

Where are the Words?

The Disappearance of the Women, Peace and
Security Agenda in the Language of Country-
Specific UN Security Council Resolutions

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for Peace and Freedom

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June 2020

Where are the Words? The
Disappearance of the Women, Peace
and Security Agenda in the Language
of Country-Specific UN Security Council
Resolutions: A Guide for Civil Society
Organisations

1st edition
28 pp.

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Design: Nadia Joubert

Cover: Modified design by veraholera,
Freepik

www.wilpf.org

For more on advocacy around the Women, Peace
and Security Agenda, check out:

PeaceWomen, WILPF's WPS Programme

PeaceWomen facilitates monitoring of the United Nations system, with a particular focus on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda; engages in advocacy work to strengthen the implementation of the WPS Agenda across the United Nations (UN) system and provides outreach and capacity-building to amplify and support local gendered conflict analysis and expertise. PeaceWomen's portfolio of tools and projects range from policy advocacy at the UN to monitoring, to outreach, to local capacity building.

The London School of Economics' Centre for Women, Peace and Security

WILPF partnered with the London School of Economics' (LSE's) Centre for Women, Peace and Security (WPS) to publish the main report: *Where are the Words? The Disappearance of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the Language of Country-Specific UN Security Council Resolutions*. The LSE Centre for WPS is an academic space for scholars, practitioners, activists, policy-makers and students to develop strategies to promote justice, human rights and participation of women in conflict-affected situations around the world.

The Feminist Impact for Rights and Equality Consortium (FIRE)

WILPF is a founding member of the recently formed Feminist Impact for Rights and Equality Consortium (FIRE). FIRE works an accelerator for the realisation of a feminist vision of Peace and Security by working together to develop and further concrete, integrated and overarching strategies capable of challenging deeply-rooted patriarchal structures, systems and cultures, to address militarism from a feminist perspective and improve the lives of women across the globe. Other founding members include: Kvinna till Kvinna, MADRE, medica mondiale and the Nobel Women's Initiative.

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Introduction to the guide

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) works at the local, regional and global levels, conducting advocacy, organising, alliance-building and awareness-raising, in order to realise our vision of feminist peace. WILPF's international institutional engagement focuses on the United Nations (UN) – its bodies, organs and mechanisms – and the governments of UN Member States. The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda – which includes the ten WPS resolutions¹ – is an important tool in this engagement, particularly around the UN Security Council.

In May 2020, WILPF and LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security published a research report with the title *Where are the Words? The Disappearance of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the Language of Country-Specific UN Security Council Resolutions*.² This report exposes the need for a new strategy for engagement with the UN Security Council by examining the role and place of the WPS Agenda in international law and practice.

We developed this guide to support civil society organisations and activists to make use of the findings and insights arising from the *Where are the Words?* report, including by:

- sharing the key findings from our report;
- showing how these findings are relevant;
- making suggestions as to how these findings might be used;
- sharing foundational knowledge of the UN Security Council to strengthen feminist advocacy so we can make better use of the existing UN Security Council resolutions; and
- showing how such research and advocacy, supported by this knowledge, can be continued in different country contexts.

Using this guide, you can strengthen your advocacy and understandings of the UN Security Council and take steps towards holding the UN System accountable for its commitments on the WPS Agenda.

¹ All references to “resolutions” will refer to “UN Security Council resolutions” beyond this point, unless otherwise specified.

² We refer to this report throughout this guide as the “*Where are the Words?* report” or, more simply, “our report.”



Part I: Why the research findings matter to civil society

What is the purpose of the *Where are the Words?* report?

The *Where are the Words?* report explores whether the UN Security Council is fulfilling its obligations vis-à-vis the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda as outlined in the ten WPS resolutions and through its country-specific resolutions – and, if not, what we can do about it.

Our report specifically examines the ten WPS resolutions, the resolutions adopted between 2018-2019 and the country-specific resolutions on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Libya, Syria and Yemen.

Additionally, we examine the relationships of the WPS and country-specific resolutions with international law to better understand what insights these relationships can provide and how these insights can inform our advocacy.

What are the key findings of this report?

1. *There are nearly 2,500 WPS commitments reflective of international legal obligations contained in the ten WPS resolutions.*

The WPS resolutions are a collection of commitments that are reflective of legal obligations. There are nearly 2,500 specific commitments housed within 210 numbered (or “operative”) paragraphs³ of the ten WPS resolutions. 20+ specific actors are responsible for implementing them. This finding demonstrates the magnitude, scope and potential of the WPS resolutions.

3 Check out the explanation of what we mean by “operative paragraphs” (what they are and what they do) found on p. 7 of this guide. Operative paragraphs may also be referenced in this guide as “OPs.”

2. *Where are the Words? Not in country-specific resolutions.*

The UN Security Council should, by its own resolutions, incorporate WPS into country-specific resolutions.⁴ An analysis of the country-specific resolutions adopted between 2018-2019 as well as sets of resolutions adopted on the DRC, Libya, Syria and Yemen shows that this is largely not happening. For example, our review of 144 country-specific resolutions shows that: 8 of 36 (or 22% of) resolutions on Libya; 3 of 13 (or 23% of) resolutions on Yemen; 1 of 24 (or 4% of) resolutions on Syria; and 23 of 71 (or 32% of) resolutions on the DRC incorporate WPS in any form. We also found that where a reference to WPS is included in country-specific resolutions, it is often weak. (This is the case, for example, within the resolutions on Yemen and Syria.)⁵

3. *The UN Security Council does not receive the information it should receive on the status and implementation of the WPS Agenda in the UN Secretary-General's reporting on country-specific situations.*

The UN Secretary-General is obligated to report on the implementation of country-specific resolutions (typically, following the UN Security Council's establishment of formal reporting arrangements with the UN Secretary-General within the final operative paragraphs of a resolution). If information is not included in the UN Secretary-General's reports on a given situation, it is unlikely to be reflected in the drafting of the next resolution on that situation.

