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Rule of Law/Sexual Violence in Conflict



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## High-Level Launch of the global Network and Community of Practice for Prosecutors and Practitioners Pursuing Criminal Accountability for Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV Prosecution Network)

On the margins of the seventieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women

Monday, 9 March 2026 | 4:45PM-6:00PM | CR-2, United Nations Headquarters, New York

### Background

For over fifteen years, the United Nations Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict (TOE), co-led by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (OSRSG-SVC), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), has supported more than thirty Member States in advancing justice through the investigation and prosecution of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). Mandated by Security Council resolution 1888 (2009), the TOE is the only global UN mechanism established to provide specialized rule of law assistance to national institutions to deliver accountability for CRSV.

Working in conflict and post-conflict contexts as diverse as the Central African Republic (CAR), Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Guinea, Iraq, Mali, Nigeria, South Sudan, Syria, and Ukraine, the TOE has witnessed the transformative power of national justice systems when they are capacitated and survivor-centered. In these contexts, national prosecutors have brought landmark cases under domestic and universal jurisdiction, forged innovative cross-border partnerships, and amplified survivors' voices in criminal proceedings. These efforts have widened access to justice for survivors of serious international crimes and strengthened the foundations of peace.

After 15 years, we are at a crossroads: we can either build on these national successes to establish a "new normal" where perpetrators expect accountability for CRSV or risk allowing these prosecution successes to remain an isolated victory. At the national level, prosecutors and investigators who pursue accountability for CRSV show great courage and resilience, often working in isolation, facing complex operational, security and

legal challenges without access to comparative experience or specialized support. Survivors of CRSV are amongst those facing the greatest hurdles to report and access justice, making sexual violence one of the most efficient and cost-free tactics of war and terror.

To bridge this gap and respond to repeated requests for dedicated specialized support from justice practitioners and Member States, the TOE initiated two years ago the creation of a global Network and Community of Practice for Prosecutors and Practitioners Pursuing Criminal Accountability for CRSV (CRSV Prosecution Network) — the first global, practitioner-led network devoted to this issue. In March 2024, the TOE convened a foundational international conference of prosecutors working on CRSV in The Hague, The Netherlands, whose conclusions recommended the establishment of such a Network. Several rounds of consultations with prosecutors and legal practitioners subsequently helped identify the practical needs of this specialized community and a practical way forward.

Guided by these consultations, the TOE finalized in 2025 the blueprint for a global Network. It is grounded in two mutually reinforcing pillars:

- A Practice Centre: A publicly accessible digital platform housing a unique global CRSV jurisprudence database, together with a multimedia repository of practical tools, thematic resources, and scenario-based training materials. The practice center will act as a one stop center of reference for all justice professionals working on CRSV prosecutions at national level.
- A Peer-to-Peer Knowledge Exchange Community: A secure, membership-based forum enabling prosecutors and legal practitioners to exchange experiences, troubleshoot challenges, and collaborate in real time.

Both pillars are now ready for activation.

This year's CSW70 theme, "Ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls", presents the perfect opportunity for Member States to join the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten, the Team of Experts, and its co-leads in launching this Network. The launch will occur during a high-level ministerial event and be complemented by the inauguration of a photo exhibit. The high-level ministerial event will present the new Network platform and its benefits to national judicial authorities and underscore that advancing justice for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence is central to realizing gender equality, strengthening the rule of law, and building sustainable peace.

This high-level event will mark a foundational moment for prosecutors working on cases of conflict-related sexual violence and for survivors seeking justice. It will send a clear political message about ending impunity, inaugurate the new online tools, and activate the global CRSV Prosecution Network. This initiative demonstrates how digital innovation and practitioner solidarity can transform access to justice for survivors worldwide.

## Objectives

### The event aims to:

- Formally launch the CRSV Prosecution Network — release its online platform, unveiling its functions, partners and founding members; and showcase the features of the newly created CRSV jurisprudence database anchored in the Sharing Electronic Resources and Laws on Crime (SHERLOC) portal maintained by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).
- Invite all Member States and their national judicial authorities to join the network to enhance access to justice for survivors of CRSV.

- Showcase how practitioner networks and digital tools have successfully enhanced access to justice and accountability for CRSV, notably within national domestic jurisdictions.
- Highlight the leadership of national prosecutors from diverse jurisdictions advancing CRSV prosecutions.
- Amplify survivor perspectives from conflict and post-conflict settings, underscoring access to justice as a pathway to recovery and non-repetition.
- Mobilize Member States and partners to provide the initiative sustained support for the 2026–2030 period.

## Proposed Agenda (60 minutes)

**16:45–16:55 Buffer/Introduction** (some participants will join from the General Debate)

**16:55–17:05 Opening Segment**

- Moderator: Senior UN official/Member State (TBC)
- Opening Remarks: Ms. Pramila Patten, SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict

**17:05–17:20 Statements: Advancing Access to Justice through Judicial Cooperation** (List TBC)

- Member State TBC
- Member State TBC
- Member State TBC
- Member State TBC

**17:20–17:35 Presentation and Launch of the CRSV Prosecution Network**

- Ms. Chloé Marnay-Baszanger, Principal Human Rights Officer and Team Leader, UN TOE  
Live demonstration of the Practice Centre and Online Platform as well as CRSV jurisprudence database (jointly with UNODC)

**17:35–17:50 Prosecuting Conflict-Related Sexual Violence – From Isolation to Connection** (List TBC)

- Prosecutor
- Prosecutor
- Victim Representative

Moderator: TBC

**17:50–17:55 Closing Segment: A Call to Action**

- Representative of Sponsor Government(s).

**17:55–18:00 Buffer** (to absorb possible delays)

## Expected Outcomes

- Official inauguration and public demonstration of the CRSV Prosecution Network.
- New members joining in.
- Renewed political commitment to justice for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, aligned with CSW70's access-to-justice theme.
- Strengthened cooperation among national prosecutors, survivor advocates, and UN entities.

- Commitments to sustain and expand the CRSV Prosecution Network as a global platform for practitioner exchange (2026–2030).

## **Organizers and Partners**

Co-Organizers: The Governments of Austria, Belgium, Estonia, Germany, Latvia, and Slovenia in collaboration with the United Nations Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, supported by the TOE co-leads DPO (TBC), OHCHR, and UNDP, and by UNODC.

Co-sponsors (in alphabetical order): Colombia, the European Union, Finland, Greece, Lithuania (final list of co-sponsors TBC at a later stage).

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