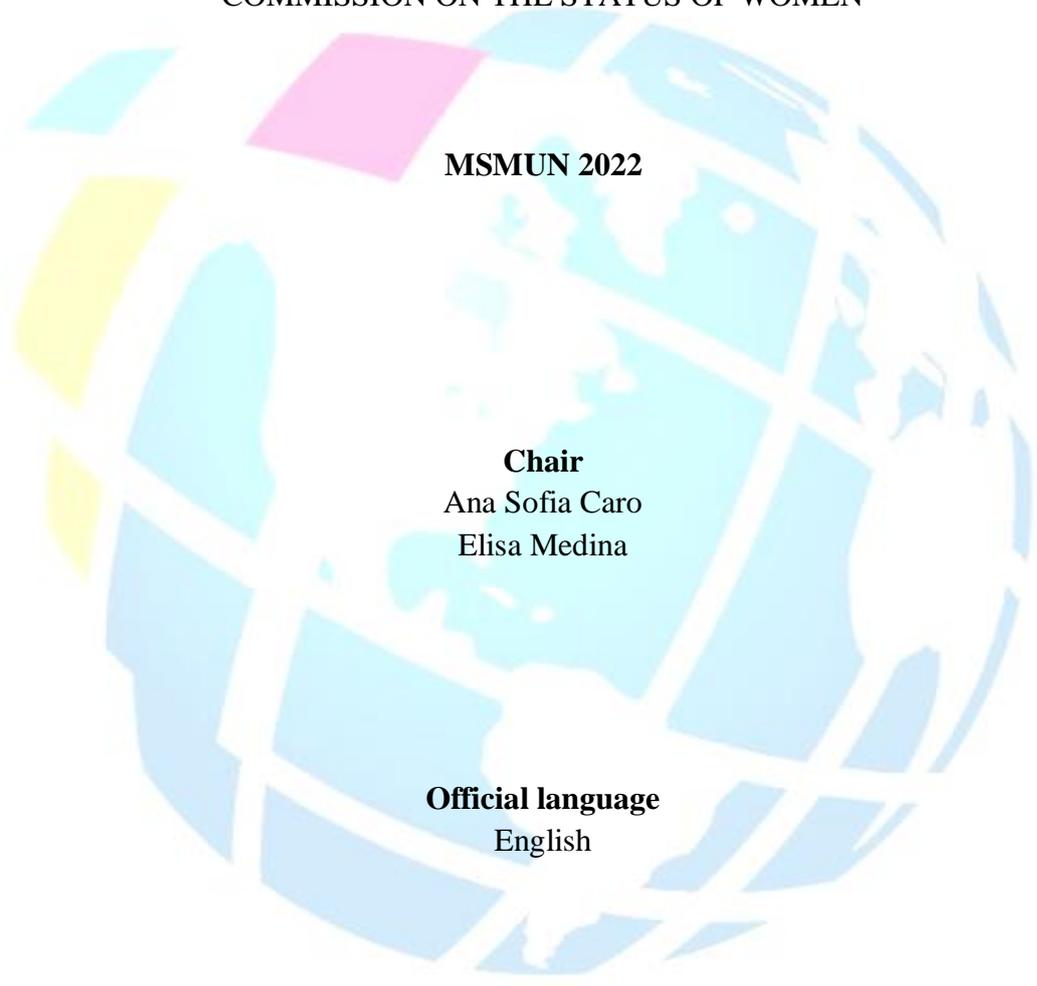


CSW

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN



MSMUN 2022

Chair

Ana Sofia Caro

Elisa Medina

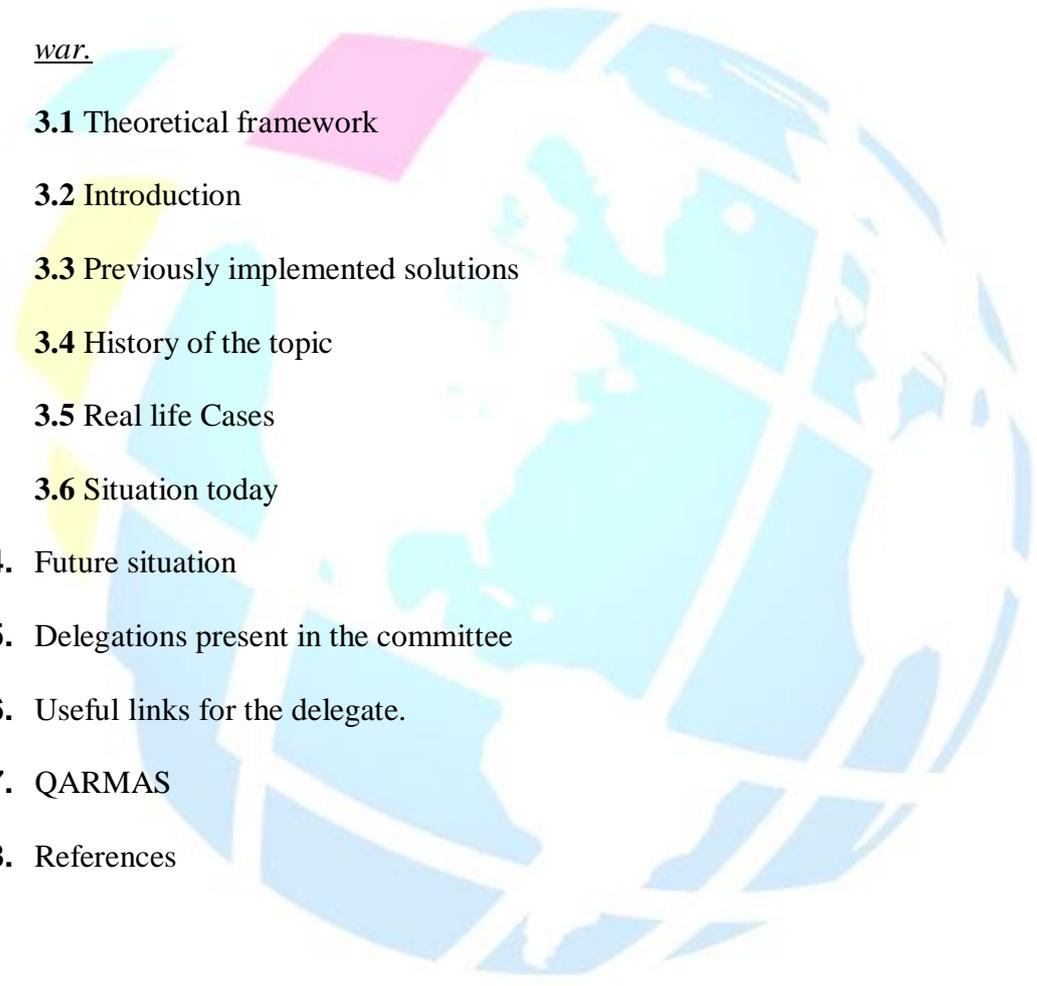
Official language

English

Topic

Protection of women's rights in war zones and the use of women as spoils of war.

Table of contents

- 1.** Welcoming letter
 - 2.** Committee's Information
 - 2.1** History
 - 2.2** Objective
 - 3.** Topic A: Protection of women's rights in war zones and the use of women as spoils of war.
 - 3.1** Theoretical framework
 - 3.2** Introduction
 - 3.3** Previously implemented solutions
 - 3.4** History of the topic
 - 3.5** Real life Cases
 - 3.6** Situation today
 - 4.** Future situation
 - 5.** Delegations present in the committee
 - 6.** Useful links for the delegate.
 - 7.** QARMAS
 - 8.** References
- 

1. Welcoming letter

Dear delegates,

We could not be more excited to be presiding over the Committee on the Social Status of Women. It's a total honor for us, Elisa Medina and Ana Sofia Caro to be your presidents while tackling this important topic, considering current situations worldwide regarding women. As delegates, you all have a great responsibility in your hands, that's why we expect the best from you, and we're confident you will exceed our expectations.

We both know that this is a problem that has sadly been normalized by modern society, which is why regardless of how dense the topic might be, it is exactly why we must take action right now and take a step forward to not only learn but also raise awareness. Subsequently, you will not only learn but also experience what it feels like to see a problem from different perspectives, come up with solutions to tackle said problem, develop confidence in yourself and be the best version of yourself as well.

