

**Written Submission to the
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the theme of
Protection of Women's Human Rights in Conflict and Post-Conflict Contexts**

Submission prepared by UNICEF for the CEDAW Committee General Discussion,
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Introduction:

1. UNICEF welcomes the CEDAW Committee's decision to adopt a General Recommendation on the protection of women's human rights in conflict and post conflict contexts, and appreciates the opportunity to contribute to the General Discussion drawing from our programming and policy experience working to protect and support women and girls, including adolescent girls in conflict and post-conflict contexts.
2. UNICEF is mandated by the UN General Assembly to be the leading advocate for children's rights, including for girls and boys living in conflict and post conflict contexts. With extensive field presence in over 130 countries, UNICEF is often present in countries prior to the eruption of violence, during the conflict itself working with partners to deliver humanitarian assistance and protection, and throughout the post-conflict period, helping to rebuild communities and societies in the aftermath of crisis. UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs), which are guided by international human rights law and humanitarian law and principles, serve as the global framework for UNICEF-supported work in humanitarian action, which covers emergency preparedness and response, including early recovery. They clearly state the organization's commitment to planning and implementing humanitarian action in a way that benefits girls, boys, women and men in line with their rights and through an analysis of their distinct needs and capacities.
3. It is widely acknowledged that armed conflict has distinct impacts on the risks and vulnerabilities of girls, boys, women, and men as well as on their capacity to respond. Armed conflict may exacerbate pre-existing gender inequalities, leading to increased discrimination, greater exclusion, and disproportionate risks for women and girls.¹ At the same time, humanitarian crises may lead to shifts in traditional gender roles and can, in certain situations, create openings for greater gender equality.²
4. Given UNICEF's child-rights focus and mandate, this submission will draw particular attention to the need to make visible and clearly address the distinct protection needs and capacities of girls, including adolescent girls, within the forthcoming General Recommendation on the protection of women's human rights in conflict and post-conflict contexts. Part I of this submission will set the framework for looking at the rights and distinct needs of girls in conflict and post-conflict

¹ For example, increased mobilization of soldiers is often accompanied by the presence of commercial sex trade (including child prostitution) around military bases and army camps, increasing women and girls' vulnerability to sexual exploitation and violence. During crises, material shortages (i.e food, health care, water, fuel) may mean increased stress and workload for women and girls who have traditionally been the providers for the everyday needs of their families.

² For example, women may take on new roles and step into the decision-making and income-generating vacuums left by men, who may not be able to play their traditional roles as wage-earners or providers.

contexts, including by making brief reference to relevant international law and related normative frameworks for protection. Part II will address three of the thematic areas highlighted by the Committee, namely: participation in peacebuilding, violence against women and girls, and economic opportunities with a view to highlighting distinct aspects that relate to the fulfillment of girls' rights and their distinct needs. Part III presents a summary of recommendations for consideration by the Committee to consider in the drafting of the General Recommendation.

Part I: Rationale for Protecting the Rights and Addressing the Distinct Needs of Girls in Conflict and Post-Conflict Contexts

Distinct Impact of Conflict on Girls, Including Adolescent Girls.

5. During armed conflict women's and girls' exposure to rights violations increase dramatically as a result of the greater instability and insecurity that ensues and the related breakdown of formal and informal protection mechanisms. Due to their age and related lack of experience, lack of power, dependency and vulnerability, girls of different ages may face distinct risks and suffer disproportionate consequences of conflict. For example, during armed conflict girls, and in particular adolescent girls, are vulnerable to gender based violence, especially sexual violence and exploitation, including rape, enforced pregnancy, forced prostitution, forced marriage and forced child-bearing. Consequences of such violations may include increased and life-threatening exposure to STIs such as HIV, as well as lifelong physical, psychological, and social scars. Conflict-affected girls may suffer additional violations including forced removal from families and homes, killing and maiming, abduction or recruitment into armed forces or groups, illegal detention, torture and other inhumane treatment. Girls may find themselves separated from their families, or they may become heads of households with responsibility for caring for younger siblings.
6. Girls may also be exposed to discriminatory practices which severely reduce their access to basic social services. For example, conflict-affected girls are less likely than conflict-affected boys to be enrolled in school and have limited access to sexual and reproductive health services. In cultures where boys are more valued than girls, boys may be given priority by families and community members when distributing aid. Increased poverty resulting from crisis may drive parents to push their daughters into early marriage as a coping mechanism, which robs girls of their childhood, family, security, education, health, psychosocial wellbeing and opportunities for development. In many cases girls who, along with women, are ascribed traditional household responsibilities, take on an increased work load to support their families in the face of diminished social services, increasing their daily burden and leaving less time for school, play, recreation or other activities.

