging the time and other burdens imposed on women within their socially designated roles can also help to facilitate more effective participation, particularly if accompanied by compensating measures, such as the provision of childcare and support for women’s travel away from home.\textsuperscript{56} Given the long history of low female participation in high-level decision-making contexts in Myanmar, quotas and affirmative action policies are necessary to ensuring that women’s exclusion from the peace process does not continue.

The protection and prevention pillars of UNSCR 1325 are particularly relevant to the NCA’s definitions of violence, which are not comprehensive. In defining violence against women, the NCA fails to include ‘all’ forms of violence against women. It also fails to provide measures that would secure women’s access to justice and prosecute the perpetrators of all forms of violence against women. While in Myanmar’s 2011 Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process the GoM accepted several recommendations with respect to ensuring access to justice for victims and survivors of GBV, to date, none of these recommendations have been implemented.

It is encouraging that a comprehensive Law on Protection and Prevention of Violence against Women (PoVAW), in line with international standards, has been developed. The draft law includes critical provisions such as comprehensive definitions of rape; consent; marriage, inheritance and divorce; with a survivor-centred approach at the heart of its design. The draft law calls for bringing GBV committed by armed personnel and persons in positions of authority under the ambit of the PoVAW law, which means that they can be prosecuted for these abuses. Despite the possibility that certain provisions of the PoVAW law may be weakened before its passage, there is an expectation that the draft developed in consultation with women’s groups and civil society more broadly will be presented to the Union-level Parliament.

UNSCR 1820 highlights that conflict-related sexual violence constitutes a war crime and a crime against humanity. The Resolution also highlights that when commanded or condoned by leaders of an armed group, sexual violence can be used as a ‘tactic of warfare’. It must, therefore, be addressed through security, justice and other measures.

The concept of sexual violence as a ‘tactic of war’ can be difficult to understand and can obscure the many other forms of GBV that occur during, before, and after conflict. Sexual violence may be common in situations of instability and armed conflict, and may be perpetrated by armed actors as well as civilians. To say that it is a ‘strategy’ or ‘tactic’ means that commanders either know that their solders are committing sexual violence and do not make efforts to stop it, or that commanders order it (for instance, by forcing women into sex work, organising sex trafficking, or forcing sterilisation, pregnancy or abortion). These acts are considered ‘tactics’ because they can terrorise populations, force civilians to flee to avoid the sexual violence, or they can be part of a programme to eliminate a particular ethnic group. It is important to distinguish between sexual violence that is being used as a short-term strategy, and sexual violence that occurs as an ongoing reality marking women’s lives.

57 A comprehensive gendered analysis of the NCA and Political Dialogue is the subject of a forthcoming Policy Brief (no.5) by AGIPP.
58 These recommendations, which Myanmar accepted but has not implemented, include ‘establish and enforce strict legislation criminalising rape in every context, including marital rape’; to ‘ensure that violence against women and girls, including domestic violence and all forms of sexual abuse, constitutes a criminal offence, and that perpetrators are prosecuted and punished’. A full list of recommendations can be found here: [http://bit.ly/1XUBrD5](http://bit.ly/1XUBrD5).
everyday experience. To make this distinction, patterns of sexual violence committed by state and non-state actors must be carefully analysed, separating intent from frequency of such acts, and target groups. More broadly, it is important to ensure that the prevalence of GBV is not seen as a phenomenon found only in ‘conflict settings’ or during a particular phase of conflict.

UNSCR 1820 also stresses that armed actors who perpetrate sexual violence crimes cannot receive amnesty in peace agreements. Furthermore, the resolution urges the UN to train military and humanitarian personnel to prevent, recognise and respond to sexual and other forms of violence against civilians. States are called upon to strengthen their capacities, including in the health and judicial sectors.

Relevance in Myanmar: Since the 1990s, there have been widespread reports of the use of sexual violence by armed actors—particularly the Tatmadaw—against ethnic women from conflict-affected areas of Myanmar. Despite the documented prevalence of GBV perpetrated by state and other actors the GoM has failed to amend constitutional articles guaranteeing immunity to its security personnel. Furthermore, the NCA’s narrow focus on sexual violence (against women and children), demonstrated in Chapter 3 Article 3(m) on protection of civilians, excludes a range of GBV definitions, as well as lack of access to justice mechanisms for survivors of these.