Thank you for accompanying us in this version of MSMUN internal model 2022, we are extremely excited to see you on the day of the debate, and we hope that this experience encourages you to continue with this amazing opportunity that the school provides you. Don't hesitate to contact us in case you need any help, whether it's with the guide or anything else. Finally, always believe in yourself and in your own power, because you *can make the impossible possible*.

Sincerely,

Your chair.

Elisa Medina and Ana Sofia Caro

2. Committee's Information

2.1 History

The Commission of Status of Women (CSW) first met at Lake Success, New York, in February 1947, later after founding the United Nations. All 15 government representatives were women. The Commission was initially supported by a United Nations unit that later became the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) in the UN Secretariat. The CSW developed close ties with non-governmental organizations, with those with consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) invited to participate as observers.

From 1947 to 1962, the Commission worked to change discriminatory legislation and raise global awareness of women's issues by setting standards and developing international conventions. The CSW successfully argued against using "men" as a synonym for humanity when contributing to the development of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and succeeded in introducing new, more inclusive language.

Because the codification of women's legal rights required data and analysis, the Commission embarked on a global assessment of women's status. Extensive research yielded a detailed picture of each country's political and legal standing, which was later used to draft human rights instruments.

The Commission drafted the early international conventions on women's rights, such as the 1953 Convention on the Political Rights of Women, which was the first international law instrument to acknowledge and protect the political rights of women; and the first

international agreements on women's rights in marriage, namely the 1957 Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, and the 1962 Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages. The Commission also contributed to the work of UN offices, such as the International Labour Organization's 1951 Convention concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value, which enshrined the principle of equal pay for equal work.

In 1963, the United Nations General Assembly requested the Commission to draft a Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, which the Assembly eventually adopted in 1967. In 1979, the Commission drafted the legally binding Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child established the right of petition for women victims of discrimination in 1999.

By the 1960s, evidence grew to prove that women were being disproportionately affected by poverty. Because of this the Commission's work focused on women's needs in community and rural development, agricultural work, family planning, and scientific and technological advancements. The commission urged the UN system to increase its technical assistance to women's advancement, particularly in developing countries.

The Commission proposed that 1975 be designated International Women's year for its 25th anniversary, an idea supported by the general assembly, in order to draw attention to women's equality with men and their contributions to peace and development. The year began with the First World Conference on Women in Mexico City, followed by the 1976-

1985 United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development, and Peace. Additional world conferences were held in 1980 in Copenhagen and 1985 in Nairobi.

In 1987, after the Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi, the Commission took the lead in arranging and promoting the UN system's work on economic and social issues for women's empowerment. Its efforts shifted to promoting and prevailing women's issues as part of the mainstream, rather than as separate concerns. In the same period, the Commission helped bring violence against women to the forefront of international debates for the first time. These efforts resulted in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 1993. In 1994, a UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes, and consequences was appointed by the Commission on Human Rights, with a mandate to investigate and report on all aspects of violence against women.

The Commission served as the preparatory body for the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, which adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. After the conference, the Commission was mandated by the General Assembly to play a central role in monitoring the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and advising ECOSOC accordingly. As called for in the Platform for Action, an additional UN office for promoting gender equality was established: the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI).

In 2011, the four parts of the UN system mentioned on this page—DAW, INSTRAW, OSAGI, and UNIFEM—merged to become UN Women, now the Secretariat of the Commission on the Status of Women.

2.2 Objective

The CSW plays an important role in promoting women's rights, documenting the reality of women's lives around the world, and shaping global standards on gender equality and women empowerment.

In 1996, ECOSOC expanded the Commission's mandate in resolution 1996/6, deciding that it should take the lead in monitoring and reviewing progress and problems in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as in standardizing a gender perspective in the UN activities.

Representatives from the UN Member States, civil society organizations, and UN entities gather in New York for the Commission's annual two-week session. They discuss progress and gaps in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of 1995, the key global policy document on gender equality, as well as the General Assembly's 23rd special session. Women's empowerment members agree on additional actions to advance progress and encourage women to exercise their rights in political, economic, and social fields. The outcomes and results of each session are forwarded to ECOSOC for follow-up.

