

STUDENT WORKSHEET #1

Timeline: International Law, Sexual Violence, and Speaking Up

(2 pages)

Purpose: This timeline helps you understand the key events leading up to U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand's speech at the United Nations on 12/4/23.

Key Events Timeline

1948

- The United Nations adopts the [UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights -1948](#)
- It does not specifically name rape or sexual assault as a war crime.

June 2008

- The UN passes [UN Security Council Resolution 1820 \(2008\) – Amendment recognizing sexual violence as a war crime](#)
- Sexual violence is officially recognized as a war crime and a threat to international peace.

October 7, 2023

- Terrorists attack Israel.
- Footage, evidence, self and eyewitness reports show that terrorists raped Israeli and foreign national women during the attack.

October–December 2023

- Despite [UN Security Council Resolution 1820 \(2008\) – Amendment recognizing sexual violence as a war crime](#), the UN as an international body, does not publicly condemn the sexual violence.

December 1, 2023:

- [UN Women finally condemns sexual violence on 10/7/23](#)

December 4, 2023

- U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) speaks at the United Nations, criticizing the UN's silence.
- [Speech: Senator Kirsten Gillibrand Speaks Out on Sexual Violence used on 10/7/23 Attacks at Special UN Meeting, 12-4-23](#)

March 4, 2024

- The UN releases a report acknowledging evidence that terrorists did use rape as a crime of war on 10/7/23 against Israeli women and foreign nationals: [UN Report Says Hamas Used Rape as Crime of War, 3/5/24](#).

Quick Think Question

- Why might silence from a powerful organization be concerning when human rights violations occur?



Photo: U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, official U.S. Senate portrait. Public domain image via Wikimedia Commons.