UNSCR 1888 urges the Secretary General to appoint a Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) to provide leadership, co-ordination and advocacy to implement UNSCR 1325 and 1820. This commitment was advanced in February 2010 with the appointment of the first SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict. The resolution urges states to pursue legal and judicial reform to bring perpetrators of sexual violence to account and facilitate appropriate redress by victims and survivors. It also calls on states to ensure that traditional leaders prevent the stigmatisation of victims. UNSCR 1888 calls for the assistance of Women’s Protection Advisers (WPAs) amongst the UN cohort of Gender Advisers and within human rights protection units.

Relevance in Myanmar: The March 2015 report of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict included a statement on Myanmar condemning on-going sexual violence (including by members of the Tatmadaw) in Kachin State where armed conflict continues, as well as in Northern Shan, Rahkine and Chin States. The report highlighted both the opportunity of the GoM, having signed the Declaration of the Commitment to End Sexual Violence in 2014, to advance women’s rights, and the subsequent continued impunity for wartime sexual violence perpetrated by armed actors, as well as the lack of transparency in military courts. The report recommended that preventing sexual violence be a feature of all ceasefire negotiations and addressed in transitional justice procedures. Additionally, in Myanmar, local,
traditional and customary justice systems and practices continue to be barriers for women's access to services, such as monetary settlements brokered at village level. The CEDAW Committee, in its recommendations to the GoM, expressed concern about the prevalence of GBV perpetrated by state actors against rural ethnic women, including the Shan, Mon, Karen, Palaung, and Chin. Furthermore, in March 2016, the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar reiterated these concerns.

The Geneva Call Deed of Commitment
In Myanmar, implementation of the WPS agenda can be complemented by EAOs signing the three Geneva Call Deed of Commitments. The Deeds bind EAOs to comply with humanitarian norms and be held publicly accountable. The Deed of Commitment for the Prohibition of Sexual Violence in Situations of Armed Conflict and Towards the Elimination of Gender Discrimination, launched in 2012, can be a complement to WPS policymaking in Myanmar. The KNU and CNF have signed this Deed. This action signals to other EAOs that mechanisms such as this are available for them as they work to abide by international humanitarian norms. What is needed now is for the KNU and CNF to fully integrate this Deed across all relevant policy and operational frameworks and for other EAOs to engage with the Deeds.

UNSCR 1889 is the first WPS resolution to focus primarily on peace-building. It aims to strengthen the implementation and monitoring of UNSCR 1325. It reiterates the necessity of increasing women’s participation and mainstreaming gender perspectives in all decision-making processes, especially in the early stages of post-war peace-building. It also calls on states to track funds spent on gender equality and recovery planning, and invest in women’s physical and economic security, health, education, justice, and participation in politics. To improve the quality and consistency of information on WPS on which UNSC bases its decisions, UNSCR 1889 calls for the development of indicators and reporting, increasing women’s participation, and strengthening law enforcement and ending impunity. These indicators are discussed below. They focus not only on global data (for instance, the average number of women participating as delegates to peace talks), but also encourage countries to develop their own data on issues such as the extent and adequacy of programmes offering employment or reparations to women ‘post-conflict’, or the extent to which security and justice systems respond to women’s rights abuses.

Relevance in Myanmar:
Although UNSCR 1889 speaks directly to the necessity of gender inclusiveness in early peace-building, women’s inclusion and participation in the NCA negotiations was lacking—a point raised by AGIPP in our first Policy Brief. As highlighted in UNSCR 1889, one key way to improve such lacklustre implementation of WPS Resolutions is to monitor and track the funding being provided to support women’s participation in peace-building. As highlighted by

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68 For further discussion on this issue, see Educational Initiatives and Asia Justice and Rights (2015).
71 For further information on their use in Myanmar see: www.genevacall.org
73 AGIPP (2015).
Recent international analysis, the absence of long term financing for women’s rights organisations in conflict and post-war settings is a severe impediment to implementing all WPS resolutions and for advancing gender inclusive peace processes.74

The Government of Myanmar could demonstrate its commitment to UNSCR 1889 by guaranteeing a dedicated budget and adequate funding for implementation of the NSPAW. Furthermore, AGIPP encourages donors to release data about their allocation of funding in support of women’s participation and gender inclusion in the peace process. To this end, the JPF has committed to operationalise a minimum 15% allocation towards gender equality. During the first phase of the PSF an estimated 21% of all funds were committed to projects that directly contributed to WPS.75 It has innovated in this area with the opening of a Gender, Peace and Security funding window, which provides core and strategy support to civil society organisations.


