

THE MAPUTO PROTOCOL ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

What does the Maputo Protocol say about Women, Peace and Security ?



The Maputo Protocol's **Articles 10 and 11**, as seen below, underscore the essential role of women in peace-building and conflict resolution, while also ensuring them special and necessary protections during times of war.

Article 10(3) is a particularly ground-breaking provision that challenges traditional priorities of military expenditure, advocating for resources to be reallocated towards social development and the promotion of women. Evidence shows that women's involvement in peace processes leads to more inclusive, sustainable, and lasting peace agreements.



ARTICLE 10 – RIGHT TO PEACE

1. Women have the right to a peaceful existence and the right to participate in the promotion and maintenance of peace.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the increased participation of women:
 - a) In programmes of education for peace and a culture of peace;
 - b) In the structures and processes for conflict prevention, management and resolution at local, national, regional, continental and international levels;
 - c) In the local, national, regional, continental and international decision making structures to ensure physical, psychological, social and legal protection of asylum seekers, refugees, returnees and displaced persons, in particular women;
 - d) In all levels of the structures established for the management of camps and settlements for asylum seekers, refugees, returnees and displaced persons, in particular, women;
 - e) In all aspects of planning, formulation and implementation of post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation.
3. States Parties shall take the necessary measures to reduce military expenditure significantly in favour of spending on social development in general, and the promotion of women in particular.

ARTICLE 11 – PROTECTION OF WOMEN IN ARMED CONFLICTS

1. States Parties undertake to respect and ensure respect for the rules of international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflict situations, which affect the population, particularly women.
2. States Parties shall, in accordance with the obligation's incumbent upon them under international humanitarian law, protect civilians including women, irrespective of the population to which they belong, in the event of armed conflict.



3. States Parties undertake to protect asylum seeking women, refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons, against all forms of violence, rape and other forms of sexual exploitation, and to ensure that such acts are considered war crimes, genocide and/or crimes against humanity and that their perpetrators are brought to justice before a competent criminal jurisdiction.
4. States Parties shall take all necessary measures to ensure that no child, especially girls under 18 years of age, take a direct part in hostilities and that no child is recruited as a soldier.



HOW HAVE GOVERNMENTS IMPLEMENTED THIS SO FAR?



African Union (AU) Member States have enacted constitutional reforms strengthening protections from violence in conflict and promoting women's participation in peace processes. For instance, Somalia and Côte d'Ivoire have emphasised women's involvement in peacebuilding within their constitutions.



Increasingly, peace agreements across the continent are including provisions specifically addressing women, girls, and gender equality. For example, the 2021 Peace Agreement in South Sudan includes gender-sensitive clauses, while Kenya and Eswatini have enacted laws on sexual violence and gender-based violence (GBV) in conflict settings, such as the Sexual Offences Act and Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act (2018), respectively. In addition, the Central African Republic and DR Congo have renewed commitments to combat sexual violence in conflict.



Over half of AU Member States have developed National Action Plans (NAPs) in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), which calls for the active participation of women in peace processes and the protection of women in conflict. These NAPs are national strategies that outline specific actions to implement the provisions of UNSCR 1325. For instance, countries like Mali, Uganda, and Burundi have adopted three different NAPs, showing a deepening commitment to women's involvement in peace and security matters. Recently, nations such as Malawi (in 2021) and Morocco (in 2022) adopted their first NAPs. However, despite this progress, many countries still face challenges with expired NAPs, and a lack of funding often hampers effective implementation, limiting the impact of these plans.



Several Member States have introduced institutional reforms to elevate women's roles in peace processes. South Africa has established initiatives like the South African Women in Dialogue to assist women from conflict-ridden African countries. Rwanda has increased its contribution of women to UN peacekeeping missions, with 30% of its police forces in peacekeeping missions being women. Meanwhile, in the Central African Republic, women now represent over 25% of the national police force and nearly 16% of the gendarmerie.

“ **United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), calls for the active participation of women in peace processes and the protection of women in conflict.** ”



WHAT MORE COULD GOVERNMENTS BE DOING?

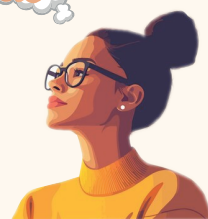


- ✓ **Tackle the root causes of conflict**, such as resource exploitation, border disputes, and governance challenges, by fostering sustainable development and collaboration.
- ✓ **Impose sanctions on countries** that commit atrocities against civilians and violate international human rights laws to reinforce the commitment to peace and stability across the continent.
- ✓ **Incorporate women and girls actively** in all stages of conflict prevention, resolution, and peacebuilding, ensuring their leadership in decision-making processes at local, national, and international levels.
- ✓ **Adopt, renew and monitor the implementation of National Action Plans (NAPs)** for UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions, addressing any gaps in execution to ensure full integration of gender considerations into peace processes.
- ✓ **Adhere strictly to international humanitarian law and human rights frameworks**, ensuring the protection of civilians, particularly women and girls, during conflict and displacement situations.
- ✓ **Reallocate military resources to social sectors**, prioritising health, education, and gender equality to align budgets with long-term peacebuilding and sustainable development goals.
- ✓ **Ensure the protection of displaced women and girls**, particularly from gender-based violence in refugee and IDP camps, and provide them access to justice and support services.

WHAT WOULD A FUTURE WHERE ARTICLE 10 AND 11 OF THE MAPUTO PROTOCOL ARE IMPLEMENTED LOOK LIKE?

African women's active participation in peace processes leads to a lasting and stable peace across the continent. **Their leadership, integral to conflict resolution and decision-making, ensures that peace agreements are not only inclusive but sustainable—resulting in fewer wars, less violence, and stronger, more cohesive communities.**

With women's meaningful involvement, societies experience healing, recovery, and justice after conflict, as legal frameworks protect them from sexual violence and hold perpetrators accountable. No child is forced to take part in hostilities—ending the scourge of child soldiers. Peace is not a fleeting achievement, but a lasting foundation for progress, prosperity, and shared security.



Where can I find more resources about this and how can I get involved?

Scan this QR Code to find out!

SCAN ME!



SOLIDARITY FOR
AFRICAN WOMEN'S RIGHTS
A force for freedom



MOUVEMENT DE SOLIDARITÉ
POUR LES DROITS
DES FEMMES AFRICAINES
Une force pour la liberté