UN Women supports all aspects of the Commission's work and also facilitates the participation of civil society representatives.

3. **Topic:** *Protection of women's rights in war zones and the use of women as spoils of war.*

3.1 Theoretical framework:

Violence: The use of physical force to injure, abuse, damage, or destroy. Especially to dominate someone or something.

Sexual violence: Forcing or manipulating someone else into unwanted sexual activity without consent.

Armed conflict: A situation where there is a resort to armed force between two or more States, regardless of the reason or the intensity of it, it's the force between states which leads to the death of 25 or more people in a year calendar is classified as an armed conflict.

Spoil of war: The term "spoils of war" refers to those movable goods taken from the enemy by a soldier with the consent of their general.

War: Armed conflict prolonged between two or more nations or inside nations.

Terrorism: The unlawful use or threat of violence, especially against the state or the public, as a politically motivated means of attack or coercion.

Misogyny: Hatred of, aversion to, or prejudice against women. Supports the idea that men are naturally superior to women.

BAME: Black, Asian, and minority ethnics.

3.2 Introduction:

“Sexual violence in conflict needs to be treated as the war crime that it is; it can no longer be treated as unfortunate collateral damage to war.”

- UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura

Modern armed conflict is much more likely to result in civilian casualties than military ones. According to UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict, civilians—mostly women and children—make up the vast majority of the victims in today's wars. Women in particular face diverse forms of sexual violence, which sometimes are placed to achieve military or political objectives. Despite conflict ends, the impacts of sexual violence linger, things such as unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. As a result of fear and impunity, the widespread sexual assault itself may remain or even worsen after a conflict. Additionally, the needs of survivors must be met with resources that the majority of post-conflict nations lack, including medical care, HIV treatment, psychological support, financial aid, and legal retribution.

A report made by Amnesty International explains the situation of women in the most problematic zones in the world. According to the report, some women and girls are sexually abused and even killed for behaving in a way the opposing party considers unacceptable or for going against authority, since women are considered “easy bait”. Armed groups establish dressing codes and curfews with the purpose of humiliating, criticizing, violating, or even killing the people that dare to oppose these. It’s important to mention that most governments don't do anything to generate nor guarantee secured zones for young girls, which makes the whole situation more worrying.

In the course of armed conflicts, gender divisions tend to worsen in the societies that suffer from them. The ideologies that support sexual division of labor are grown with the aim

of reinforcing traditional roles so that the tasks assigned to men and women are perfectly established.

The motivation for rape during conflict varies:

- *Unsystematic*: In other words, random. A by-product of the collapse in social and moral order during the war. The community may take advantage of exploiting the chaos of conflict to commit sexual violence against women without fear of punishment.
- *Systematic*: Carried out by fighting forces for the purpose of terrorizing the people, severing families, ruining communities, and, in some cases, altering the ethnic composition of the following generation.

It can also serve to end resistance by imposing fear in communities or opposing armed groups. An estimated 40 percent of child soldiers around the world are girls, the majority of whom are forcibly enlisted.

Women are also blamed for being raped, accusing them of not being able to avoid it and even of enjoying said traumatic experience. This stigmatization reinforces the invisibility in which sexual violence usually takes place since it is hardly reported due to the victim's fear of being considered guilty. This invisibility perpetuates, on the one hand, the impunity of the aggressors, and on the other, multiplies the obstacles that the victim must face to overcome what happened since the social support they can count on is restricted.

Human rights: Rights that are being violated

In some present delegations the declaration of human rights is not being complied with as some of the rights within it are being denied to women, some of these are :

Article 1: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”

As women are not treated equally, and there's no dignity for them in war zones as they have become spoils of war and are the prey to any kind of abuse in conflict areas.

Article 3: “Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person.”

For women in wars, there's no such thing as security of themselves as they are in constant danger of several situations that may happen, such as sexual harassment, torture, and even their lives are at risk as they may be assassinated at any moment because of the war and possible militias from their enemy using them as a way of humiliation.

Article 5: “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”

No one has the right to torture even if it's in a war zone women need to be protected, Women are being tortured such in a mental and physical manner in conflict zones.