UNSCR 1960 focuses on systemically strengthening accountability around sexual violence in conflict. It mandates the creation of a monitoring and reporting mechanism to compile data on conflict-related sexual violence and list perpetrators. Furthermore, UNSCR 1960 requires the SRSG (mandated by UNSCR 1888) to provide regular briefings to the Security Council, sanctions committees, and groups of experts. The SRSG can also approach parties credibly suspected of using (or of not stopping) sexual violence, agree upon action plans to end the violence, train security sector actors on international law in this area, and support survivors.

**Relevance in Myanmar:** Despite the election of a quasi-civilian government in 2010, followed by the 2015 elections and its promise of a full transition to democracy, local and international organisations continue to document cases of GBV perpetrated by state forces against civilians on a regular basis.77 For instance, recent reports submitted by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar expressed concern over the number of reports of sexual violence perpetrated by Tatmadaw personnel.78 Further analysis has highlighted ongoing reports of rape and sexual violence perpetrated by the Myanmar security forces in conflict areas.79 As outlined above in relation to UNSCR 1888, the continued evidence of widespread violence and the constitutional clauses discussed above that protect state actors from prosecution suggest the need for urgent attention to legal and administrative reforms to address GBV in Myanmar.


UNSCR 2106 adds operational detail to previous resolutions on this topic, and reiterates that all actors, including the Security Council and parties to armed conflict, as well as all states and United Nations.

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75 Statement by Elizabeth Armstrong, Director of the PSF, 13 December 2016, Yangon.


Nations entities, in coordination with civil society, must implement previous mandates and end impunity for sexual violence. The resolution reiterates that women’s participation is essential to any prevention and protection response, and reaffirms the need to deploy Women’s Protection Advisers and Gender Advisers. Furthermore, the resolution recognises the critical importance of providing timely assistance to survivors of sexual violence and the need to provide non-discriminatory and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health, psychosocial and legal services.

Relevance in Myanmar: As called for by women’s rights organisations, and as the NSPAW highlights, there is a pressing need to strengthen systems, structures and practices to address the issue of holding perpetrators to account for GBV.81 The NSPAW, as noted above, offers opportunities for realising women’s human rights. Despite this, the NCA does not include any mechanisms for improving access to justice for survivors of GBV. Furthermore, the Penal Code’s criminalisation of abortion resulting from conflict-related sexual violence is contradictory to the advances called for in UNSCR 2106 in the provision, by all actors, of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services in conflict settings.


UNSCR 2122, which was adopted only a few months after UNSCR 2106, is the most detailed of the WPS resolutions. It reiterates UNSCR 1325’s focus on women’s participation and leadership as critical elements in international peace and security, and places further responsibility on states, envoys, and mediators to include women in peace processes. The resolution specifically calls on states to ensure women’s full and equal participation in all phases of electoral processes, including ensuring women’s safety prior to, and during elections. Other highlights of the resolution include the acknowledgement that the full range of human rights violations against women in conflict goes beyond sexual violence and includes gender differentiated impacts of forced displacement, enforced disappearances and the destruction of civilian infrastructure, amongst other neglected violations. The resolution acknowledges the humanitarian principle that victims of violence should receive aid without discrimination—including a non-discriminatory approach to the medical responses relevant to pregnancies caused by sexual violence. Though not stated explicitly, this is a reference to the fact that abortion may be an appropriate medical intervention for some survivors. The resolution calls for investigation and prosecution of persons responsible for war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity or other serious violations of international humanitarian law. The resolution specifically draws attention to supporting civil society and emphasises the need for dedicated funding mechanisms to support organisations working on women’s leadership development and participation at all levels of decision-making.

Relevance in Myanmar: In regions of Myanmar that have been affected by decades of armed conflict, and in civilian populations that have been forced into internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, the daily impacts of armed conflict and camp life are experienced disproportionately by women.83 Women frequently have little to no access to basic sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning and maternal health care.84 Women’s civil society organisations

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82 For the full text of UNSCR 2122 see: unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2122.


play critical roles in providing basic services, building trust and providing valuable information about
the status of women and girls.