The UN Secretary-General's reporting on the few WPS commitments that were incorporated into country-specific resolutions on the DRC, Libya, Syria and Yemen was limited, insufficient and/or non-existent.

4. *However, the UN Security Council does receive, or has the opportunity to receive, enough information to act on the WPS Agenda; it just doesn't.*

In addition to the establishment of reporting arrangements with the UN Secretary-General, the UN Security Council has another formal mechanism for receiving this information: the invitation of women civil society organisation (CSO) briefers under Rule 39 of the UN Security Council's Rules of Procedure and in accordance with its intent to do so as expressed in S/RES/2242(2015), OP5(c). The content of these briefings provides information on the implementation of and is often deeply rooted in both the WPS and country-specific resolutions and is considered a significant entry point for civil society activists.

4 We can look, for example, to S/RES/2242, OP5(b).

5 To learn more, consult the "Country-Specific Analysis" section of the research report, at pp. 7-12.

Women take risks to provide the UN Security Council with accurate information on the agenda items of which they brief. This information should be reflected in the UN Security Council's resolutions and actions.

What are the key recommendations of this report?

The research and findings can inspire civil society activism around the WPS agenda in the following ways:

1. *Change the frame*

As feminists, we know that language matters. It comes as no surprise to us that the way we talk about the WPS resolutions and frame the UN Security Council's responsibilities around them matters. This is particularly true where the WPS resolution commitments reflect international legal commitments – and where there are so many.

We should aim to catalyse implementation of each of the WPS resolution commitments, specifically, as well as for the overarching normative framework set out within the ten WPS resolutions or each resolution individually. We can identify where the weaknesses in UN Security Council implementation are occurring by specifically referencing the UN Security Council's commitments as they relate to our work, citing specific operative paragraphs in our arguments and advocacy with our national governments and regional organisations as well as with the UN.

We can also identify where the weaknesses of UN Security Council implementation are occurring by investigating and creating clarity around critical but undefined terms used in UN Security Council commitments and organising around that. For example, our investigation of the UN Security Council's terminology around gender shows that associations attached to general terms – “gender dimensions,” “gender considerations,” and others⁶ – can attribute meaning that contributes to legal weight and force.

Developing an awareness of these meanings can strengthen our advocacy.

2. *Support CSO briefers*

The UN Security Council's linguistic conventions can function to silence women CSO briefers before they speak, changing in critical ways what they want or plan to share about their situations and how they share it.

6 We analysed nine terms in total: see Annex I, “Overview of the Use of “Gender” in WPS UN Security Council resolutions”.

Rather than “rewrite” their remarks in “UN Security Council language” – focusing on sharing experiences and information in a way that the UN Security Council will “hear” and feel “moved” to act upon – activists briefing the UN Security Council can be supported to share their information, experiences and solutions in their own words, whilst citing WPS resolutions’ and country-specific resolutions’ operative paragraphs to give them greater legal weight.

This serves as a corrective to the current dynamic of the briefer system, which places a burden of responsibility on women CSO briefers for sharing the experiences of their communities in a way that brings about action and leaves them feeling responsible for UN Security Council inaction. By grounding their experiences in specific WPS commitments (emanating from the WPS resolution and/or country-specific resolution operative paragraphs and which are reflective of legal obligations), CSO briefings can take on greater legal purpose.

3. *Continue in your context*

Our report analysed the country-specific resolutions adopted within a single year (2018-2019) and four countries (the DRC, Libya, Syria and Yemen) to evaluate the extent of the UN Security Council’s inclusion of references to the WPS Agenda (including the WPS resolutions).⁷

There is more to learn from making connections across the language of the WPS resolutions and more to gain by being more specific in our usage. An operative paragraph in one WPS resolution may – and often does – repeat or build on that of previous WPS resolutions.

For example, if we are advocating for the development of the capacities of national institutions to provide assistance to survivors of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations, we can support our advocacy aims with reference to S/RES/2122(2013)⁸, OP 11. It is also true though, that the language used in this paragraph of this resolution draws heavily from and strengthens S/RES/1820(2008), OP13. Where this occurs, we can render our advocacy more forceful by referencing both.

We can create coherence in our advocacy by asking questions about what certain phrases or terms used within the WPS resolutions actually mean. We can interrogate to what extent these terms have been informed by feminist perspectives within the context of WPS advocacy and within the context of resolutions over time. We can build from these meanings by acknowledging or challenging them. Our analysis of gender terminology in Annex I to this guide shows one way in which this can be done.

7 We lay out how to do this research on pp. 8-11 of this guide. We also included sample research tables for Yemen as Annex II, for use as a template in your research. It’s also important to note that If you’re conducting advocacy around the DRC, Libya or Syria, there’s no need to start from scratch. Contact WILPF to obtain the research tables for these countries.

8 This construction “S/RES/” is the shorthand for formal citations to UN Security Council resolutions.

We can make connections with other UN mechanisms and organs, reminding the UN Security Council and other bodies of their commitment to function as “One UN.” We can pay particular attention to links between the resolutions and human rights mechanisms (as we did, for example, in our analysis of “civil, political and economic rights”⁹).

Last, we can apply our understanding of the WPS resolutions’ operative paragraphs as housing sets of commitments (and pursue their implementation from this understanding).¹⁰

4. Make productive use of UN Security Council inaction: create a documentary record

Much of our current advocacy defines purpose and achievement primarily in terms of UN Security Council action. Creating a documentary record of the work of CSO briefers and other activists around specific commitments as well as of the UN Security Council’s actions and inaction, can ensure we lay responsibility more squarely upon the UN Security Council.

