

Delegation from the Republic of Slovenia

Position Paper for the Security Council

The topics on the agenda of the United Nations (UN) Security Council (SC) are Marking the 25th Anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and; Addressing the Disproportionate Effect of Armed Conflicts on Children. The Republic of Slovenia (Slovenia) recognises all topics on the agenda to be of great importance and looks forward to cooperating multilaterally to address these issues.

I. Marking the 25th Anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)

Twenty-five years after the adoption of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda, the UN stands at a crossroads. WPS showed that considering women's interests and perspectives is not only a moral question but a strategic security question. While achieving the adoption of UNSC Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 was an important milestone, the international community has not delivered on the resolution's core commitments. Although studies have shown that peace agreements with women's signatories have higher rates of implementation and last longer, women are still largely excluded from negotiation rooms. In 2024, only 7% of negotiators were women. Yet, women suffer massively in crisis zones. In 2024, conflict-related sexual violence increased by 87 per cent compared to 2022. And even in Slovenia, being considered one of the driving forces of the WPS agenda in the European Union (EU), 23% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since age 15. These numbers show that a lot remains to be tackled, and the struggle towards gender equality must continue.

Building on *UNSCR 1325*, in 2008, *UNSCR 1820* was adopted, focusing specifically on sexual violence in armed conflict. This resolution emphasised the role of sexual violence as a war tactic and the importance of prosecuting perpetrators, as well as training peacekeepers in prevention and consistent reporting. *Resolutions 1889* (2009), *2122* (2013), and *2242* (2015) enhanced women's meaningful participation in post-conflict processes and ensured monitoring and reporting progress, progressively focusing more on effective implementation. Foundational milestones like the *Beijing Declaration* (1995) and the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)* (1979) laid the groundwork for the fight for gender equality and empowerment. The Beijing Declaration served as a comprehensive plan on how to achieve equal education, pay, participation in decision-making, and lasting peace, while CEDAW provided a legally binding international treaty, holding states accountable for eliminating discrimination in all areas of life. The International Women's Rights Project Impact Study showed, however, that results across UN member states (MS) varied vastly, particularly due to insufficient funding. Another ambivalent project is the National Action Plans (NAPs), i.e., country-specific strategies to implement the WPS goals. Only 108 UN MS have adopted NAPs, and their quality differs immensely. According to UN Women, the overall conclusion across all UN MS was that most NAPs were under-financed, monitored, and evaluated. This does not apply to Slovenia. While most NAPs are outdated, Slovenia has adopted an updated version of its original NAP (2010) in 2018, addressing the first NAP's shortcomings. Slovenia is also an active member of the EU's WPS Council and is a persuasive voice in the informal Group of "Friends of UNSCR 1325", pushing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) action plan on WPS. In 2022, Slovenia had the highest number of female Members of Parliament in its history, the first female President of Parliament, and a female Minister of Foreign Affairs. Over half of its diplomats are women, and over 60% of top managerial roles in the foreign services are held by women. Slovenia has also committed itself to a Feminist Foreign Policy. These achievements demonstrate not only Slovenia's belief in the normative and security-related prospects of WPS, but also its capability to effectively implement corresponding policy.

To expand global WPS enforcement, the Republic of Slovenia proposes the strengthening of NAPs. To be concrete, Slovenia calls all UN MS to design an NAP or update outdated ones, every 3-5 years. These NAPs must be integrated across ministries to incorporate gender perspectives in all aspects of life. To ensure country-specific NAPs still maintain a universal level, Slovenia demands the establishment of a central oversight body, monitoring and evaluating MS' NAPs. If MS fail to implement measures in a previously decided timeframe, this oversight body will recommend corrective measures or incentives to ensure implementation. A joint funding model combining national contributions, EU and NATO co-funding,

and international grants such as UN Women could be used to enable all MS' participation in creating a safe and equal future for everybody.

I. Addressing the Disproportionate Effect of Armed Conflicts on Children

The situation of children in armed conflict remains deeply concerning. In 2024 alone, the UN verified 41.370 grave violations against children in armed conflict. There is a particular cruelty in the role of children in these conflicts; they are both victims and instrumentalised perpetrators of the terror. Children are the most vulnerable societal group, and because of it, they become targets of sexual violence, starvation, displacement, forced recruitment as child soldiers, and other war crimes. The deliberate and designed attack on children must be condemned as one of the highest breaches of the obligation to protect non-combatants. Armed violence also destroys children's prospects for the future: 52 million children globally are currently out of school due to conflict, many missing more than a year of education. Children's chances for the future are also massively impacted by the irreversible effects and scars armed conflicts leave on their vulnerable psyches. Slovenia acknowledges the special responsibility the international community has for the protection of children and the establishment of lasting peace and security.

The foundations of child protection during armed conflict lie in the *Geneva Conventions (GC) (1949)*, the *Additional Protocols (1977)*, as well as the *Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (1989)*. Out of these milestones, the six grave violations against children in armed conflicts were identified: killing and maiming, the recruitment and use of child soldiers, sexual violence, abduction, attacks on schools and hospitals, as well as the denial of humanitarian access. Another landmark for the practical implementation was the *UNSCR 1612 (2006)*. This resolution established the so-called Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM), which was the missing tool enabling systematic tracking of the gravest child violations in crisis settings. Now, war crimes (against children) could be better documented and penalised, strengthening the previous steps. This measure also paved the way for the UN Secretary General's (SG) so-called "list of shame", calling out states' grave violations against children, formally introduced with *UNSCR 1379 (2001)*. Since 1997, the SG has also had a Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict – a rather symbolic gesture of solidarity and awareness for the special needs of children in crisis. Slovenia is an active member in the fight for children's protection in armed conflicts. Slovenia is an active partner in international efforts to protect children from the impacts of armed conflict. Nationally, it enforces strict laws criminalising human trafficking, sexual violence, and child abuse, thereby fully implementing EU child protection directives. Slovenia is also part of the comprehensive EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child (2021) and contributes to the EU's humanitarian funding programme, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operation (ECHO), focused on child protection. In response to the current Ukraine war, Slovenia takes in Ukrainian child refugees and enables a qualitative education for them through special training for Ukrainian school teachers, going beyond standard pedagogy and strengthening teachers' psychological formation, so they know how to identify and react to traumatised children. These initiatives reflect not only Slovenia's dedication to safeguarding children affected by armed conflicts, but also its ability to translate international commitments into effective national action.

The Republic of Slovenia believes that children are best protected if the outbreak of conflicts or the escalation can be prevented. Thus, Slovenia proposes to expand programmes, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights' (OHCHR) Human Rights Early Warning System. When the outbreak of armed conflict cannot be prevented, special child support mechanisms must come into play. For instance, all UN Peacekeeping missions should have special Child Protection Field Units (CPFUs), dedicated to enforcing MRM and coordinating rapid response. These CPFUs could be financed by existing Peacekeeping funds and voluntary donor states. Similar to national projects, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) could finance trauma-sensitive education in the form of mobile psychosocial teams and specialised schoolteachers in refugee-hosting countries, enabling a qualitative, trained response across MS. Together, these measures offer feasible, targeted steps to prevent armed conflict, protect children in crisis regions but also in refuge, and promote lasting peace and security.