



**COOPERATION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON
SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT
AND
THE UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA**

The Office of the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (the Office of the Special Representative) and the University of Ottawa, through the Gender, Peace and Security Collaboratory, hereinafter referred to collectively as the “Parties”, have agreed to sign this Cooperation Agreement, hereinafter referred to as the “Agreement”, which represents a statement of intent by the Parties to work together and sets out the Parties’ general understanding of key areas of collaboration between them.

Preamble

- The Office of the Special Representative is an office of the United Nations Secretariat that supports the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, hereinafter referred to as “the Special Representative” whose role is to provide coherent and strategic leadership, to work effectively to strengthen existing United Nations coordination mechanisms, and to engage in advocacy efforts, *inter alia*, with governments, including military and judicial representatives, as well as with all parties to armed conflict and civil society, in order to address, at both headquarters and country level, sexual violence in armed conflict. The mandate of the Special Representative was established by United Nations Security Council resolution 1888 (2009), which reaffirms that women and girls are particularly targeted by the use of sexual violence as a tactic of war and emphasises that this crime is a threat to international peace and security.
- The Special Representative chairs the United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict Network, which is currently comprised of 24 United Nations entities. Her work is also supported by the United Nations Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, which functions as an operational arm of the mandate.
- The Special Representative has established three strategic priorities for the mandate, namely: (i) converting cultures of impunity into cultures of justice and accountability through consistent and effective prosecution; (ii) fostering national ownership and leadership for a sustainable, survivor-centred response; and (iii) addressing the root causes of conflict-related sexual violence with structural gender inequality and discrimination, poverty, and marginalisation as some of its invisible drivers in times of peace and war.

- All initiatives, including programmes and advocacy undertaken in pursuit of the conflict-related sexual violence mandate, take a survivor-centred approach, which at its core, entails the centering of the needs of survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.
- The University of Ottawa is a bilingual (English and French) post-secondary educational institution incorporated pursuant to The University of Ottawa Act, 1965 Statutes of Ontario 1965, Chapter 137 and is located in Ottawa, Canada. The University of Ottawa offers a wide variety of academic programs, administered by ten faculties. The University of Ottawa engages in research that is founded on excellence, relevance and impact and is conducted in a spirit of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- The University of Ottawa is unique for its internationally distinctive interdisciplinary expertise in regional and international security and development. Its community of scholars creates a nexus of intersectional methodological expertise, theoretical innovation, and a vast network of community and policy partners.
- In support of Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security and to facilitate the required surge of ideas, vision, and strategic thinking, the University of Ottawa proposed the creation of a Gender, Peace and Security Collaboratory: an open, creative space of innovation to foster partnerships amongst researchers, practitioners, policymakers, community activists, and Indigenous partners that can generate solutions to challenges under the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Recognising that partnerships with academic institutions are critical in bolstering efforts to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence, including by addressing knowledge gaps;

Acknowledging the need to produce, share, and disseminate innovative and transformational research on conflict-related sexual violence to inform policy and practice;

Responding positively to the call of the United Nations Secretary General through the Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030) for multi-stakeholder partnerships (Goal 17) to facilitate the participation of all sectors of society in the process of 'localising' the Sustainable Development Goals;

The Office of the Special Representative seeks to collaborate with the University of Ottawa as part of its efforts to tackle the root causes and prevent the occurrence of conflict-related sexual violence. It is essential that efforts toward conflict prevention, resolution, and peacebuilding, including preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence, are informed by the latest research findings of leading academic and research institutions. Academic research contributes to providing a comprehensive understanding of the nature and prevalence of conflict-related sexual violence, its impact on individuals, communities and societies as well as effective strategies for prevention and response. Collaboration with research institutions can help to ensure that research findings are effectively integrated into policies and programming, through regular information-exchange, technical collaboration and joint problem-solving, using modern and innovative technologies.

The Context

- As conflicts continue to rage, sexual violence continues to be used as a tactic of war, terrorism, and political repression, designed not only to inflict bodily harm on survivors/victims but also to terrify, dominate, humiliate, and degrade them, their families, and communities.
- Sexual violence has serious and multiple health, social, and economic repercussions for survivors/victims, as well as their social networks and communities. Widespread and systematic sexual violence hampers post-conflict recovery by inflicting lasting physical and psychological scars on survivors/victims, marginalising and excluding them from the workforce. It often turns survivors/victims into social outcasts, fracturing families and corroding community structures. Stigma and victim-blaming are compounded by a historical absence of accountability.