Where we clearly express, document and amass documentation of the UN Security Council’s inaction or inadequate action, we build a solid foundation from which to identify where the failures of implementation are occurring and take steps towards rectifying them.

5. Keep the WPS Agenda alive and effective

If the UN Security Council remains ineffective despite evidence gathered as to (1) its legal commitment to take specific actions and (2) its specific inaction, we can leave it behind.¹¹

The resolutions are already there. There is consensus that it is implementation that is needed. We can use these findings to develop strategies for ensuring that this happens, including by realising WPS commitments in alternative forums and working to flatten the outdated vertical power structures upon which the UN was founded.

9 To read this analysis, check out pp. 3-4 of the research report.

10 As WILPF has already separated the commitments emanating from each of the WPS resolutions, please contact us if having this research would assist your advocacy.

11 Where the UN Security Council does not act in accordance with its commitments under the WPS resolutions, the UN Security Council is not acting in accordance with its responsibilities under the UN Charter.

For example, we can look to the following alternative forums and pathways and draw from these findings and the WPS Agenda to strengthen connections between them:

1. *National Action Plans*, which we can demand must include relevant WPS language from the UN Security Council resolutions on our country-contexts, reflect relevant language from the WPS Agenda and engage with UN human rights platforms;
2. *Regional bodies and policy agendas*, which we can engage to pay attention to and encourage coherence with the WPS Agenda (notably as regards responsibilities recommended for them by the UN Security Council within the WPS resolutions); and
3. *Human rights mechanisms*. We can look to the responsibilities that the UN Security Council recommends for them, examine Human Rights Council resolutions and further integrate the mutually reinforcing WPS and Human Rights Agendas.



Part II: A feminist primer on the UN Security Council and its resolutions

Why the UN Security Council?

Though it is tasked with the maintenance of international peace and security, the UN Security Council too often falls short in practice. This is for reasons including but not limited to power politics and undemocratic and patriarchal working and decision-making methods and structures.

Opinions on feminist pacifist engagement with the UN Security Council – whether and how it should be done – therefore vary widely. Many of us choose not to engage, citing the UN Security Council’s disconnection to the work we do on the ground, the harm of its past actions and positions, and the risks of being “co-opted” (or inadvertently legitimising and normalising the UN Security Council’s at times anti-feminist practices). Others, citing the same reality, choose to engage in order to minimise future harm and the impacts of past harms. Still others take a utilitarian approach, engaging with the UN Security Council as a practicality.¹²

Through this guide, we aim to show how we can tap into a potential usefulness of the UN Security Council to achieve our aims. As we recommend more frequent and confident use of the resolutions in supporting our advocacy, this section further explains how resolutions are structured and how they “work.”

For more on this, head to the [PeaceWomen Resource Centre](#)

¹² WILPF’s previous engagement, for example, has included the publication of a guide for diplomats entitled “[Towards a Feminist Security Council](#).”

What is the role of the UN Security Council?

UN Security Council's purpose

The UN Security Council's primary and overarching function, as set out under Article 24 of the UN Charter, is maintenance of international peace and security. To carry out this mandate, the UN Security Council is empowered by the UN Charter to make decisions to take a broad range of actions around the peaceful settlement of disputes and to address threats to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression under Articles 24, 25 and 103 of the UN Charter. Decisions made by the UN Security Council surrounding the peaceful settlement of disputes fall under Chapter VI (Articles 33-38) of the UN Charter. Determinations as to the existence of any threats to the peace, breaches of the peace or acts of aggression and decisions as to what measures should be taken to address them fall under Chapter VII (articles 39-51). These determinations and decisions are formalised in resolutions and may be legally binding or non-binding in nature. As a general rule,¹³ resolutions adopted under Chapter VII are considered binding; resolutions adopted under Chapter VI are considered non-binding.

The potential usefulness of the UN Security Council is derived from its authority to make potentially binding decisions. Our report focused primarily on the resolutions for this reason, because the resolutions house its decisions, recommendations, commitments, sentiments as well as the legal underpinnings of its actions – all of which become relevant due to the UN Security Council's exclusive power to make binding decisions.

The UN Security Council's role in advancing the WPS Agenda

The UN Security Council is responsible for carrying forward the commitments outlined in the ten WPS resolutions, which fall under Chapter VI.

The ten WPS resolutions are: S/RES/1325(2000); S/RES/1820(2008); S/RES/1888(2009); S/RES/1889(2009); S/RES/1960(2010); S/RES/2106(2013); S/RES/2122(2013); S/RES/2422(2015); S/RES/2467(2019); and S/RES/2493(2019).

¹³ Check out Section II of the *Where are the Words?* report, entitled "Understanding the UNSC and the WPS UNSCRs as They Relate to International Law," pp. 1-2.

Our report shows that the UN Security Council has committed itself to fulfilling a greater number of commitments than it appears to be aware of (or interested in pursuing). Two of these commitments, on which our report focused in great detail, are (1) the UN Security Council's commitment to incorporating the WPS resolutions into its country-specific resolutions and (2) its commitment to engaging with women and women-led CSOs and inviting them to the UN Security Council.¹⁴

How do resolutions work?

Structure of the UN Security Council resolutions

UN Security Council resolutions contain two different types of paragraphs:

1. *Preamble paragraphs.* Preamble, or non-numbered, paragraphs (PPs), typically occur at the start of a resolution. PPs provide the context, background and legal underpinnings for the overall resolution.
2. *Operative paragraphs.* Operative, or numbered, paragraphs (OPs) follow the PPs. The OPs are generally considered more important than PPs as they convey a more specific purpose or intention. The OPs outline the UN Security Council's decisions, commitments, sentiments and recommendations—what the UN Security Council plans to do or wants to happen. The OPs can be legally binding.