Normative Frameworks for the Protection of Women and Girls

7. The normative foundation for protecting the rights of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict contexts is drawn from international law and related commitments. These include International Humanitarian Law including the Geneva Conventions (1949) and the Additional Protocols (1977) which together provide general protection to women and men equally, and specific additional protections that target the distinct needs of women and girls, including protection from sexual violence.³ In addition to humanitarian law, international human rights

³ See: Geneva Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (adopted 12 August 1949, entered into force 21 October 1950) 75 UNTS 287; Protocol I Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (adopted 8 June 1977, entered into force 7 December 1978) 1125 UNTS 3; Protocol II Additional to the

law provides specific protection for women and girls, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) –which is not age-specific and thus applies to females throughout the life-cycle – from infancy to old age, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which does not have a derogation clause and thus arguably applies in times of conflict.⁴ State and non-state responsibilities to protect the rights of conflict-affected girls and boys are also called for in the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict.⁵ Provisions for protecting women and girls during conflict are also found in the broader framework of International Criminal Law including the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court⁶, Refugee Law⁷, as well as a growing body of soft law instruments, including Security Council Resolutions.

8. In particular, Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1889 (2009) on Women, Peace and Security,⁸ draw attention to the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women and girls and their exclusion from conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peace-building, and call for strengthened monitoring efforts to promote women and girls' inclusion in peace-building and better meet their needs for security and basic services. Notably, despite the broader reference to 'women, peace and security,' particular mention of girls is made within the preambles as well as throughout both these Resolutions. Security Council Resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010) on Prevention and Protection from Conflict-Related Sexual Violence⁹, specifically reference women and girls, and establish strengthened accountability mechanisms to hold perpetrators to account. Security Council Resolutions 1612 (2005), 1882 (2009), and 1998 (2011) on Children and Armed Conflict,¹⁰ which expand protection for conflict affected girls and boys, include calls to establish monitoring mechanisms to document and respond to grave violations of children's rights including forced recruitment, killing and maiming, sexual violence and targeted attacks against schools and hospitals. These normative frameworks outline the primary role of States parties in upholding international law and in providing effective protection, and reflect a strengthened protection regime for women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations which include increasingly robust accountability mechanism designed to prevent, as well as more swiftly identify and respond to violations of women and girl's human rights. They can thus offer critical guidance in the drafting of the forthcoming General Recommendation.

Links between protecting the rights of women and girls

9. As referenced above, normative tools for the protection of women's human rights in conflict and post conflict contexts often make specific reference to girls, in particular in relation to their need

Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of the Victims of Non-international Armed Conflicts (adopted 8 June 1977, entered into force 7 December 1978) 1125 UNTS 609

⁴ See: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (adopted 18 December, 1979, entered into force 3 September 1981, GA Res 34/180, 34 UN GAO, Supp (no. 46 at 193); Convention on the Rights of the Child (adopted 20 November, 1989, entered into force 2 September 1990), GA Res 44/25, Annex, 44 UN GAOR Supp (no 49) at 207.

⁵ Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, Un Doc A/54/L84 (2000).

⁶ Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (adopted 17 July 1998, entered into force 1 July 2002) 2187 UNTS 3.

⁷ Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (adopted 28 July 1951, entered into force 22 April 1954) 189 UNTS 137.

⁸ Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and 1889 (2009) on Women, Peace and Security.

⁹ Security Council resolution 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1960 (2010) on Sexual Violence in Conflict and Post Conflict Situations.