Despite the welcomed increase in female parliamentarians in the November 2015 elections, the
lead up to Myanmar’s elections saw a continued side-lining of women. This is inevitably due to the
continuous failure to institute quotas to increase women’s access to decision-making positions,
including in the electoral process, by the GoM and political parties. With women accounting for
just 13% of elected MPs, Myanmar remains at the bottom in regards to gender equality in national
politics in ASEAN.\(^{85}\) Equally, the continued impunity for GBV perpetrated by armed actors, as well
as the lack of transparency in military courts, is in direct contravention to both UNSCR 2122 and
international humanitarian law.

**United Nations Security Council Resolution 2242 (2015)**\(^{86}\)

Adopted at the 15th anniversary of UNSCR 1325, UNSCR 2242 reiterates the substantive links
between women’s participation and sustainable peace and security. The resolution addresses
several areas, and calls on states that support peace processes to provide financial and practical
support specifically to women. States should continue to integrate the WPS agenda into strategic
plans and other planning frameworks, and ensure sufficient resources for implementation. States
are also encouraged to implement their relevant obligations under international humanitarian law
and international human rights law, through broad consultation, including with civil society and
women’s organisations. They should continue to strengthen access to justice for women, through
the prompt investigation, prosecution and punishment of perpetrators of GBV, and reparations.\(^{87}\)

To counter violent extremism, the resolution calls for enhanced women’s participation, leadership
and empowerment as core to UN strategy and responses and calls for adequate funding. Whilst previous
resolutions have focused on the need to train women to participate in peace processes, a welcome
development in UNSCR 2242 is the recognition of the need to train mediators on how to achieve
inclusive peace processes, and thus acknowledges the link between women’s participation and more
sustainable peace agreements.\(^{88}\)

**Relevance in Myanmar:** Following the partial signing of the NCA in October 2015, the ceasefire in
Myanmar is now moving into the implementation and monitoring phase, and the peace process has
commenced. Given the very low levels of women’s inclusion and participation to date, these phases
provide another opportunity for all actors to shift course. To take advantage of these opportunities,
PSF’s The Women Are Ready report and AGIPP’s Policy Brief no.1 (in English and Myanmar) outline
practical policy recommendations.\(^{89}\)

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Governance of Myanmar*. Subnational Governance in Myanmar Discussion Paper Series No.3. Yangon:
The Asia Foundation.


\(^{87}\) Reparations refer to measures adopted to redress harms resulting from crimes or breaches of
state responsibility. For more on reparations, see: the UN Secretary-General’s Guidance Note on
headquarters/attachments/sections/news/stories/final guidance note reparations for crsv 3-june-2014
pdf.ashx?v=1&d=20141013T121449](http://www2.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachment

\(^{88}\) UN Women. (2015). *"Statement by UN Women on the adoption of Security Council resolution 2242 on
women, peace and security."* 14 October 2015.

SECTION 4. WPS NORMATIVE FRAMEWORKS AND ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS

The WPS policy space is constantly evolving; characterised by new and emerging issues and trends, policies, data, actors and stakeholders. Major influences include an expanding normative framework on WPS; increased global attention to preventing and responding to sexual violence in conflict; growing evidence from around the world on the impact of women’s participation and gender inclusion in improving the inclusivity and therefore sustainability of peace agreements, and increased linkages between the WPS agenda and other thematic areas of the UNSC and the multilateral system. Some of these more recent advances in international WPS policy development are summarised in Box 5, and are examples of ‘soft norms’. Despite these advances, there is currently no mechanism for holding states that do not implement the UNSCRs accountable, and there remains a persistent gap between the normative advances in the WPS policy arena and actual implementation. After a brief discussion of the growing normative framework around ‘sexual violence in conflict’, this section explores several accountability mechanisms and their relevance to the context of Myanmar’s peace process. These include mechanisms from, CEDAW GR 30, UN indicators on women, peace and security, civil society indicators for in-country monitoring, and National Action Plans (NAPs).

