

## Concept Note

# Commemoration of the 15-Year Anniversary of the Establishment of the Mandate on Sexual Violence in Conflict

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### **Date & Time:**

Wednesday 23 October 2024, 10 a.m. 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. 6 p.m.

### **Location:**

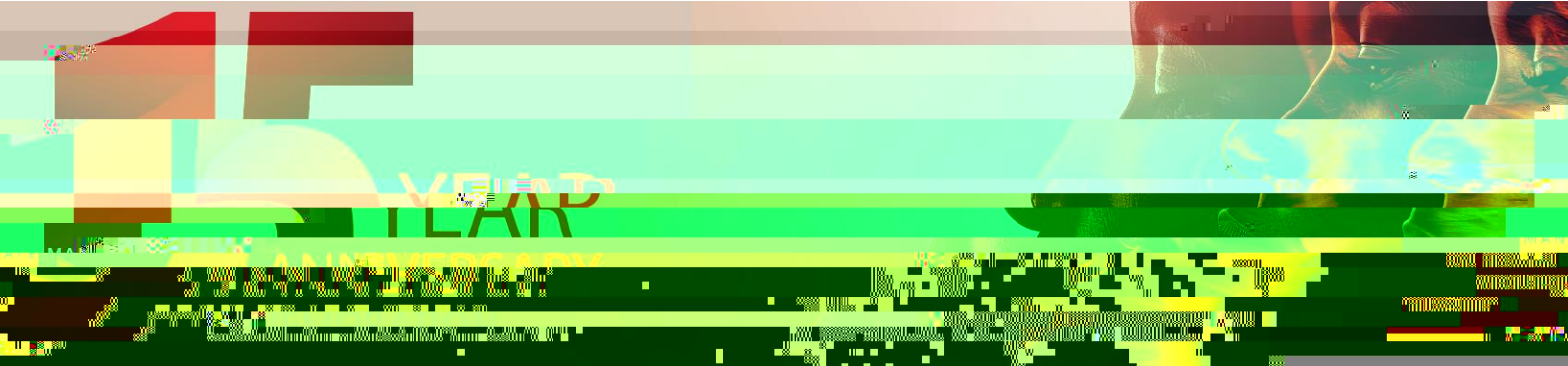
ECOSOC Chamber, United Nations Headquarters, New York, USA

### **Co-hosted by:**

The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (OSRSG-SVC) and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Government of Norway, the Government of Sierra Leone, the Government of Switzerland, the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of the United States of America.

### **Background:**

In 2024, the United Nations marks the 15-year anniversary of the establishment of the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict established through the unanimous adoption of **Security Council resolution 1888 (2009)**. This resolution called for a **Special Representative** to provide coherent and strategic leadership to UN efforts to address sexual violence in conflict, while promoting cooperation and coordination of efforts among all relevant stakeholders, primarily through the interagency initiative **UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict (UN Action)**. It iative



information sharing and efforts to avoid gaps and overlaps in the UN system-wide response at both headquarters and country levels.<sup>1</sup>

Security Council resolution 1888 also established a **Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict (TOE)** to strengthen institutional safeguards against impunity for these crimes and to help build the capacity of national justice and security sectors that have been weakened by war. It further mandated the deployment of dedicated **Women's Protection Advisers (WPAs)** to the field to enhance monitoring, reporting and response efforts, including dialogue with the parties to armed conflict to obtain concrete and time-bound protection commitments. Together, the SRSR, the UN Action network, the TOE and WPAs form an integrated prevention and response architecture to address the scourge of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV).

The most recent annual *Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (S/2024/292)*, covering the year 2023, compiled by the OSRSG-SVC, spans 21 settings of concern. Moreover, the Annex to the report lists 50 State and non-State armed groups who are credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for patterns of sexual violence in