Women as spoils of war

A spoil of any kind is to claim something with or without consent, just with the leader approving anything chaos may start.

Physical, mental, and sexual violence has become a common use or practice of war, conflict, and terrorism that torments many women around the world, in addition to being a repressive political tool for governments in belligerent situations.

Since the beginning of warfare, a massive number of sexual violations of women and girls have been documented, and with the passage of time, it has become normalized that in most cases they go unpunished. They are possibly part of war strategies. It has also been asserted that they have become military targets and the main victims of an armed conflict in which they are raped, mutilated, and often killed because they are considered a "useful target to humiliate the enemy". In Latin American countries such as Brazil, Mexico, and Colombia among others, but also in Asian countries such as Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Syria, and Palestine between others, the female gender becomes vulnerable in acts of war. This was confirmed through the report 'Scarred bodies, hidden crimes ', which highlights the situation of women in the most conflicting areas of the world (Amnesty international).

Perpetrators and/or aggressors refer to this practice as ethnic or gender cleansing, or spoils of victors to satisfy male forces. Likewise, between 60% and 70% of women are victims of atrocious acts against their bodies and integrity, especially BAME and poor women who witness these acts more closely and are considered humble women (Genser.J.).

Women's bodies are "used as an envelope to send messages to the perceived enemy." (Alexis V.). The reason for women to be used as spoils of war is because of the image that men are dominant over women, and have more power. Women's body control has been a constant use of the patriarchy with diverse manifestations, the most prominent one being power over a woman's sexuality and the idea that her body belongs to a man. → In other

words, through the body of women not only control is exercised over them, but this control is extended to the entire enemy community.

3.3 Previously implemented solutions

UN responses

The UN War Crimes Commission wrote a resolution against rape in 2008 which is S/RES/1820, which states that "rape and other forms of sexual violence may constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity or a constitutive act of genocide." The resolution points out that the use of sexual violence can worsen armed conflicts and therefore demands that all warring parties cease its use without delay and swiftly adopt measures to protect civilians, in particular women and girls.

UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict, which brought together the efforts of 13 UN organizations, was established in 2007 to unify the work of multiple UN agencies fighting sexual violence. The UN system is making a concentrated effort to enhance accountability and coordination, increase programming and advocacy, and support country efforts to prevent sexual violence and properly address the needs of survivors.

Examples include the Joint Government-UN Programme on Sexual Violence in Liberia and the first-ever Comprehensive Strategy on Combating Sexual Violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, both of which were backed by UN Action.

Funded by the Australian Government's Aid Agency (AusAID), UN Action has also, together with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, documented best peacekeeping practices in addressing conflict-related sexual violence. From initiating firewood patrols in Darfur to establishing market escorts, night patrols, and early-warning systems in the

Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Analytical Inventory of Peacekeeping Practice catalogs direct and indirect efforts to combat sexual violence during and in the wake of war.

3.4 History of the topic:

For centuries, during the conflict, sexual violence was pretty much unavoidable. Women have always lived in a society where they've faced discrimination and violation of their own rights for their sex. These have led to the empowerment of feminism that grows every decade, which doesn't cause any concrete solution since the government continues to fail to provide the necessary means for the protection of women, taking into account that at the world level the female gender has only been recognized three-quarters of the legal rights of men.

The evidence along with the issue was ignored by historians, politicians, and the world at large, yet it isn't recent at all. A 1998 UN report on sexual violence and armed conflict notes that historically, armies considered rape one of the legitimate spoils of war. The UN Security Council did not become conscious of the issue until 1992 when numerous rapes of women in the former **Yugoslavia** came to light. On December 18, 1992, the Council deemed it necessary to confront the "large, organized and systematic detention and rape of women, in particular Muslim women, in Bosnia and Herzegovina." have.

The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, in force since July 2002, includes rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or "any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity" as a crime against humanity when it is committed in a widespread or systematic way. Arrest warrants issued by the ICC include several counts of rape as both a war crime and a crime against humanity.

Although changing international and national laws are major steps towards punishing and ending sexual violence, they cannot be successful without a fundamental change in people's attitudes towards the sexual abuse of women.