Participation and protection in the WPS agenda
Of the eight UNSCRs on WPS, four have a primary focus on advancing the normative framework on the prevention and response to ‘sexual violence in conflict’. This focus has grown considerably in recent years, beginning with the passing of UNSCR 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009), and later spurred by the launch of the UK’s Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (2012), Resolution 2106 (2013) and the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict (2014). Whilst the severity of violence against women (and any accomplishments of these resolutions to confront the issue) must never be understated, some have voiced concern about the disproportionate focus on the ‘protection’ aspects of the WPS agenda (and sexual violence in particular) at the expense of the ‘participation’ aspects of the broader WPS agenda. A focus on women only as victims (of sexual violence) risks diverting attention from the underlying issue of guaranteeing women’s full and equal participation in all forms of decision-making, at all levels. Indeed, civil society submissions to the Global Study on the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 called for a more

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93 As above.
inclusive understanding of protection needs to encompass all human rights abuses in conflict and ‘post-conflict’ settings; and for women to be recognised and supported as powerful political actors, religious leaders, public servants, community organisers and peace negotiators, amongst their many other roles.84

Box 5: Soft norms relevant to international WPS policy development

In addition to the UNSCRs, recent regional and global advances in the WPS policy arena include:

- Declaration of the Advancement of Women in the ASEAN Region (1988)95
- ASEAN Charter and Declaration of Human Rights (2012) (in particular, Article 36)96
- G8 Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict (2013)
- Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the ASEAN Region (2013)97
- Adoption by the UN General Assembly of the Arms Trade Treaty (2013)
- Regional implementation plans on WPS (EU, NATO 2014), Pacific Regional Action Plan (2012)
- NATO military guidelines on the prevention and response to sexual violence in conflicts (2015)
- Global Study and High Level Review on Women, Peace and Security (2015), called for by UNSCR 2122 (2013)
- Agreement at the United Nations to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 5 (gender equality) and Goal 16 (Peaceful Societies) (2015)
- Integration of the WPS agenda within the World Humanitarian Summit outcomes (May 2016)

CEDAW General Recommendation No. 30 (2013)

In 2013, the CEDAW Committee issued General Recommendation (GR) 30. These are authoritative statements which provide further guidance on states’ responsibilities under the Convention to encourage better implementation.99 CEDAW GR 30 provides guidance to state parties on how to take concrete measures to ensure that women’s human rights are protected before, during and after

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95 ASEAN. (1988). Declaration of the Advancement of women in the ASEAN Region.

96 ASEAN. (2013). ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) and Phnom Penh Statement of the Adoption of the AHRD.


99 There are 33 CEDAW General Recommendations (GRs). For a listing of all GRs, see: www.refworld.org/publisher,CEDAW,GENERAL,,0.html.
violent conflict, and includes a focus on preventing and responding to all forms of violence against women, access to justice, political participation, and economic participation.

GR 30 is specifically designed to interpret state obligations within the UNSCRs in relation to CEDAW implementation. As such, it helps the agenda move from the increasing focus on protection from sexual violence in conflict back towards a human rights foundation. Under GR 30, states are compelled to report about their efforts to implement the WPS resolutions, specifically, “to provide information on the implementation of the Security Council agenda on women, peace and security […] including by specifically reporting on compliance with any agreed United Nations benchmarks or indicators developed as part of that agenda”. GR 30 also expands the scope of entities that must be held accountable for war crimes against women to all groups participating in, or party to, conflict, including independent armed groups, militias and paramilitaries. Furthermore, women’s rights groups and other civil society organisations are encouraged to integrate their analysis of the implementation of GR 30 in their CEDAW shadow reports.

Relevance in Myanmar: Myanmar has experienced one of the world’s longest running civil wars, lasting for over six decades. In response to this, the GoM’s CEDAW obligations require that it prevent, investigate and provide redress for violations of women’s human rights during and after conflict. GR 30 further emphasises that CEDAW obligations are non-derogable, however, the GoM continues to fail to uphold its obligations, particularly as they relate to violent conflict. As mentioned above, the 2008 Constitution’s Chapter 8, Art. 381; and Chapter 14, Art. 445 are in direct contravention of Myanmar’s obligation under CEDAW. The Women’s League of Burma addressed GR 30 in their 2016 shadow report, which included practical recommendations on ways to ensure women’s full and equal participation in the peace process as well as on strengthening accountability and access to justice in relation to conflict-related sexual violence (such as constitutional amendments, independence of the judiciary, gender sensitisation for law enforcement and military personnel, prosecution of perpetrators and independent international investigations).

UN Indicators on Women, Peace and Security (2010)
In 2010, on the tenth anniversary of UNSCR 1325, the UN Secretary General released a set of 26 indicators intended to guide global implementation of the WPS agenda from 2011 to 2020. The indicators, which were developed following a call to action in UNSCR 1889, cover the four pillars of the WPS agenda: prevention, participation, protection and relief and recovery. The indicators were a breakthrough in addressing accountability and the effective monitoring of progress. They can be adapted to the national level for planning, policymaking, research and monitoring and reporting, by serving as a useful starting point for identifying context specific and measurable signs of progress in – or threats to – women’s participation in peace and security processes. As requested by the UN, several countries have also integrated these indicators, or some of them, into their own NAPs on WPS.

