



United States Mission to the OSCE

On the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict

As delivered by Chargé d’Affaires, a.i., James E. Donegan
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 24, 2021

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The United States has long been committed to the prevention of, and accountability for, conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) as well as efforts to support and protect survivors. On this *International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict*, the United States proudly stands with the global community in commemorating the thirteenth anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820, which for the first time recognized sexual violence, including rape, as a threat to international peace and security that deserves—and demands—action from the international community.

The Biden/Harris Administration has pioneered new efforts to prevent and respond to all forms of gender-based violence, including CRSV. In March, President Biden called for the first-ever U.S. *National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence* and a revitalized *Global Strategy on Gender-Based Violence*, which will prioritize advancing new efforts to address CRSV. Furthermore, through the Department’s *Women, Peace, and Security* Strategy Implementation Plan, the United States is committed to strengthening legal reforms and justice for all CRSV survivors, including as part of transitional justice processes, while also advocating for women’s safe and meaningful participation in such processes.

The pandemic compounded the risks of gender-based violence facing women and girls globally and increased challenges to accessing services for survivors of CRSV. The United States recognizes that if we are to build back better, we must collectively ensure that our approaches to addressing the pandemic and security are inclusive and gender-informed.

Unilateral efforts to address CRSV will not be sufficient to fully address this global challenge. The United States is proud to be a longstanding and leading supporter of the United Nations Office of the *Special Representative of the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict*. We have resumed our support for the UN Population Fund, including for its humanitarian responses, which address sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence through an integrated approach, critical for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

Today’s commemoration provides an essential reminder that sexual violence in conflict is preventable, and the cost of inaction is too high to bear. The United States recognizes that our efforts to prevent and respond to all forms of gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, not only serve to support survivors and defend the human rights of all women, girls, and gender diverse persons, but additionally advances the safety, security, and prosperity of all people.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

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