3.5 Real life Cases:

- The greatest number of violations in history dates back to World War II, where historian Anthony Beevor states that every German woman no matter her age was a victim of an attempt of sexual violence from soviet soldiers after Germany failed in its operation "*barbarroja*". Subsequently, sexually transmitted diseases and women scarcity were factors that made soldiers abuse girls aged 12-13 as an alternative. Mortality in women was greater than 1.4 million, either it being suicide or aggression.
- During the independence of India 70,000 women became victims of sexual violence, and many more perished to prevent this from happening, either by committing acts of voluntary suicide that were frequently forced upon them by their own families, or by being killed by their own families or communities to protect the honor of the community. Not only this, but millions of women were kidnapped and sexually tortured.
- Another example takes us back to Colombia, more than five decades ago. Conservative and liberal parties clashed prior to this conflict, around 15,000 women are believed to have been abused during the conflict in Colombia, yet the number is probably way higher since many victims never reported anything. The organization in its report "The war inscribed in my body" collects testimonies of sexual violence with cases since 1959, where the perpetrators were insurgent groups such as the

Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the National Liberation Army (ELN), the Guevarist Revolutionary Army (ERG), and state agents such as the Colombian National Army.

- Mexican Revolution: Since the start of this conflict in México, physical and sexual violence worsened, mainly focusing on peasant women. Up to date, it is considered the most dangerous country in Latin America for the female gender.
- Venezuelan migration: This problematic has affected neighboring countries such as Colombia due to the high amount of migrants that arrive to the nations, but for white slavers (traficantes de blanca) it has been a benefit due to the high women flux. Which has become one of the most dangerous acts on the whole country for Venezuelan women which has become refugees.
- After World War II, the “hunt” for sexual slaves extended through Belgium and Holland. The situation widened throughout Europe, reaching a big women percentage that ceded to serve as sexual workers to military soldiers, while the ones that refused were killed.
- Iraq and Syria: When the Iran war arrived, the governments of these two nations weakened, which made them into highly dangerous Islamic states for the female gender. In these countries, religious laws were introduced that violated the rights of women and deprived them of their freedom and integrity.

- Inside one of the civil conflicts in Africa and the diverse economic and social situations that are confronted there, women are considered a prize and a method of payment for the military. Their role is not of importance and their body is mutilated in imaginable ways, this is why it's considered that African women are the group that has been the most mistreated of all times.

Armed conflict:

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated the total number of people displaced by armed conflict in 2004 at 34 million: 9.3 million were refugees in neighboring states, and another 25 million were internally displaced in their home countries. According to the United Nations Secretary-General, "The differential impact of armed conflict and the specific vulnerabilities of women can be seen in all phases of displacement."

Without money or other resources, displaced women and girls may be forced to engage in sexual activity in exchange for safe passage, food, shelter, or other resources. Some may move to urban areas, perhaps in search of the relative security of a densely populated area or in the hope of finding employment. Whatever the reason, both internally displaced and refugee women and girls are at risk of ongoing exploitation by locals when living in urban areas, especially since they are less likely than encamped populations to be given priority for assistance and protection by governments or by humanitarian organizations. Some examples of places with this problem would be refugee women living in Peshawar, Pakistan. In Colombia, the Ministry for Social Protection reported in 2003 that 36 percent of internally displaced women in the country had been forced by men into sexual relations.

3.6 Situation today

This situation continues to cause terror in the different countries already mentioned and even though society and feminist parties want to plant a positive change, the conflicts in each country make this almost impossible.

- One of the most recent conflicts where the violation of women's rights can be evidenced is the war between **Russia and Ukraine**, causing multiple problems both internally and externally and subsequently affecting women in both territories. Here, Russian troops are going to Ukrainian educational institutions and raping girls from said institutions. Amnesty International has declared an “Epidemic of violence against women in the eastern region ruined by conflict” which tells how gender violence has increased ever since the war started. “It is very serious that women, whose lives are already heavily affected by the trauma and destruction caused by the conflict, find themselves unable to turn to any help and abandoned by the authorities, who have a responsibility to protect them from interfamily gender-based violence and sexual violence”, stating that women who live in this region do not feel safe even in their own home. Likewise, more than 400 cases of sexual violence committed by the Russian military have been reported, thus maintaining "double victimization" regardless of the legal frameworks that penalize this type of aggression.