¹⁰ Security Council resolution 1612 (2005), 1882 (2009), 1998 (2011) on the Protection of Children in Armed Conflicts.

for protection. While such references are welcome, it still remains the case that girls, and in particular adolescent girls, are often overlooked in the collective prevention and protection response in conflict and post-conflict contexts, and there remain significant gaps in efforts to ensure that they participate meaningfully in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace-building. Yet, as noted by the *UN Task Force on Adolescent Girls*, actively engaging adolescent girls as agents of transformation and change, and working to improve their lives, has a catalytic effect on society at large and contributes to gender equality and poverty alleviation –which together are key variables to promote sustainable peace.¹¹

10. In addition to protecting and supporting girls in their own right, protecting the rights of girls is the first step in promoting gender equality for women as stereotyping of gender roles and gender-based discrimination begins in childhood and is felt most acutely in adolescence. Conversely, protecting the rights of women, who historically have been the primary caregivers of children, has a direct link to protection of girls. Women’s health and social and economic status, for example, is directly linked to a child’s prospects for survival and development and resources put in their hands are more likely to be used to benefit children. In the context of armed conflict, where health, social and economic indicators decrease, and insecurity increases, the protection of women can have an exponential impact on the protection of both boys and girls.
11. The CEDAW Committee is encouraged to take the opportunity of the forthcoming General Recommendation to highlight the importance of protecting the rights, addressing the distinct needs of, and ultimately, investing in girls, including adolescent girls within broader efforts to protect women’s human rights in conflict and post-conflict contexts. Sustainable peace requires long-term investment, and investing in the girls of today will help realise greater participation and leadership among the women of tomorrow.

Part II: Thematic areas of concern and their relation to the rights and distinct protection needs of girls

Participation in Peace Building

- *Security Council Resolution 1889, Preamble: Recognizing that an understanding of the impact of situations of armed conflict on women and girls, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, adequate and rapid response to their particular needs, and effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process, particularly at early stages of post-conflict peacebuilding, can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security.*¹²

Participation of girls, including adolescent girls in peace-building

12. In post-conflict contexts, residual community tensions may linger in the aftermath of conflict, fuelled by a weak economy, high rates of poverty and unemployment, dilapidated infrastructure and social services, and the slow pace of reconstruction. Investing in and fostering meaningful political participation of youth, including adolescent girls, in the post-conflict context is essential to any peace-building effort. A political crisis represents an opportunity to engage girls to better know and to demand the recognition of their rights as citizens and to have their voices heard in the rebuilding of their society.

¹¹ See UN Task Force on Adolescent Girls, “*Programme Framework for Country Action - Advancing the Rights of Marginalized Adolescent Girls*” (2009).

¹² Security Council resolution 1888 (2009) on Sexual Violence in Conflict and Post Conflict Situations.

13. Investment in inclusive youth groups, where both girls and boys have opportunities to take on leadership roles and for their voices to be heard contributes positively to the reconstruction and development of their communities.¹³ Conflict transformation efforts targeting youth can also yield results. For instance, in Lebanon, Lebanese and Palestinian children and youth participated in peer to peer training in conflict transformation, tolerance and alternatives to violence with the aim of developing and sustaining conflict resolution mechanisms to facilitate the resolution of inter and intra-communal tensions and to promote dialogue.¹⁴ States parties should ensure that significant investments are made in gender- and age-appropriate life-skills education, leadership and conflict resolution training for youth specifically target adolescent girls so they can participate equally in the rebuilding of their societies and as future leaders.
14. States parties should adopt a more integrated approach to promoting and protecting the rights of women and girls, including adolescent girls, and creating opportunities for their meaningful participation in prevention efforts, conflict resolution and peace-building in the interest of promoting longer term peace and security. This includes broadening the traditional framework of analysis to look at longitudinal investments – for example, investing in primary and secondary education for girls so that they are well positioned to take on future leadership roles in their communities and societies.

Addressing distinct protection needs and capacity of girls within disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation.