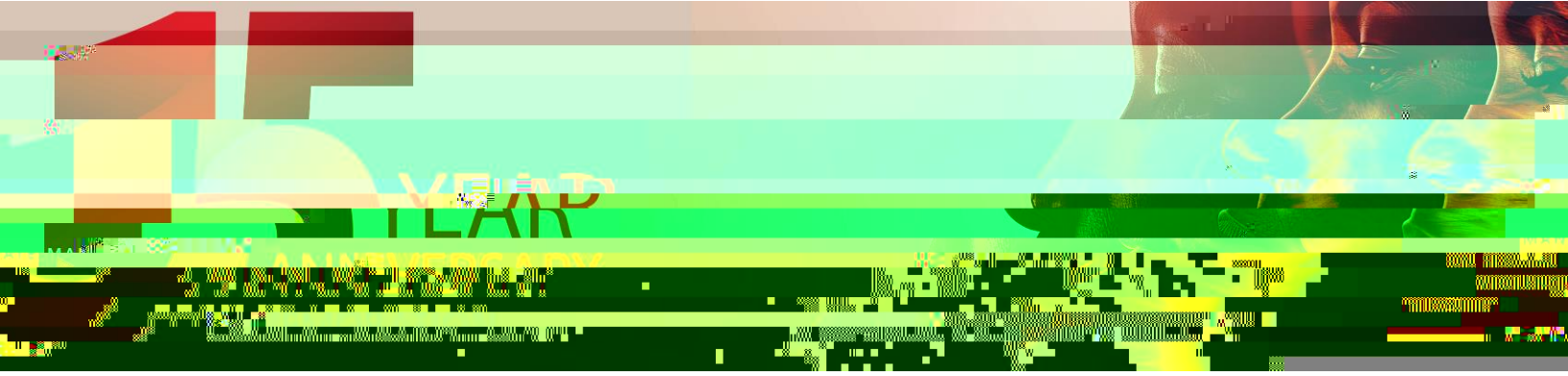
repeatedly listed for several years as the violations continue unabated and the required corrective and remedial measures are yet to be adopted.

The intervening decade has seen a dramatic **paradigm and perspective shift** in the treatment of conflict-related sexual violence, which is now understood as a threat to both individual and collective security, and an impediment to the restoration of peace. This has lent a new sense of

- Today, the concept of conflict-related sexual violence, as a **war crime, crime against humanity and/or constituent act of genocide that cannot be amnestied** in the context of peace negotiations and transitional justice processes, has gained widespread acceptance. The **circle of stakeholders** has expanded considerably to embrace new and non-traditional actors, such as peace negotiators and mediators, military and police, peacekeeping personnel, ceasefire monitors, sanctions experts, war crimes investigators, and religious and traditional leaders, working alongside human rights. The effect has been to give security actors new responsibilities and victims/survivors of conflict-related sexual violence new avenues for accountability and action.

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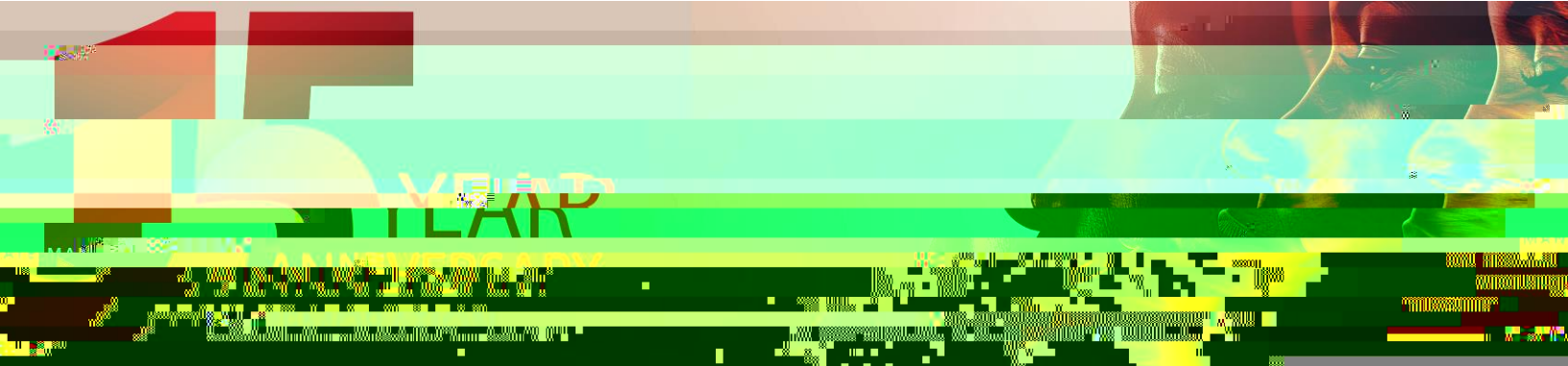
<sup>1</sup> The UN Action network currently consists of the following 26 members: CTED, DPPA, DPO, IOM, ITC, ILO, UN-HABITAT, UNOCHA, OHCHR, OSAPG, OSRSG-CAAC, OSRSG-VAC, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNEP, UNDGC, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODA, UNODC, UN Women, UNOCT, UN Youth Office, WFP, and WHO.