In our report, we focus on the OPs because they tend to have greater legal weight. However, this doesn't mean that we should view PPs as unimportant. In fact, it's important to retain a holistic understanding of resolutions when we review them.

The resolutions are living documents. Some of the language within the PPs of earlier resolutions has “travelled” – and may travel – to the OPs of more recent resolutions. There are many reasons for this kind of travel: it can, for example, reflect the relative cohesion of the UN Security Council at different points in time or it can reflect a normative shift over time. Whatever the reason, the OPs within a resolution adopted tomorrow are likely to have roots in the language of the PPs of a resolution adopted ten years ago. This is particularly true in thematic, compared to country-specific, resolutions – with a not insignificant impact on our ability to ensure our feminist perspectives are included in country-specific resolutions.

¹⁴ These commitments are rooted in S/RES/2242(2015), OP5(b), in which the UN Security Council “[d]ecides to integrate women, peace and security concerns across all country-specific situations on the Security Council's agenda, taking into account the specific context of each country” and within OP5(c) of the same resolution, in which the UN Security Council “[e]xpresses its intention to invite civil society, including women's organisations, to brief the Council in country-specific considerations and relevant thematic areas.”

What to look out for in preamble and operative paragraphs

Preamble paragraphs:

1. *References to relevant treaties (including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women¹⁵) and the WPS resolutions.* Your awareness of whether (how often, and in what context) these references are included in earlier country-specific resolutions can serve as the foundation of advocacy conducted around the drafting of new country-specific resolutions. One advocacy goal might be to move the treaty and WPS resolution references you've traced from the PPs into the OPs, where they are given more weight.
2. *References to "Article 41," "Chapter VII of the UN Charter," or the phrase "[d]etermining that the situation in [Member State] constitutes a threat to international peace and security" (or similar).* The inclusion of these references within PPs have an important impact on our interpretation of the resolutions overall. These references indicate that the UN Security Council intends the overall resolution to be legally binding, and therefore increases the legal weight and force of all its subsequent decisions, recommendations and commitments.

Operative paragraphs:

1. *Leading verbs.* The UN Security Council's intent to follow through on its plans and willingness to make an effort to bring them about is typically demonstrated by the leading verbs. You'll notice that both PPs and OPs begin with italicised verbs, for example, "urges," "expresses," and "encourages" or "decides," "demands," "authorises," and "requests." (Leading verbs within PPs will end in "-ing," whereas leading verbs within OPs are written in the present tense.) You'll also notice that some operative and preamble paragraphs contain these kinds of italicised verbs within the paragraphs as well – not just at the start. This indicates the UN Security Council's intention for a specific recommendation, commitment, decision or sentiment of the paragraph to be set apart from the others and – at times, particularly within OPs – specifically acted upon, or viewed in a different light. Not all leading verbs have the same impact. Verbs such as "demands," "requests," "authorises," and "requests" – found only in the OPs – indicate the UN Security Council's intent for a specific operative paragraph to be legally binding.
2. *References to relevant treaties (including CEDAW) and the WPS resolutions.* OPs that cite to treaties and WPS resolutions carry greater legal weight and therefore can be a useful tool for strengthening our advocacy, where they appear.

What are the different types of resolutions?

For the purposes of this report, there are two types of resolutions: thematic resolutions and country-specific resolutions. Country-specific resolutions are just that – they address and respond to country-specific situations as they arise and unfold. Thematic resolutions address “cross-cutting” matters – “thematic issues” – that are connected to the maintenance of international peace and security. WPS is an example of a thematic issue. The WPS resolutions are examples of thematic resolutions.

Country-specific resolutions are more likely to fall under Chapter VII of the UN Charter than thematic resolutions. Country-specific resolutions are therefore more likely to contain binding decisions and more likely to be acted upon.



Part III: How to conduct and use this research

How was the analysis for our report done?

Having an overview of the methodology behind our research and analysis will support you as you conduct and use this research in your own context.

We examined both types of resolutions, though we focused more on the country-specific resolutions. We analysed the WPS resolutions to better understand what the UN Security Council has already committed itself to doing around gender and women across the continuum of violence and conflict. The better we understand what the UN Security Council is required to do by its own resolutions, the more capable we are of identifying where the failures of implementation are occurring.

Though we gained important insights on the WPS resolutions through this research,¹⁶ we focused on country-specific resolutions because they address conflicts within and the security of our communities – they affect us where we live. They also tend to contain a greater number of binding decisions, which have the most immediate impact.

How were the WPS resolutions examined?

We closely analysed the WPS resolution OPs to gain a better understanding of what the UN Security Council has committed itself to doing, asking questions at a granular level: what does this phrase or term mean? What needs to happen as a result of this phrase? Who needs to do it?

We also paid close attention to language patterns, tracing the evolution of certain terms and definitions over time with an eye to surfacing connections with other UN mechanisms and organs (with particular attention to connections with human rights mechanisms).

How were the country-specific resolutions examined?

We then focused on the UN Security Council's specific commitment to incorporate the WPS resolutions into its country-specific resolutions, asking: did the UN Security Council do this? If so, to what extent? What "counts" as inclusion of WPS language? What should? How are we doing this "counting"? How should we do it?

To respond to these questions, we reviewed the country-specific resolutions adopted between 2018-2019. We also reviewed the full set of country-specific resolutions adopted on Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Libya, Syria and Yemen. For a more in-depth look at the framework for this review, consult pp. 4-7 of the *Where are the Words?* report.

How can I continue this research in my own context?