Key Areas of Collaboration

- The Parties will collaborate to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence through knowledge and capacity transfer, with an emphasis on addressing specific gaps in the Women, Peace and Security agenda. The University of Ottawa's Gender, Peace and Security Collaboratory will support the Office of the Special Representative in its efforts to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence, *inter alia*, by:
 - i. Producing robust, transformational, and critical **research on conflict-related sexual violence** and related topics of the wider Women, Peace and Security agenda. The focus of this research shall be on under-explored fields of study, including but not limited to the use of digital tools for conflict-related sexual violence prevention and response as well as survivor-centred protection of and support to diverse groups of victims such as girls, men and boys as well as vulnerable populations, such as Indigenous groups, the LGBTQIA+ community, children (born of conflict-related rape), and people with disabilities.¹
 - ii. Integrating **academic courses and modules on conflict-related sexual violence** and related topics of the wider Women, Peace and Security agenda into the academic course programme of the University of Ottawa.
 - iii. Creating of a (physical and/or virtual) **space with customised tools** for co-training and engaging national, international, Indigenous and Global South students, researchers, grassroots activists, community mobilisers, thinktanks, and policymakers on gender, peace and security issues, including conflict-related sexual violence.
 - iv. Establishing and chairing an **academic consultation committee on conflict-related sexual violence**, which will advise the Office of the Special Representative, through regular and ad-hoc consultation and exchange. The consultation committee shall consist of academics, researchers, and practitioners from a variety of academic and research institutions, which have demonstrated novelty and excellence in the area of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. At least half of the seats on the advisory committee shall be

¹ Conflict-related sexual violence disproportionately affects women and girls. Rightfully so, there has been a significant amount of research dedicated to understanding the victimisation and impact of this crime on women and girls. However, there are still significant gaps in our understanding of the experiences and needs of other types of vulnerable groups. In order to effectively address the needs of *all* survivors, it is crucial to produce more robust knowledge on the specificities of these vulnerable groups and how conflict-related sexual violence impacts them.

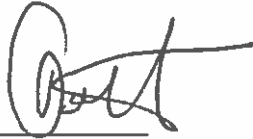
- filled by representatives from the Global South, conflict-affected regions, and/or marginalised communities, including Indigenous groups.
- v. Launching and coordinating a joint **Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Visiting Fellowship Programme** for early- and/or mid-career researchers, practitioners, and activists from the Global South and/or marginalised communities who have demonstrated commitment to advance the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Visiting Fellows shall spend 6-12 months researching at the University of Ottawa (physical) and 6 months supporting the work of the Office of the Special Representative at the United Nations Secretariat (physical or virtual).
 - vi. Providing **advisory and technical support** to the Office of the Special Representative, *inter alia*, in designing and developing innovative online training modules on conflict-related sexual violence; in developing a global Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements (MARA) database to ensure the systematic gathering of conflict-related sexual violence data in line with the survivor-centred approach; and in developing knowledge products on conflict-related sexual violence and related topics of the wider Women, Peace and Security agenda.

General Provisions

- The Parties affirm that their collaboration will be in full accordance with the values upheld by the United Nations system.
- Implementation of the areas of cooperation in this Agreement will be subject to the availability of sufficient financial and human resources for that purpose and will be conducted in a gender- and culturally sensitive manner, in compliance with the Parties' programme of work, priority activities, principles, internal rules, regulations, policies, administrative procedures, and practices.
- The Parties commit to promoting and communicating joint activities to relevant audiences in a spirit of collaboration and joint ownership.
- As part of this collaboration, intellectual property applicable to each jurisdiction will apply, and issues of intellectual property will be handled on a case-by-case basis, with the basic governing principles: 1) Background intellectual property will remain the property of the organisation which owns it, though arrangements may be entered into as part of any project or programme and; 2) Parties will do their best to act in coherence with the University of Ottawa's philosophy to promote free, open, and shared access to knowledge for any intellectual property developed for the purpose of this collaboration. The Parties commit to upholding data protection legal requirements that are applicable to them in their governing jurisdictions and, to the extent possible and where practical, the Parties will use reasonable efforts to go over and above such applicable legal requirements.
- The effective commencement date of this Agreement will be the date of its signing by both of the Parties and will expire 5 years following such date, unless one of the Parties provides the other Party with 30 (thirty) calendar days written notice of termination prior to the expiry. This Agreement may be amended only by written approval from all participating Parties, and the decision to amend the agreement shall include the date of the amendment, the signatures of appointed representatives of each party, and any new terms and conditions amended or added to this agreement.

- This Agreement is not legally binding on the Parties, is not intended to create legal or enforceable obligations on the Parties.

IN WITNESS WHERE OF THE PARTIES HERETO EXECUTE THIS AGREEMENT:



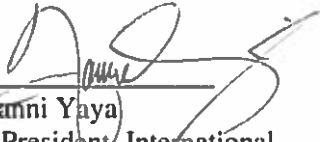
Dr. Pramila Patten
Under-Secretary-General and
Special Representative of the Secretary-General
on Sexual Violence in Conflict

Date: May 2, 2023



Dr. Jacques Frémont
President and Vice-Chancellor
University of Ottawa

Date: May 2, 2023



Dr. Sanni Yaya
Vice-President, International
and Francophonie
University of Ottawa

Date: May 2, 2023