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agenda, such as overcoming stigma; psychosocial support and mental health care in the context of a survivor-centered approach; justice, accountability and reparations; the plight and rights of children born of wartime rape; sexual violence as a tactic of terrorism and political repression; and sexual violence in the context of human trafficking including to fund and fuel the operations of transnational criminal, armed and terrorist groups.

- < Encourage Member States, including members of the UN Security Council, representatives of UN Regional Groups and the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security, youth delegates, UN entities and civil society representatives to make interventions highlighting their contributions to this agenda, **share good practices and lessons learnt**, and **pledge renewed political and financial support to the next phase of the mandate**.
- < Help to shape, and give momentum to a **forward-looking Agenda for Action**, which will set the stage for the coming years.

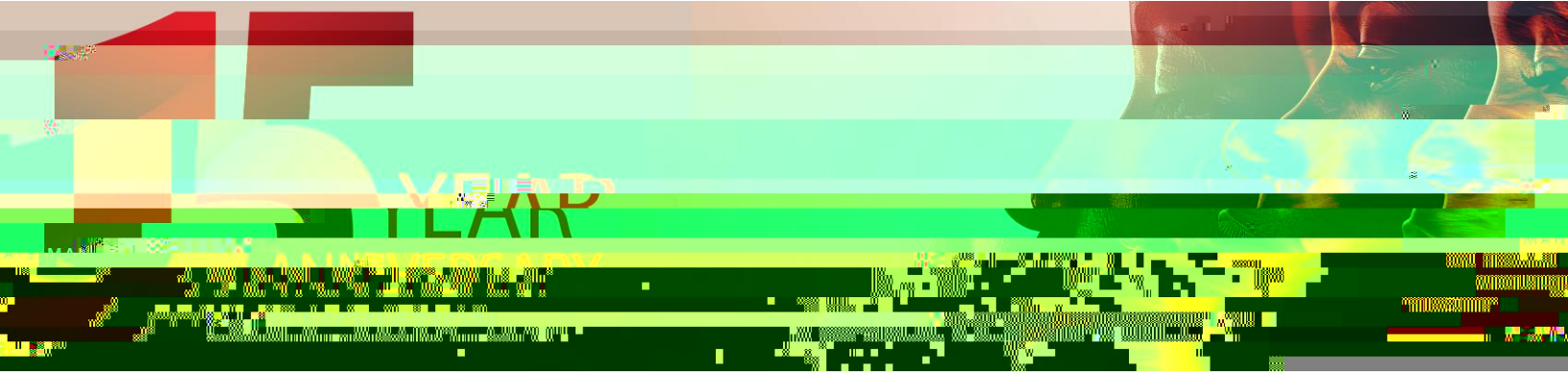
### **Participants & Target Audience:**

Full realization of the aims of Security Council resolution 1888 (2009) will require the strategic coordination of efforts by a range of informed policy-makers and implementing partners. The event will therefore bring together representatives from **Governments, the UN system, NGOs and academics** for a day of commemoration, reflection and renewed commitment. Participation at the level of Permanent Representative or Deputy Permanent Representative is encouraged.

The event is planned to coincide with the **week of the annual Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security (WPS)**, to be chaired by the Confederation of Switzerland as President of the Security Council. Ministers, experts, civil society representatives and UN officials who will be in New York for this Open Debate are encouraged to attend the anniversary commemoration.

### **Media:**

The event will be **webcast live** on UN Web TV (<https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1q/k1q98uvrrs>) and archived on the website of the Office of the SRSG-SVC ([www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict](http://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict)). It is **open to UN-accredited media**.



The event will also be promoted through a **social media campaign** and participants are welcome to cross0a/MCID 1/2605BDC q611.95 0 0 143.95 0 647.55 cm/Image9 Do EMC /Span 0 g0 G. g55S EMC /Sp