You can continue this research in your own context by following the below steps:

1. *Identify and make a list of the resolutions that relate to your specific country-context.*

To find these resolutions, you can draw from three key sources: the [UN Security Council's resolution database](#), the [UN Digital Library](#) and the [Security Council Report's database](#) of "key documents" for country-specific and regional issues.

2. *Read these country-specific resolutions. Evaluate the relative presence (or absence) of WPS references within them.*

As a starting point, search each of your country-specific resolutions for references to key treaties and WPS resolutions. Make note of these. Be sure to track references within operative paragraphs and preamble paragraphs separately.

Then, search for references to key terms and affixes, including: wom-, fem-, girl, sex- and gender. Make note of these, tracking references to operative and preamble paragraphs separately. (If this is too time-consuming, focus on operative paragraphs for reasons outlined above.

Next, isolate WPS references by removing from this group:

- Condemnations or regrets surrounding deaths of or violence against women (and which are not qualified by text outlining UN Security Council commitments to doing something about it);
- References to UN-related sexual exploitation and abuse (UN SEA); and
- Any references that retain the same language within the same contexts from one resolution to the next, or which were weakened from one resolution to the next.

Your compiled list of references within the operative paragraphs of the resolutions represents the set of WPS UNSCR commitments the UNSC has already made in connection to your specific situation (and for which it is therefore accountable). The Yemen research tables (Annex II to this guide) can be used as a template. Consult our report¹⁷ for further guidance.¹⁸

3. *Evaluate your list.*

How many country-specific resolutions are there, in total? How many (and what percentage) of these resolutions contain references? How many operative paragraphs contain WPS references, within those resolutions? Are these strong references?

With this step, you complete the process of compiling the list of WPS references within your country-specific resolutions.

4. *Research and document whether the commitments within the UNSCRs have been carried out in reality.*

Among the most critical questions are:

- Does what the UNSC promised to do match what you see on the ground?
- How do your findings inform your work and advocacy?

In this way, you can continue building the knowledge and research that can be used to push for an adequate UN response and, if the UN does not act in accordance with its commitments, strengthen your position for pursuing your aims in alternate forums.

How can I use the research findings from the *Where are the Words?* report (and from my own research, in my own context) to support my advocacy?

There are many ways this can be done. If you're an activist living a conflict or post-conflict situation, you may find that the WPS resolutions speak to your particular circumstances. For example, in the DRC, the path to transitional justice remains uneven. If this is a critical issue for you and/or your organisation, you may wonder how you can use this research or these findings to catalyse a UN response to address this.

¹⁷ Pp. 9-10 of the *Where are the Words?* report may prove particularly useful.

¹⁸ Your list of references within preamble paragraphs can be used as suggested within the text boxes on pp. 9-10 of this guide.

One way to use these findings involves an initial review of each of the WPS resolutions.

How does each of these resolutions speak to the problem you're working to resolve?

In the particular context of transitional justice, if we look the WPS resolutions, we find, for example, that S/RES/2467(2019)(16)(d) states:

16. Encourages Member States to adopt a survivor-centered approach in preventing and responding to sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations, ensuring that prevention and response are non-discriminatory and specific, and respect the rights and prioritize needs of survivors, including groups that are particularly vulnerable or may be specifically targeted, and notably in the context of their health, education, and participation, and in this regard the Council:

*d. Encourages concerned Member States to ensure the opportunity for the full and meaningful participation of survivors of sexual and gender-based violence **at all stages of transitional justice processes**, including in decision-making roles, recognizes that women's leadership and participation will increase the likelihood that transitional justice outcomes will constitute effective redress as defined by victims and will respond to important contextual factors;*

We can think about how the WPS references within our country-specific resolutions can be connected to, reinforcing of and supported by country-specific resolutions. We can turn to the list of WPS references we prepared around our country-specific resolutions and – where we can – make these connections. Where we can't, we can identify gaps for the UN to address.¹⁹

These connections can build a strong evidence-based argument. We can take this argument to the CSO advisory bodies which engage with our country teams. CSO advisory bodies can be a useful and effective means of interacting with the UN in our country contexts to ensure the UN is implementing the WPS resolutions and relevant operative paragraphs of country-specific resolutions in its programmes.

¹⁹ Returning to the DRC example, the references from the country-specific resolutions for the DRC that may be of interest to us around transitional justice include (but are not limited to) those collected in Annex III to this guide.

Annex I: Sample research:

Overview of the use of “gender” in WPS UNSCRs

The term “gender” is referenced in 61 WPS SCR OPsⁱ across all ten WPS SCRs and in various contexts. Gender was referenced primarily as a descriptor within a compound phrase, such as in: “gender approaches;” “gender component;” “gender considerations;” “gender dimension;” “gender issues;” “gender mainstreaming;” “gender perspective;” “gender-responsive;” and “gender-sensitive.” An analysis of contexts in which these terms appeared was conducted to capture definitions, associations and patterns in usage. This analysis produced the following results:

TERM	OVERVIEW OF USE IN WPS UNSCRs
<i>Gender-based approaches</i>	This term is referenced in the context of the Peacebuilding Commission, the role of which in promoting “gender-based approaches” towards reducing instability in post-conflict situations is “reaffirmed” by the UNSC. ^{ii iii}
<i>Gender component</i>	A clear meaning of this term does not arise from a review of WPS UNSCRs. It is used in the context of “field operations” (which are to include a “gender component”). ^{iv}
<i>Gender considerations</i>	<p>This term is referenced as a commitment for Security Council missions to take into account.^v The integration of “gender considerations” is listed as an intended outcome of the meaningful participation of civil society in peace and security meetings.^{vi} It has been loosely defined in relation to humanitarian programming to include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “the provision of access to protection and the full range of medical, legal and psychosocial and livelihood services, without discrimination,” 2. “ensuring women and women’s groups can participate meaningfully,” and 3. ensuring women and women’s groups can be “supported to be leaders in humanitarian action.”^{vii}
<i>Gender dimensions</i>	This term is typically used in the context of the “gender dimensions” of peace processes, peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and situations on the UNSC’s agenda. ^{viii} In the context of a call for increased commitment of counter-terrorism funds towards projects which address “gender dimensions,” “gender dimensions” are defined to include women’s empowerment. ^{ix}