- **Iran:** At the moment it's not in any type of war, but from past years to the present Iranian women have been physically, mentally, and sexually abused. This is due to the fact that in Iran women's rights are heavily restricted, they have little to no laws that forbid discrimination, which leads to daily harassment, arbitrary detention, torture, and other ill-treatment, and denial of access to education, employment, and public spaces. This internal conflict against women has reached the level of femicide, to the point where going out is no longer a safe option for women.



- **Afghanistan:** As of right now, Afghanistan is dealing with one of the most difficult situations regarding women since the Taliban took over the country, due to the fact they are being abused in every possible way and also banned from doing multiple things, such as getting a proper education,

- working jobs outside the house, and only leave their house when it's a necessity.

When used as spoils of war, women are not only used for conflicts between two different countries, but also for the country's own internal conflict. Afghanistan is a perfect example of this since the Taliban raped and kill women to humiliate them. During the last 12 months, human rights violations against women and girls have increased steadily.



- **Palestinian/Israeli conflict:** This conflict has been going on for many years, but it has still not come to an end. The United Nations has intervened, with the objective of mitigating violence and conflict going on in these two countries, yet no result has come out. The situation is getting worse and worse for women every day, as in both countries they are heavily oppressed due to the constant war. Both of these countries violate women's rights and said violation increases day by day. In addition to this, in both countries, there is no governmental intervention when women are used as war tools by military troops, which makes the situation for them even more difficult.



- **Democratic Republic of Congo:**

The Congo is a country where women are constantly used as trophies for men, and due to the diverse conflicts inside the country, there's no justice being made for them. Some evidence seen over the past years is the fact a woman is raped on average more than once in her life in



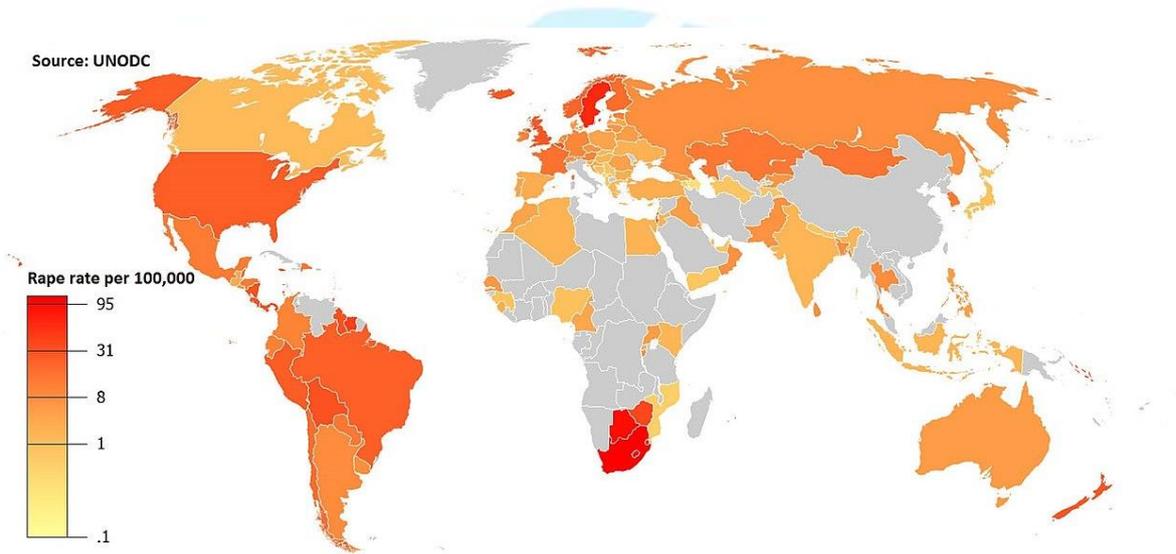
the DRC. Suffering this type of trauma has become a daily occurrence for women and girls, who even get rejected by their families if they talk about the traumatic experience they have been through. This issue has played a significant role throughout the more than 20 years of conflict in the DRC

- **The Islamic State in Asian countries** has reached power by imposing extremist laws that go against the daily lives of women, facing constant danger. In **Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, and Pakistan** the female gender is condemned to suffer the different norms that the government imposes and the rebel groups that rule inside the country.

