

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 1 August 2025 from the Permanent Representative of
Panama to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to address you with reference to the presidency of the Republic of Panama of the Security Council during the month of August.

In its capacity as President of the Security Council, Panama intends to convene an open debate on conflict-related sexual violence on the theme “Identifying innovative strategies to ensure access to life-saving services and protection to survivors of sexual violence in conflict zones”, in connection with the item entitled “Women and peace and security”, to be held on Tuesday, 19 August 2025, at 10 a.m.

Please find attached the concept note outlining the thematic scope of the event (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Eloy **Alfaro de Alba**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 1 August 2025 from the Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept note for the Security Council open debate on conflict-related sexual violence, on the theme “Identifying innovative strategies to ensure access to life-saving services and protection to survivors of sexual violence in conflict zones”, to be held on 19 August 2025

I. Background

Conflict-related sexual violence is an atrocity that lays bare the horrors and human costs of war. It has been called “history’s greatest silence” and the world’s “oldest” and “least-condemned” war crime. Against this backdrop, in 2008, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution [1820 \(2008\)](#) condemning the use of sexual violence, including as a tactic of war, to humiliate, dominate, instil fear in and forcibly displace targeted populations.

In 2009, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution [1888 \(2009\)](#), which established an integrated institutional architecture to address this brutal reality, including through the establishment of the mandate of a dedicated Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, working primarily through the inter-agency coordination initiative, United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, and the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, which works to strengthen institutional safeguards against impunity for these crimes, and women’s protection advisers deployed to United Nations country presences to strengthen monitoring, reporting and response in line with Security Council resolutions [1960 \(2010\)](#) and [2467 \(2019\)](#). Women’s protection advisers have strengthened the information base on conflict-related sexual violence, which is critical to response and prevention measures to address these crimes.

The normative framework guiding the response of the Security Council and the United Nations system to this scourge has evolved through the subsequent adoption of resolutions [1960 \(2010\)](#), [2106 \(2013\)](#), [2331 \(2016\)](#) and [2467 \(2019\)](#), which reaffirm the gravity of these crimes as a threat to collective security and an impediment to durable and inclusive peace. These resolutions are grounded in the broader women and peace and security agenda, which emphasizes the centrality of women’s participation, protection and human rights in conflict prevention and resolution, peacebuilding and recovery.

The annual open debate on conflict-related sexual violence provides an opportunity for Member States to reflect on emerging themes associated with the widespread and/or systematic use of sexual violence by State and non-State actors as a tactic of war, torture, terrorism and political repression, during and in the wake of armed conflicts. In particular, the debate will be focused on the importance of sustaining access to quality, life-saving multisectoral services for survivors amid proliferating and escalating conflicts, which often target and destroy critical civilian healthcare infrastructure or render it inaccessible to those in desperate need. Women and girls are disproportionately affected by conflict-related sexual violence, and tailored services must be accessible to meet their specific needs. This includes, but is not limited to, comprehensive and non-discriminatory health services and psychosocial and legal support for an appropriate recovery.

Moreover, the debate will also include an examination of how to sustain efforts to prevent and address sexual violence during and after the drawdowns and transitions of United Nations peace operations, which result in significant security, assistance and monitoring vacuums. Particular attention must be given to the protection of women and girls during these transitions and to the strengthening of gender-sensitive early warning systems.

Finally, the debate will also include an analysis of how to address the gaps that result from diminished United Nations capacity in conflict-affected zones, in order to support international and local actors in mitigating the risk of and enhancing the response to conflict-related sexual violence in monitoring and reporting, investigations and the provision of assistance to survivors. Community-based, women-led organizations and human rights defenders often play a critical front-line role in delivering these services and must be adequately supported.

II. Guiding questions

- How can the Security Council and regional organizations support efforts related to the prevention of and response to conflict-related sexual violence during mission transitions and drawdowns?
- How can the Security Council support humanitarian access for service providers in conflict zones to meet the needs of affected populations, including survivors of sexual violence and those at risk?
- How can the Security Council ensure the protection of critical civilian infrastructure in conflict zones, including healthcare facilities, that provides safety and life-saving assistance to vulnerable groups, such as survivors of conflict-related sexual violence?
- How can the United Nations support the delivery of multisectoral services for survivors amid proliferating and escalating conflicts?
- How can Member States bolster financial and in-kind support to ensure the timely and adequate provision of multisectoral services, including medical care, mental health and psychosocial support, economic empowerment and access to justice and legal redress?
- How can the Security Council and the broader United Nations system ensure the meaningful participation of women and girls, particularly survivors, in the design, implementation, and monitoring of prevention and response strategies related to conflict-related sexual violence, in line with the women and peace and security agenda?
- What strategies can be employed to protect and empower women and girls in displacement settings, who face heightened vulnerability to sexual violence during and after conflict?
- How can the Security Council and the United Nations system support efforts to hold perpetrators accountable for crimes of sexual violence in conflict, in a survivor-centred and trauma-informed manner, to deter and prevent acts of sexual violence in conflict from occurring?

III. Format, briefers and participation

The Chair of the open debate is to be determined. The following speakers will provide briefings:

- The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict
- Women's civil society briefer, facilitated by the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security

Member States wishing to participate in person should inscribe their names on the list of speakers through the eSpeakers module of e-deleGATE. A letter addressed to the President of the Security Council, duly signed by the Permanent Representative or the Chargé d'affaires a.i., requesting to participate in accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure must be uploaded to the eSpeakers module of e-deleGATE. Inscription for said meeting will open on 14 August at 9:30 a.m.

To guarantee the participation of as many delegations as possible, statements should not exceed three minutes.