<i>Gender issues</i>	This term is used in a variety of contexts, in connection to CTED, ^x the PBC, ^{xi} “all relevant United Nations entities,” ^{xii} “discussions pertinent to the prevention and resolution of armed conflict, the maintenance of peace and security, and post-conflict peacebuilding”. ^{xiii} This term is associated with commitments on how to address or consider gender issues ^{xiv} (rather than definitional directions surrounding of what “gender issues” is comprised).
<i>Gender mainstreaming</i>	This term is used in connection to peacekeeping missions, “mission elements,” and “the post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery processes and sectors.” The PBC and gender advisors are also referenced in connection to this term. In relation to “special measures” that “all relevant UN entities” and “their respective institutions” are obligated to take, gender mainstreaming is defined to include the allocation of adequate financial resources within all relevant offices and departments and on the ground, the allocation of adequate human resources within all relevant offices and departments and on the ground and the strengthening of respective mandates’ cooperation and coordination when addressing the issue of sexual violence in armed conflict. ^{xv}
<i>Gender perspective</i>	<p>This term is referenced in connection to the need for “integration” or “mainstreaming” within UN peacekeeping operations,^{xvi} as well as within the former iterations of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs,^{xvii} and the Secretariat and UN agencies.^{xviii} The UNSC calls for deployment of more gender advisors doing the work of integrating a “gender perspective” in “mission elements” most clearly defined within the UNSCRs in relation to peace agreements.^{xix} In relation to peace agreements, a gender perspective includes but is not limited to one that puts forward:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction; 2. measures that support local women’s peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements; and/or 3. measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary.
<i>Gender responsive</i>	This term appeared twice in connection to discussions of judicial and legal reform, security sector reform, law enforcement and access to justice. ^{xx} It also appeared in connection to UN peacekeeping operations and special political missions, where it is defined to include the provision of “field-based gender advisors and other missions’ sectors with full access to the policy, substantive and technical support of these entities on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and successive resolutions, making full use of respective comparative advantages.” ^{xxi} This is a term that the UN has taken steps to define as in, for example, UN Women’s “Guide for Gender-Responsive Implementation of the Global Compact for Migration” (published in early 2019).
<i>Gender-sensitive</i>	This term is typically used in the context of training, ^{xxii} data collection and research. ^{xxiii}

This analysis demonstrates that while the WPS UNSCRs do not provide a singular definition of gender or of the compound terms which appear across the WPS UNSCRs, associations attached to these terms can attribute meaning that contributes to legal weight and force.

Table References

- i This number is not reflective of the total number of appearances of the term “gender” within WPS UNSCRs.
- ii S/RES/1888(2009), OP18.
- iii “Approach” appears in connection to gender, also in connection to the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), in S/RES/1820(2008), OP11.
- iv S/RES/1325(2000), OP5.
- v S/RES/2242(2015), OP5(b): “reiterates its intention to ensure Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including through consultation with local and international women’s groups.” See too S/RES/1325(2000), OP15.
- vi S/RES/2242(2015), OP1: “further encourages the meaningful participation of civil society organisations at international and regional peace and security meetings, as appropriate, including donor conferences to help ensure gender considerations are integrated in the development, prioritisation, coordination, and implementation of policies and programmes.”
- vii S/RES/2242(2015), OP16.
- viii S/RES/1325(2000), OP16; S/RES/2122(2013), OP1; S/RES/2122(2013), OP2; S/RES/2242(2015), OP5; S/RES/2122(2013), OP7.
- ix S/RES/2242(2015), OP13.
- x S/RES/2242(2015), OP11.
- xi S/RES/1820(2008), OP11.
- xii S/RES/1888(2009), OP22.
- xiii S/RES/2122(2013), OP7.
- xiv See: S/RES/1888(2009), OP22; S/RES/2122(2013), OP7; and S/RES/2242(2015), OP11.
- xv S/RES/1888(2009), OP22
- xvi S/RES/1325(2000), OP5.
- xvii S/RES/2242(2015), OP4.
- xviii S/RES/2493(2019), OP2.
- xix S/RES/1325(2000), OP8.
- xx See: S/RES/1889(2009), OP10. See also S/RES/2122(2013), OP10.
- xxi S/RES/2422(2015), OP7.
- xxii S/RES/1325(2000), OP7.
- xxiii S/RES/2242(2015), OP12.

Annex II: Sample research: Yemen research tables

Below, you'll find the tables we used to conduct research on the country-specific resolutions adopted around Yemen. We used two tables for this purpose.

In the first table, following the UN's methodology,²⁰ we collected all the references to certain terms and affixes (wom-, fem-, girl-, sex-, gender, CEDAW and the ten WPS UNSCRs) within the operative paragraphs of the country-specific resolutions on Yemen.

In the second table, we evaluated the references we collected in the first table. We asked: Are these references really WPS references? If so, are they strong WPS references?²¹

These tables can be created, and this method applied, for any set of country-specific resolutions.²²

²⁰ Learn more about this process by turning to pp. 5-6 of the *Where are the Words?* report.

²¹ For more on how to make this determination, turn to pp. 6-7 of the *Where are the Words?* report.

²² If you're conducting advocacy around the DRC, Libya or Syria – the other focus countries of this report – contact WILPF to obtain the research tables for these countries.