- *Security Council Resolution 1889, Article 13: [The Security Council] Calls upon all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to take into account particular needs of women and girls associated with armed forces and armed groups and their children, and provide for their full access to these programmes.*¹⁵
 - *The Paris Principles, Article 4.1:...It is important that the differences between girls' and boys' experiences are understood and taken into account by all actors and that programming for children who are or have been associated with armed forces or armed groups explicitly reflects the particular situation of both girls and boys.*¹⁶
15. In many conflicts large numbers of girls have been associated with armed forces or armed groups and their reintegration poses particular challenges. While there are commonalities between the circumstances and experiences of women and girls, and of girls and boys, the situation for girls can be very different in relation to the reasons and manner in which they join the armed forces or groups, the potential for their release, the effects that the experience of being in the armed force or group has on their physical, social and emotional well-being, and the consequences this may have for their ability to successfully adapt to civilian life or reintegrate into family and community life after their release.
16. Most girls do not go through formal or informal disarmament, demobilization, reintegration processes. In fact, in many contexts, girls have been discriminated against in accessing such formal processes – identified as ‘dependents’ rather than as abductees and children associated with armed forces or groups who need to be released where they did not serve in visible

¹³ Working with Adolescents in Situations of Civil Unrest, Population Displacement, and Post-crisis Transition, UNICEF ESARO, 2009 (Working draft).

¹⁴ Joint UN Project on Conflict Prevention and Peace building in Lebanese Public Schools and UNWRA Schools, UNRC, UNDP, ILO, UNESCO, UNFPA and UNICEF, Lebanon, 2010.

¹⁵ Security Council resolution 1889 (2009) on Women, Peace and Security.

¹⁶ The Paris Principles: Principles and guidelines on children associated with armed forces or armed groups (2007).

combatant roles. This is particularly the case for girls who became pregnant or had children during their time associated with armed forces or groups. These young mothers mostly return to communities on their own, where they and their children frequently experience marginalization and stigmatization by their families and communities because of the stigma attached to rape and giving birth to babies fathered by rebel-captor 'husbands'. This makes them further vulnerable to gender-specific discrimination and abuse. When developing DDR programmes it is essential that they are designed to address the specific concerns of young mothers and their children. The voices of young girls and women should be incorporated into the design process or these programmes will likely continue to fail to meet their distinctive needs and build on their unique capacities.

17. States parties should ensure that, in the framework of integration programmes for persons associated with armed forces and armed groups, specific attention is paid to young women and girls and their children without targeting them excessively and thus exposing them to further stigma. States parties should also recognize that economic reintegration is key for the successful integration of young mothers. Indeed, girls' shame needs to be dealt with by supporting girls' psychosocial healing, teaching girls and their communities about their rights and promoting girls' self-efficacy, self-esteem and empowerment to promote their capacity to protect their own integrity and to construct a viable place in their community. This necessarily includes supporting them to access education and vocational training as well as information on life skills, to enable them and their children to survive.
18. In addition to providing age and gender-specific DDR support, girls in conflict affected communities can play a key role in preventing future recruitment of girls and boys. For instance in parts of Colombia, where child recruitment was a problem, adolescent and youth boys and girls from the Nasa indigenous community were trained in conflict resolution and community leadership and helped to design strategies to prevent the influence of armed groups in their community. By investing in community-based education and youth leadership programmes that are inclusive of girls, States parties can help foster peace and stability in the aftermath of conflict.

Violence

- *Security Council Resolution 1325, Para 10: [The Security Council...] Calls on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict.*¹⁷
 - *Security Council Resolution 1820, Para 3: [The Security Council...] Demands that all parties to armed conflict immediately take appropriate measures to protect civilians, including women and girls, from all forms of sexual violence.*¹⁸
19. Gender-based violence, especially sexual violence, is particularly widespread in conflict zones, where rape, often used as a weapon of war, puts large numbers of women and girls at risk and where sexual violence goes largely unpunished. Girls in conflict and post-conflict environments may be at particular risk of gender based violence given their level of dependence, their limited ability to protect themselves, and their limited power and participation in decision-making processes. Because they have had relatively little experience of life, girls are also more easily exploited, tricked and coerced than adults. Depending on their level of development, they may

¹⁷ Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security.