- **Latin American countries** continue to carry on these cases without receiving any humanitarian response from the governments. “The violation and other sexual crimes, such as genital mutilation, are used with frequency by conflict causing as terror tactics” denounces Susan Lee, director of the Regional Program for America in Latin America.

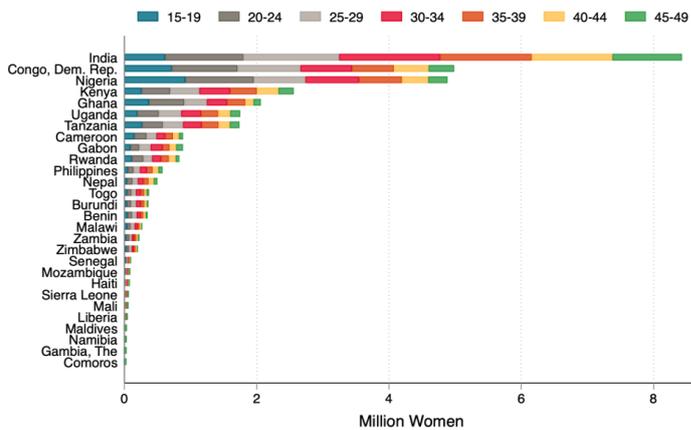
- At the **global level**, it is estimated that 736 million of women-around one every three- has experimented at some point in their life with any kind of violence, whether it is physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner or sexual violence from someone that wasn't her partner (30% of women aged 15 or older).

Some statistics on the topic :



The map displays which parts of the world are more affected by sexual assault against women. According to it, the most affected areas are the Asian continent, South America and Africa. And it also shows how it is a global problem, affecting multiple countries.

Other statistics on the African continent:



The most affected continent by sexual abuse is the African continent, with India as the most affected, followed up by the DRC. Even though the UN has tried to provide solutions, the results show that these solutions have not been implemented or have not shown positive results. Women are not a priority in the majority of countries shown in this graph, which makes violating their rights a lot easier.

4. Future situation

It's easy to see that women will continue to be used as spoils of war, meaning it will not improve in the short term. The situation will only worsen due to the armed conflicts that are going on in different countries, and the governments of said countries will continue to take little to no action on the issue, meaning the whole problem will proceed to go unpunished and normalized in certain delegations.

5. Delegations present in the committee

1. The United States of America.
2. Russian Federation
3. French Republic
4. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
5. People's Republic of China
6. Republic of Colombia
7. Democratic Republic of Congo
8. The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
9. The Republic of India

10. State of Israel
11. The Islamic Republic of Iran
12. Dominion of Canada
13. The Republic of Rwanda
14. The Kingdom of Norway
15. The Islamic Republic of Pakistan
16. Emergency delegation: The Syrian Arab Republic

6. Useful links for the delegate

- *Sexual violence: tool of war*

<https://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/assets/pdf/Backgrounder%20Sexual%20Violence%202014.pdf><https://news.un.org/es/story/2022/05/1508292>

- *Las mujeres: territorios de guerra.*

<https://librepensador.uexternado.edu.co/las-mujeres-territorio-de-guerra/>

- *Rape in times of war*

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/mar/03/gender.uk>

- *Sexual violence against women in war*

<https://gsdrc.org/document-library/sexual-violence-against-women-and-girls-in-war-and-its-aftermath-realities-responses-and-required-resources/>

8. QARMAS:

1. Does your delegation have laws and/or sanctions that promote and protect the rights of women in your country?
2. Has your delegation provided aid and/or supports for women that are a victim of these acts? If so, which ones?
3. What has your delegation done to provide the security that women need in war scenarios?
4. Has your delegation been involved in an armed conflict in the last 5 years?
5. Have there been any interventions from the United Nations in your delegation, if yes, which solutions have they promoted?
6. Has your delegation experienced cases of women being used as spoils of war?

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