100 Harris-Rimmer, S. (2014).
101 General Recommendation 30 Art. V(A). Accessed from: docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=6QkG1d%2fPPRiAghKb7yhsidCrOJUTvLRFDe6%2fx1pWChol+cilmPBq0gA%2fHq5T4bPzuaUJENxKkQHQgPbs6rD6D03eyw2VKMuRq4KnRqN8StU%2fTqRnQc76VatVto
Relevance in Myanmar: The indicators can provide a basis of conversation in Myanmar to examine how best to set goals and measure progress towards substantive gains in the participation of women in public life, including in the peace process. Further, these indicators provide a useful accountability mechanism for UN entities, donors and the international community in Myanmar in relation to funding for gender equality, civil society organisations (and women’s rights organisations), as well as resourcing of gender technical expertise (see Box 6). In addition, these indicators may be a useful tool in any mapping, benchmarking or analysis exercises as part of any planned review of the NSPAW to support the advancement of the WPS agenda in Myanmar.

Box 6: Indicators from the UN Strategic Framework on WPS (2011-2020)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>These are examples of indicators of women’s participation in public life:</th>
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Funding for gender equality and resourcing gender technical expertise

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<td>24a</td>
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Civil Society indicators for monitoring of Women, Peace and Security (2010)

In the lead-up to the tenth anniversary of UNSCR 1325, the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders developed a set of 16 indicators for conducting in-country monitoring.104 These were developed from the perspective of women’s rights groups and networks, and more broadly from civil society, to bring together a global snapshot of the progress and gaps in implementing the WPS agenda. These indicators were broad enough to be relevant across diverse countries, and basic enough to allow data gathering and analysis over a relatively short period. In subsequent years, these were revised and consolidated into a set of 11 indicators.105

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104 A list of CSO indicators can be accessed from: [www.gnwp.org/content/civil-society-country-and-global-monitoring-unscr-1325](http://www.gnwp.org/content/civil-society-country-and-global-monitoring-unscr-1325).
Relevance in Myanmar: The civil society indicators for in-country monitoring can provide a range of actors with evidence-informed guidance. These indicators are useful tools in any mapping, benchmarking or analysis exercises as part of NSPAW implementation or a context review of ways to advance the WPS agenda in Myanmar. In particular, the indicators relating to women's participation provide additional context at the country level to the global indicators – including an index of women's participation in governance (indicator 1), the percentage of women in peace negotiating teams and breakdown of gender issues addressed in peace agreements (indicator 2), an index of women's participation in the justice, security sector, and peace-keeping missions (indicator 3), the number and percentage of women participating in each type of constitutional or legislative review (indicators 4), and the percentage of civil society organisations in task forces on UNSCR 1325 and 1820 (out of total task force members) (indicator 5).

National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security
National Action Plans (NAPs) on WPS were conceived to strengthen accountability for and guide implementation on WPS. They are one tool designed to assist states and civil society to implement WPS resolutions and standards and serve as a critical mechanism to turn normative frameworks into action. To date, 60 countries have developed NAPs. Whilst they can be beneficial, a recent comprehensive evaluation and content analysis of NAPs found that compliance with the WPS agenda is no longer solely tied to the adoption of a NAP. The growing body of evidence around NAP implementation provides a wealth of knowledge on the key components, minimum standards, good practices and layers of accountability required for NAPs to be effective. This evidence base illuminates the reasons for low performance – including poor monitoring systems, failure to allocate budgets, limited or no accountability mechanisms to enforce implementation, a lack of technical capacity, political will and commitment, a lack of coordination, ineffective coordination with civil society, limited consultation, and no time-bound actions.

Despite the value and utility of NAPs, implementing WPS standards does not start and end with them. Indeed, a NAP is “neither necessary for promoting gender mainstreaming, nor is it sufficient”. NAPs are not the only mechanism for operationalising WPS standards at the national level – for instance, these norms and standards can also be integrated into existing gender equality action plans and policy frameworks to strengthen them. UNSCR 2422 urged that in addition to

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111 This approach was taken in Colombia and Indonesia. As described in UN Women. (2012). Women, Peace and Security: Guidelines for National Implementation. New York: UN Women.
NAPs, states should continue to integrate the WPS agenda into strategic plans and frameworks, ensuring sufficient resources for their implementation.

