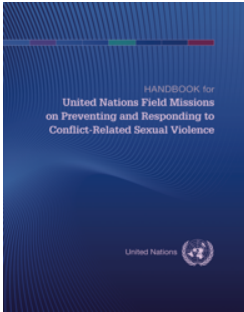


# Virtual Launch Event for the Handbook for United Nations Field Missions on Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence

## Concept note



**Date:** Friday, 5 June 2020

**Time:** 9-10 am New York time EST, 2-3 pm GMT

**Virtual venue:** YouTube livestream. Panellists connected via MS Teams.

**Organizers:** Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nations together with the Department of Peace Operations, with the support of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

## Background

Today, civilians are caught on the frontline of devastating conflicts in countries including Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan (Darfur) and Yemen. In all of these volatile settings, wars are being fought on the bodies of women and girls, men and boys. Motivated by political, military or economic aims, such as controlling territory, populations or resources, conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) is frequently and deliberately used to target civilians, inflicting long-term trauma, fracturing families and the social fabric, triggering displacement and fueling armed actors' activities. CRSV is a serious violation of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, and a crime under international criminal law. It is a major threat to international peace and security, and has been recognized as such by the United Nations Security Council through a series of emblematic resolutions on Women, Peace, and Security.

The Security Council has called on the United Nations system, Member States and the international community to take action to prevent and respond to CRSV. Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions have a unique mandate and expertise to help tackle the scourge of CRSV. Today, seven Field Missions have a Security Council mandate to address CRSV.<sup>1</sup> Staffed with specialized civilian and uniformed personnel, these Missions monitor, analyse and report on CRSV and design comprehensive responses to end these violations and promote access to multisectoral services for survivors in coordination with the host State authorities, parties to conflict, host populations, United Nations agencies, funds and programs, international and non-governmental organizations, and civil society.

With generous and continuous support from Norway, the United Nations has developed the first **Handbook for United Nations Field Missions on Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence**. Building on the new United Nations Policy on the same subject adopted in January 2020, the Handbook aims to provide practical guidance to civilian, military and police components of Field Missions and increase their capacities to prevent and respond to CRSV. The Policy and Handbook have been developed jointly by the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), the Office of the High

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<sup>1</sup> These are MINUSCA in the Central African Republic, MINUSMA in Mali, MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNMISS in South Sudan, UNAMID in Sudan (Darfur), UNAMI in Iraq and UNSOM in Somalia. Trends of CRSV have also been documented in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cote d'Ivoire, Colombia, Libya, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen as well as Burundi and Nigeria. For more information, see the Secretary General's Report on CRSV published annually.

Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (OSRSG-SVC). This publication was also made possible thanks to support to the DPO CRSV team from the Governments of Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The Handbook benefited from extensive consultations with representatives from United Nations Field Missions with a CRSV mandate, representatives from the United Nations Action Network on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and partners at United Nations Headquarters.

## Goals and objectives

The event aims to raise awareness among Member States, United Nations Secretariat and external partners on the important role of United Nations Field Missions to end CRSV and to promote sustained support for the CRSV mandate. Through high-level key notes speeches and presentations from field-based experts, the event will highlight the efforts and achievements of Field Missions in preventing and responding to CRSV while revealing the complexities and challenges of mandate implementation. By highlighting content and best practice contained in the new Handbook, this event will ultimately present the new Handbook as an essential resource for personnel currently deployed in Field Missions and a pre-deployment orientation tool for future Mission personnel. The link to download the Handbook will be shared at the end of the launch.

As co-organizer of the event and key contributor to the Handbook, the Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nations will moderate the event and remarks will be delivered by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Ms Ine Eriksen Sørreide.

## Program (1 hour)

<b>Opening session and remarks</b>	<p><b>Opening session and remarks by senior UN officials</b></p> <p>Welcome by Ambassador Mona Juul and introduction of the senior United Nations officials who will deliver their remarks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ USG-DPO, Mr Jean-Pierre Lacroix</li> <li>○ USG-DPPA, Ms Rosemary di Carlo</li> <li>○ SRSV-SVC, Ms Pramila Patten</li> <li>○ ASG-OHCHR, Ms Brands Kehris</li> </ul>
<b>Video screening</b>	<p><b>Operationalization of the CRSV mandate in the field</b></p> <p>Screening of a OHCHR video on the work of MONUSCO to end CRSV in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.</p>
<b>Keynote</b>	<p><b>Remarks by Norway’s Minister of Foreign Affairs</b></p> <p>Remarks by Minister Ine Eriksen Sørreide, Norway’s Minister of Foreign Affairs.</p>
<b>Voices from the field</b>	<p><b>Testimonies and presentations by field-based experts</b></p> <p>Short presentations will be delivered by civilian, police and military experts in Field Missions to highlight best practice in implementing the CRSV mandate, along with challenges and recommendations: <b>UNMISS</b> (South Sudan), <b>MINUSCA</b> (Central African Republic) and <b>UNAMI</b> (Iraq) (TBC).</p>
<b>Q&amp;A</b>	<p><b>Q&amp;A</b></p> <p>Questions from participants to the field-based speakers. Participants will be invited to send in their questions while registering for the event.</p>
<b>Closing remarks</b>	<p><b>Closing remarks</b></p> <p>Ambassador Mona Juul will conclude the event with closing remarks.</p>