¹⁸ Security Council resolution 1820 (2008) on Sexual Violence in Conflict and Post Conflict Situations.

not fully comprehend the sexual nature of certain behaviours, and they are unable to give informed consent.

20. In the context of armed conflict, girls, and in particular adolescent girls, are vulnerable to rape and sexual exploitation at the hands of fighting forces, community members, humanitarian workers and uniformed personnel. Girls may be abducted or recruited into armed forces or groups. Reports of girls engaging in transactional sex for aid, or selling sex to meet their own or their families' needs are disturbingly frequent. This increases their vulnerability to sexual exploitation and abuse, STI infection including HIV, and unwanted pregnancies. Conflict-affected girls may also disproportionately suffer other forms of gender-based violence including early/forced marriage, female genital mutilation and cutting, dowry/bride price abuse, incest, molestation, and trafficking. Girl survivors of sexual violence and other forms of gender based violence suffer mental health, psychosocial problems and severe social stigmatization and exclusion.
21. Addressing violence amongst girls, including adolescent girls, in conflict-affected contexts requires coordinated and comprehensive actions in prevention and response. This must include innovative efforts that stop the violence before it happens, including early warning, as well as longer-term social change efforts to address underlying causes of violence and gender inequalities. In the short term the power, voices and experiences of girls and women must be prioritized at all levels so that they can play a key role in community-based security committees, in monitoring and consultations. In the longer term, investment must be made in community-based prevention programmes that must include initiatives that challenge the widespread, tacit acceptance - by both males and females - that sexual violence is 'normal.' Too often, programmers have treated gender based violence as a women's and girls' issue, targeting solely women and girls in their prevention efforts. But the root of gender based violence lies within gender inequality, lack of respect for human rights, abuse of power and local concepts of masculinity, which must be deconstructed before full sensitization can take place. In many contexts, once properly sensitized, boys and male youth have played an active role in protecting the rights of their female peers.¹⁹
22. A broad community-based approach to addressing sexual violence is critical to help ensure that survivors are not marked by a lifelong sentence of shame and humiliation, while their perpetrators enjoy total impunity. Health, mental health and psychosocial services are often non-existent in most war torn contexts. States parties must invest in strengthening social protection systems as part of the post-conflict agenda to respond to the needs of survivors. While building these systems, interventions must be situated in a larger community-based response that is driven by the rights and wishes of survivors. Services must also be gender-sensitive and age-appropriate and based on the individual's developmental stage. The unique needs of girls aged 1 to 18 cannot be merged into one broad age category.
23. States parties should ensure that they protect, fulfill and respect the rights of conflict-affected girls to be free from violence, both during and after conflict, and should address girls' distinct needs and capacities, including by investing in preventative efforts – with the involvement of men and boys - to address the root causes of gender-based violence, in order to stop violence before it happens. They should also invest in survivor-centred community-based services that are rights based, and that include the integration of psychosocial elements within a multi-sectoral health, education, protection, legal and justice response. States parties should also invest in targeted education, vocational training, and livelihood programmes to support survivors as they rebuild their lives.

¹⁹ Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children. *Youth Speak Out*, 2005

Economic Opportunities

- *CEDAW, Article 10: States parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on the basis of equality....(a) the same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of diplomas...; (f) the reduction of female student drop-out rates and the organization of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely.*²⁰
- *CEDAW, Article 11: States parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women the same rights, in particular: (b) the right to the same employment opportunities...*²¹
- *Security Council Resolution 1889, Para. 11.: [The Security Council] Urges Member States, United Nations bodies and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to take all feasible measures to ensure women and girls' equal access to education in post-conflict situations, given the vital role of education in the promotion of women's participation in post-conflict decision making.*²²

Investing in Education, Life-skills and Livelihood Opportunities for Conflict-Affected Girls.