Relevance in Myanmar: There is a critical need for international partners to support existing national policy frameworks in Myanmar by respecting the New Deal for Fragile States and the Nay Pyi Taw Accord. This includes consideration of the existing strategic plan, the NSPAW, as part of the policy options to advance WPS norms and standards in Myanmar (an ‘NSPAW first’ approach). Secondly, international donors who comprise the Peace Support Group (PSG), the PSF and the JPF in Myanmar also have obligations and commitments to ensure women’s equal participation and gender inclusion in the peace process. This includes through their own respective NAPs on WPS and public commitments made in 2015 as part of the UN Secretary General’s High Level Review on WPS.

UN Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 16
The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), crafted at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro in 2012 and adopted in 2015 at the UN Sustainable Development Summit as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development represent a “Universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity”. They respond to, and build upon, the 2000 Millennium Development Goals, a 15-year effort intended to reduce poverty worldwide. Two SDGs have particular relevance in the context of the Women, Peace and Security agenda: SDG 5, on Gender Equality, and SDG 16, on Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.

Sustainable Development Goal 5 calls for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. Specific targets involve ending discrimination “against all women and girls everywhere” and eliminating “all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation”. To achieve this, the UN advocates for increasing women and girls’ empowerment through legal and legislative frameworks, as well as through the transformation of social norms.

112 The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States was developed through the forum of the International Dialogue and signed by over 40 countries and organisations at the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011 at Busan. Myanmar has not endorsed this policy; however, PSG donors and other international partners have endorsed the New Deal to guide their approach in countries such as Myanmar, committing to support nationally-owned and led development plans and greater aid effectiveness in fragile situations (the TRUST principles). The first Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum (January 2013) endorsed the Nay Pyi Taw Accord for Effective Development Cooperation, embodying the principles of ownership, a focus on results, inclusive development partnerships, and transparency. Amongst the coordination structures established as part of Accord were the Development Partners Group (DPG) and 16 Sector Working Groups. The Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Sectoral Working Group is led by the Department of Social Welfare and co-chaired by UNFPA and the French Embassy. This group is tasked to advance NSPAW.

113 A list of all countries that have developed NAPs can be accessed from: peacewomen.org/member-states. A number of countries, including Sweden, Norway and the United Kingdom, have a specific focus within their Plans on Myanmar. A full list of commitments made at the Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security in October 2015 (High Level Review commitments meeting) can be accessed from: www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/N1534718.pdf.


117 As above.
Relevance in Myanmar: The achievement of this goal requires nations to bolster their structures of inclusion through implementing quota systems designed to increase women’s participation in public life. Myanmar could be well placed to advance the achievement of SDG 5, provided it meet its commitments to other UN Resolutions outlined above.

Sustainable Development Goal 16 calls for the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, the provision of access to justice for all and the building of effective accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Importantly, SDG 16 recognises that poverty eradication and sustainable development cannot be achieved without first tackling conflict and insecurity issues. It identifies the problem of corruption within judiciary and police institutions and targets the need to develop effective and accountable institutions at all levels of society. Its 12 specific targets include:

- Reducing violence in all its forms;
- Ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and the torture of children;
- Strengthening the rule of law and ensuring equal access to justice;
- Reducing illicit financial and arms flows significantly by 2030;
- Reducing corruption and bribery;
- Developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions;
- Promoting responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels;
- Broadening and strengthening participation of developing countries in global governance institutions;
- Ensuring all people have legal identities and birth registration;
- Guaranteeing public access to information and protecting fundamental freedoms;
- Strengthening relevant national institutions to prevent violence, combat terrorism and crime, and promoting non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

Notably, while SDG 16 is intricately tied to the WPS agenda, as stated, it remains “gender neutral,” failing to explicitly make the connection between the achievement of poverty reduction and the inclusion of women in policy frameworks to actively resist the conditions that produce violent societies. This gender-neutral framework, however, is being challenged by peace actors around the world who argue that putting women’s concerns at the center of conflict resolution “simply makes sense.”