Table 1: Do Yemen UN Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs; SCRs) contain references to wom-, fem-, girl-, sex-, gender and the WPS UNSCRs?

UNSCR	Month	Year	Summary of each of the 13 UNSCRs adopted around the situation in Yemen, between the period of 2018-2019*	UN Methodology: Does this UNSCR contain any of the following affixes and/or terms: wom-, fem-, girl-, sex-, gender, CEDAW, + WPS UNSCRs (Yes = 1; No = 0)	Which operative paragraphs (OPs) contain these affixes and/or terms?
2014	Oct	2011	This resolution condemned “human rights violations by the Yemeni authorities” and “other actors” and stressed the need for accountability for these violations (OP2); demand ed compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law (OP5); demand ed the “immediate” rejection of violence “to achieve political aims” (OP3; OP7); and calls for the implementation of a political settlement based upon the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative (OP4; OP7).	1	1,6
2051	Jun	2012	This resolution demand ed an end to all actions “undermining the Government of National Unity and the political transition” (OP6); expressed the UNSC’s readiness to consider “Article 41” measures if necessary (OP6); and noted its support of the Implementation Mechanism and the second phase of the transition process (OP1; OP3; OP17) and, in particular, the National Dialogue Conference (OP3; OP4; OP5; OP17).	1	5
2140	Feb	2014	This resolution, taken under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, addresses the implementation of the political transition (OPs 2-9); establishes an asset freeze (OP11) and travel ban (OP15) to be applied to “individuals or entities... engaging in or providing support for acts that threaten the peace, security or stability of Yemen” (OP17); establishes a sanctions committee (OP19) and Panel of Experts (OP21); outlays designation criteria (OPs 17-18); addresses economic reform and development assistance to support the political transition (OPs 25-31); and outlines the UN’s further involvement (OPs 32-33). S/RES/2140(2014) is considered an extensive resolution on Yemen as it is comprised of 34 OPs (the highest number of OPs of any UNSCRs contained within this review).	1	3

UNSCR	Month	Year	Summary of each of the 13 UNSCRs adopted around the situation in Yemen, between the period of 2018-2019*	UN Methodology: Does this UNSCR contain any of the following affixes and/or terms: wom-, fem-, girl-, sex-, gender, CEDAW, + WPS UNSCRs (Yes = 1; No = 0)	Which operative paragraphs (OPs) contain these affixes and/or terms?
2201	Feb	2015	This resolution used strong language to deplore the Houthis' actions to dissolve parliament on 6 February and take over government institutions. It also expressed grave concern over reports of the use of child soldiers, and urged all parties to “accelerate inclusive United Nations-brokered negotiations” (OP5); urged agreement upon and public announcement of dates for completing the constitutional consultation process, to hold a referendum on the constitution, and to conduct elections (OP6); and declared the UNSC’s “readiness to take further steps in case of non-implementation” of the foregoing OPs.	0	X
2204	Feb	2015	This resolution renewed the assets freeze and travel ban until 26 February 2016 and the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 25 March 2016.	0	X
2216	Apr	2015	This resolution demand ed full implementation of S/RES/2201(2015) and further demand ed, among other measures, the withdrawal of Houthi forces from all areas they have seized, relinquishing of all additional arms seized and cessation of all actions that are “exclusively within the authority of the legitimate Government of Yemen” (OP1); decided to subject Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh, son of former President Saleh, and Abdulmalik al-Houthi, leader of the Houthi movement, to the travel ban and asset freeze (OP3); and established an arms embargo on the Houthis and forces loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh that all Member States shall implement. It also expanded the mandate of the Sanctions Committee and Panel of Experts accordingly (OPs 20-23).	1	13
2266	Feb	2016	This resolution renewed the asset freeze, travel ban and arms embargo until 26 February 2017 and the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 27 March 2017.	0	X
2342	Feb	2017	This resolution renewed the asset freeze, travel ban and arms embargo until 26 February 2018 and the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 28 March 2018.	0	X

UNSCR	Month	Year	Summary of each of the 13 UNSCRs adopted around the situation in Yemen, between the period of 2018-2019*	UN Methodology: Does this UNSCR contain any of the following affixes and/or terms: wom-, fem-, girl-, sex-, gender, CEDAW, + WPS UNSCRs (Yes = 1; No = 0)	Which operative paragraphs (OPs) contain these affixes and/or terms?
2402	Feb	2018	This resolution renewed the asset freeze, travel ban and arms embargo until 26 February 2019 and the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 28 March 2019.	0	X
2451	Dec	2018	This resolution endorsed the Stockholm Agreement (circulated as S/2018/1134) (OP3), called on all parties to fully respect the ceasefire in Hudaydah and authorized deployment of an advance team to begin monitoring and to support and facilitate the immediate implementation of the Stockholm Agreement, for an initial period of 30 days from the resolution's adoption (OP5).	1	4, 10
2452	Jan	2019	This established the UN Mission to support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA), as set out within the Stockholm agreement, for an initial period of six months from the date of the resolution's adoption.	0	X
2456	Feb	2019	This resolution renewed the asset freeze, travel ban and arms embargo until 26 February 2020 and the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 28 March 2020.	0	X
2481	Jul	2019	This resolution renewed the UNMHA mandate until 15 January 2020.	0	X
Total # of UNSCRs including WPS language, according to the UN's methodology:				5	
Total % of UNSCRs including WPS language, according to the UN's methodology:				38%	

* Resolutions on Yemen passed after 31 December 2019 were not included in this review.

Table 2: Are these references WPS references? How strong are these references?

We can apply this understanding by paying attention to certain features of the PPs and of the OPs when we review them.

