

Civil society input on Women, Peace and Security **Mandate renewal UNMISS, South Sudan**

On March 15th 2018 the UN Security Council (UNSC) will decide on the renewal of the mandate of UNMISS in South Sudan. Many civil society signatories of the Dutch National Action Plan 1325 (NAP1325), as well as members of WO=MEN Dutch Gender Platform have a longstanding relationship with South Sudan. Organizations such as STAD Foundation, ZOA, Dorcas, CARE, Cordaid, HealthNet TPO, ICCO, Mensen met een Missie, Oxfam Novib, Plan Nederland, Save the Children, WADI Foundation and CENDDOW support inclusive peace and security in close cooperation with South Sudanese women's rights organizations and peacebuilding groups.

The new resolution on UNMISS is a chance to further support inclusive peace processes. Therefore, Dutch civil society organizations that work in and on South Sudan call upon the UNSC to take into account the following recommendations:

- = **Urge UNMISS to ensure the capacity of the mission is focused on key protection activities, with specific focus on the protection of women, girls and persons with disabilities (PWDs) against Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV), both within and outside the Protection of Civilian (POC) sites.** This includes the urgent need of the deployment of military and civil (senior) gender advisors within the mission. Recently the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security has [raised the alarm](#) regarding the disproportionate cuts to gender functions in – among other peacekeeping missions – UNMISS. These budget cuts suggest that UN leaders are de-prioritizing gender as being non-essential in UNMISS. By doing so these leaders neglect their mandated UN Security Council obligations. Additionally, civil society organizations flag that - while UN-police conducts regular patrols within the POC in dark spots and twice a week outside the POC while women collect firewood - women are still not protected during trips to farms in more remoted areas. Nor is UNMISS protecting the border areas as to protect women and children from abduction.
- = **Urge UNMISS to immediately change how UNMISS troops implement their mandate to protect civilians from physical violence including SGBV** by providing active and adequate protection aimed at preventing and ending human rights violations and abuses of civilians. Several key recommendations, such as dismounted day and night patrolling, following from the report of Major General Cammaert¹ are still not implemented. The Council should establish and deploy a training support team of experienced peacekeepers, gender advisors and officers from troop-contributing countries, including UNMISS troop contributors, to train battalion officers on the UNMISS mandate, on the gendered impact of the conflict, rules of engagement, the use of force and challenges in peacekeeping.
- = **Request UNMISS to improve attention and capacity to conduct investigations of SGBV-related incidents in and around POC sites.** Civil society organizations flag that young girls are more vulnerable for sexual exploitation by different actors within POC sites due to lack of income. UNMISS should establish thorough and systematic follow-up procedures to address allegations of SGBV, exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers. *Emphasize* that peacekeepers, commanders and relevant troop contributing countries should be held accountable for failures to protect.
- = **Urge UNMISS to ensure that dismounted patrols include female military, police and civilian sections such as Human Rights and Women's Protection Advisors** in areas around the POC

¹https://unmiss.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/sg_letter_to_sc_on_implementation_of_cammaert_recommendations_19_04_2017_0.pdf

sites, UN House and other locations. Focus, at the same time, on increased and inclusive community engagement. Conduct out-reach activities to communities and civilians to consult and include them in decision-making processes. Also manage expectations and promote a clear understanding amongst civilians of the role of UNMISS.

- = **Request UNMISS to support the deployment of qualified South Sudanese female police officers to support key protection tasks, including community-oriented policing and addressing sexual and gender-based violence.** The mandate of UNMISS should be expanded to support the recruitment and professionalization of South Sudanese female police officers. This includes the support of campaigns and trainings.
- = **Request UNMISS to support women's full and effective representation and leadership in all formal and informal conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts including through the support of women's civil society organizations.** This includes supporting women's meaningful participation in political decision-making processes and in the implementation and monitoring of any outcomes. As the NGO Working Group underlines: 'Currently all state governors within South Sudan are men, which is symptomatic of entrenched gender-based inequalities that limit women's participation in decision-making processes. In previous peace negotiations, women were not adequately represented neither at the political nor civil society level. Going ahead, this should be improved upon and women should be well represented at all levels of the peace process, especially now when Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and other involved international actors push for revitalization of the peace agreement'².
- = **Request UNMISS to support local mediation processes and support the improvement of communication between the conflicting parties and tribes.** This includes supporting locally grounded peace and reconciliation initiatives of women's organizations. In the past UNMISS f.e. facilitated radio communication between groups or facilitated the transport of the reconciliation team.
- = **Request the Secretary-General to report on the efforts and contribution of UNMISS to the protection of women and girls as well as on the integration of South Sudanese women in political, social and economic life.** This includes the collection and use of sex disaggregated data, and information on the impact of UNMISS activities.

About WO=MEN

WO=MEN Dutch Gender Platform is a network of development, peace building and (women's) diaspora organizations, women's rights and gender justice organizations, academics, students, journalists, military and police. Together we aim for women's rights and gender justice worldwide. In joint cooperation with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs we coordinate the Dutch National Action Plan on the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325.

² <http://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/map/map-december-2017/>