Relevance in Myanmar: Myanmar remains challenged around the implementation and adherence to a strong rule of law, particularly women’s ability to access justice. As further sections of this Brief will illustrate, crimes of violence against women, including GBV, are committed with impunity, further entrenching the already dire effects of conflict on women. As it reaches for a sustainable peace, Myanmar should embrace the targets of SDG 16 in tandem with WPS agenda. In doing so, it would be well-placed to reinforce the efforts of other actors driving the agenda for putting WPS issues at the heart of SDG 16. The hybrid conflict/post-conflict environment demands a comprehensive response that not only includes—but foregrounds—the experiences of women.

119 As above.
121 As above.
Taking a cautious cue from other international contexts, which have seen only 20% of fragile and post-conflict societies achieve their poverty alleviation goals, Myanmar could show demonstrable success around achieving the targets of SDG 16, if gender inclusion is built into the process.  

**Myanmar Country Statement to the Commission on the Status of Women**

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is one mechanism through which progress on the SDGs is tracked. In 2016, Myanmar aligned its Country Statement to the CSW with the Statement made by Thailand on behalf of the G77 and China, and the statement made by Vietnam on behalf of ASEAN. Apart from delivering this statement, during the two weeks of negotiations on the agreed conclusions from the CSW, Myanmar’s presence was thin: a UN mission or country delegation representative was rarely present and the GoM’s interests were presented largely through the framework of the regional blocs noted above. It is notable, therefore, that while SDGs 5 and 16 are highly relevant in the Myanmar context, the GoM has yet to fully embrace its commitments to these frameworks and communicate demonstrable improvement.

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SECTION 5. CONCLUSION

Whilst international laws, norms and standards constituting the WPS policy agenda mandate women’s inclusion in Myanmar’s peace and security processes, major obstacles to achieving full compliance with the WPS agenda remain. AGIPP recommends that the Government of Myanmar, EAOs, civil society, international organisations, and donors take necessary action to ensure full compliance through the following means:

1. Remove reservations to CEDAW and ratify the Optional Protocol;
2. Implement the NSPAW through raising awareness of its existence, developing a budget and an implementation plan;
3. Implement a minimum 30% gender quota to increase women’s participation in decision-making in political life and in the peace process;
4. Implement comprehensive legislation to identify, prevent and respond to GBV;
5. End constitutional impunity for GBV;
6. Prevent and respond to GBV through the implementation and monitoring of the NCA;
7. Provide core, long-term and predictable funding for women’s rights organisations;
8. Ensure a minimum of 15% of all peace-building funding is targeted to advance gender equality; and
9. Place expert advice on gender equality and WPS across all security sector institutions.

Women’s participation is often drastically limited during the early stages of peace processes, as ceasefires and cessation of hostilities are perceived to be agreements between the upper echelons of armed groups, the military and the government. Yet, as this Brief has shown, greater female participation in peace and security processes significantly reduces the chances of conflict resuming after war has ended. A growing evidence base concludes that gender inclusion in a peace process is more likely to facilitate political settlements that are more reflective of all citizens’ needs. Despite their proven ability to positively affect outcomes, women are continually excluded from peace processes. An opportunity remains to collectively support the diffusion of international WPS norms and standards in Myanmar, to increase women’s participation and gender inclusion in the peace process and provide a greater chance of achieving a sustainable peace.

AGIPP was formed to address two persistent challenges:

1. The low levels of women’s involvement in peace and security-related negotiations and agreements to date in Myanmar.
2. The critical necessity to improve the inclusion of gendered analysis and outcomes in ceasefire and wider peace agreement texts and implementation.

AGIPP includes associated civil society organisations/networks from across Myanmar and welcomes collaboration with national women’s rights organisations/networks and peace organisations/networks that substantively address gender in their work. The work of these organisations/networks spans from community level mobilisation to advocacy and policy engagement. Collectively, AGIPP amplifies the voices of its associates and provides an arena for civil society concerns to be brought into the unfolding peace process.

AGIPP is guided by a Steering Committee comprised of seven organisations: Gender and Development Institute, Gender Equality Network, Kachin State Women’s Network, Mon Women’s Network, Nyein (Shalom) Foundation, Women and Peace Action Network ( Shan State), and Women’s Organisation Network. A small Secretariat operates in Yangon.

For more information about the Alliance visit:
Website: [www.agipp.org](http://www.agipp.org) (English) [www.agipp.org.mm](http://www.agipp.org.mm) (Myanmar)
Facebook [Alliance for Gender in the Peace Process (AGIPP)]
Twitter @AGIPPMyanmar
Email: [info@agipp.org](mailto:info@agipp.org)

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