24. Often, post-conflict contexts are characterized by high rates of poverty and unemployment as rebuilding the economic infrastructure takes time. This, combined with the legacy of conflict can leave lingering political and social tensions. For girls, and in particular adolescent girls, pressure to generate income and support their families is often exacerbated by a lack of necessary education and appropriate skills. This may leave them vulnerable to exploitation, and abuse. For girl survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, lingering psychosocial trauma may affect their capacity to socialize, to develop intellectually and to acquire the skills necessary to generate income. This, combined with social stigma and related isolation contributes to fueling their relative economic disempowerment and can lead to further sexual exploitation and abuse, and/or commercial or transactional sex.
25. In order to build a strong economic base and reverse inter-generational poverty in a post-conflict environment, investment must be made in girls. Positive examples include the Joint Programme for Employment and Empowerment of Young Women and Men in Liberia, carried out jointly with the UN and the Government of Liberia. The programme aims to promote sustainable economic recovery and development by empowering and promoting the employability of young women and men, particularly conflict-affected youth. It includes special measures to address the structural constraints faced by adolescent girls, promoting the employment of young women in non-traditional fields, and increasing the pool of female trainers and facilitators to provide female role models and mentors for young women.²³
26. States parties can invest in complementary approaches to investing in livelihood and employment opportunities for adolescent girls including: curriculum development;

²⁰ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (adopted 18 December, 1979, entered into force 3 September 1981, GA Res 34/180, 34 UN GAO, Supp (no. 46 at 193);

²¹ Ibid.

²² Security Council resolution 1889 (2009) on Sexual Violence in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations.

²³ UN and Government of Liberia. "UN Joint Programme for Employment and Empowerment of Young Women and Men in Liberia."

participatory needs/strengths assessments; participatory local market surveys ; development of a national youth livelihoods strategy; creating links between schools and youth structures and livelihood/employment services; life skills education for increased employability; creating meaningful employment through on-the-job training; and promoting economic roles as a holistic aspect of adolescent development. States parties should also invest in providing young survivors of sexual violence with targeted education and vocational training so they can gain economic and social capital necessary to break cycles of abuse and gender-based violence. It is critical for States parties to ensure that any livelihoods or employment-related programming girls falls in line with local and national development frameworks such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy or district and community development plans. Within these broader approaches it is important to ensure that gender-specific barriers to participation are addressed (for example providing child care to young mothers while they attend training, or ensuring timing and location of training or education opportunities take into consideration the workload and other responsibilities of adolescent girls).

Part III Conclusion/Recommendations

27. While there is growing attention to the rights and distinct needs of conflict-affected girls, including adolescent girls, in conflict and post-conflict contexts, a more sustained and systematic policy and programme response is needed. In this regard, States parties should consider investing a range of interventions including:
- At the service delivery level, greater investment is needed in: appropriate data disaggregation; carrying out robust needs assessments and gender analysis; providing gender sensitive and targeted services for girls including adolescent girls; training of service providers on gender-sensitive service delivery; and establishing multi-sectoral referral and response systems that are responsive to the developmental needs of girls of different ages.
 - At the household level, greater investment is needed to address harmful social norms, and efforts to involve men, women, boys and girls to address the specific gender barriers and social norms faced by girls.
 - At the community level, greater investment is needed in appropriate selection of both female and male service providers, as well as training of service providers on rights-based and age- and gender-sensitive approaches.
 - At the policy level, gender considerations should be stipulated, and a gender analysis conducted to ensure that policies address the immediate and underlying causes of inequalities and exclusion of girls.
28. States parties should make greater investments in technical expertise and resources to enable more gender-responsive women, peace and security programming that identify and address the distinct needs and capacities of women, men, boys and girls. They should promote and create spaces for traditionally silenced groups (including marginalized women and girls) to dialogue meaningfully and participate in decision making as part of efforts to build sustainable peace. States parties should ensure that dedicated resources are earmarked for targeted girls programming, and the identification and response to girls' rights and distinct needs should be made across the scope of conflict and post-conflict interventions. To be effective, this work should be carried out within a broader gender equality framework that analyses the distinct needs and capacities of girls of all ages, and that mobilizes not just women and girls, but also men and boys around a common goal of a more just and equitable post-conflict society.