How many references to review, in total? (in chronological order)	UNSCR	Year	OP	Text of all OPs within UNSCRs on the situation in Yemen adopted between 2018-2019 which contain WPS language*
1	2014	2011	1	Expresses profound regret at the hundreds of deaths, mainly of civilians, including women and children;
2	2014	2011	6	Calls upon all concerned parties to ensure the protection of women and children, to improve women's participation in conflict resolution and encourages all parties to facilitate the equal and full participation of women at decision-making levels;
3	2051	2012	5	Emphasizes the importance of conducting a fully-inclusive, participatory, transparent and meaningful National Dialogue Conference including with the youth and women's groups and calls upon all stakeholders in Yemen to participate actively and constructively in this process;
4	2140	2014	3	Encourages all constituencies in the country, including the youth movements, women's groups , in all regions in Yemen, to continue their active and constructive engagement in the political transition and to continue the spirit of consensus to implement the subsequent steps in the transition process and the recommendations of the National Dialogue Conference, and calls upon the Hiraak Southern movement, the Houthi movement and others to constructively partake and to reject the use of violence to achieve political aims;
5	2216	2015	13	Further requests the Secretary-General to intensify his good offices role in order to enable a resumption of a peaceful, inclusive, orderly and Yemeni-led political transition process that meets the legitimate demands and aspirations of the Yemeni people, including women , for peaceful change and meaningful political, economic and social reform, as set out in the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and Implementation Mechanism and the outcomes of the comprehensive National Dialogue conference, and stresses the importance of the United Nations' close coordination with international partners, in particular the Gulf Cooperation Council, Group of Ambassadors in Sana'a, and other actors, in order to contribute to a successful transition;
6	2451	2018	4	Welcomes the Special Envoy's presentation of a Framework for Negotiations in Stockholm following consultation with the parties, and further welcomes the Special Envoy's plan to discuss it during the next round of talks to pave the way for the resumption of formal negotiations towards a political solution and underlines the importance of the full participation of women and the meaningful engagement of youth in the political process;

How many references to review, in total? (in chronological order)	UNSCR	Year	OP	Text of all OPs within UNSCRs on the situation in Yemen adopted between 2018-2019 which contain WPS language*
7	2451	2018	10	Calls on all parties to the conflict to comply with applicable international law and to fulfil their obligations under international humanitarian law including to respect and protect medical facilities and personnel and their means of transportation, as such, and calls on them to protect civilian objects including schools and objects indispensable to the civilian population such as those necessary for food distribution, processing and storage, to withdraw any military personnel from civilian infrastructure, and to allow and facilitate the safe, rapid and unhindered access for humanitarian and medical personnel to all those in need, and reiterates that aid should be disbursed on the basis of need and be gender and age sensitive ;

*Any resolutions on Yemen between 2018-2019 that did not contain references to WPS were excluded from this table. Resolutions on Yemen passed after 31 December 2019 were not included in this review.

Annex III: Sample research: Country-specific references

In the snapshots of the operative paragraphs below, we see the WPS Agenda reflected in binding decisions around a country in which we may be working – DRC – and around a particular topic – transitional justice – on which we may be conducting advocacy towards the UN Security Council.

Critically, these decisions require “particular attention” to women.

The sample operative paragraphs below can therefore be connected to the operative paragraph from the WPS resolution referenced in the main text – S/RES/2467(2019), OP16(d) – to provide mutual support when conducting advocacy around transitional justice. The force of S/RES/2467(2019), OP16(d) (and the WPS Agenda as a whole) is increased by identifying its connections to binding decisions in country-specific resolutions, while the necessity of implementating the specific decisions outlined within the below operative paragraphs – and how this might be done – becomes more clear by connecting it to S/RES/2467(2019), OP16(d).

In other words, find that the below decisions around women and transitional justice do not just stand on their own. They are supported by the normative weight and textual history of the WPS Agenda, which also provides critical direction as to what “particular attention” to women in the transitional justice context should look like.

S/RES/1565(2004), OP5(g) states:

5. Decides that MONUC will also have the following mandate, in support of the Government of National Unity and Transition:

*(g) to assist in the promotion and protection of human rights, **with particular attention to women**, children and vulnerable persons, investigate human rights violations to put an end to impunity, and continue to cooperate with efforts to ensure that those responsible for serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law are brought to justice, while working closely with the relevant agencies of the United Nations;*

S/RES/1756(2007), OP3(c) states:

3. Decides that MONUC will also have the mandate, in close cooperation with the Congolese authorities, the United Nations country team and donors, to support the strengthening of democratic institutions and the rule of law in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and, to that end, to:

*(c) Assist in the promotion and protection of human rights, **with particular attention to women**, children and vulnerable persons, investigate human rights violations with a view to putting an end to impunity, **assist in the development and implementation of a transitional justice strategy**, and cooperate in national and international efforts to bring to justice perpetrators of grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law;*

S/RES/1856(2008), OP4(c) states:

4. Decides that MONUC will also have the mandate, in close cooperation with the Congolese authorities, the United Nations Country Team and donors, to support the strengthening of democratic institutions and the rule of law and, to that end, to:

*(c) Assist in the promotion and protection of human rights, **with particular attention to women**, children and vulnerable persons, investigate human rights violations and publish its findings, as appropriate, with a view to putting an end to impunity, **assist in the development and implementation of a transitional justice strategy**, and cooperate in national and international efforts to bring to justice perpetrators of grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law;*

As feminist activists, we already know that the UN Security Council is not effective in carrying forward the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda in practice, despite its commitments to do so.

If they had been, the world would look quite different today.

In this guide, we support activists to strengthen their advocacy and understandings of the UN Security Council and take steps towards holding the UN system accountable for its commitments on the WPS Agenda.

