



GENEVA CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Commemoration of the International Day of Women in Diplomacy

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

H.E. Ms. Claudia FUENTES JULIO, Vice-President of the UN Human Rights Council, and Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations in Geneva

The annual full day discussion on the human rights of women is held pursuant to UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) Resolutions 6/30 and 58/15. The theme of the second panel is the Commemoration of the International Day of Women in Diplomacy, focussing on **overcoming barriers to women's leadership in peace processes**. This debate is accessible to persons with disabilities through the provision of international sign interpretation and real-time captioning, alongside other accessibility measures.

The UNHRC gathers today to commemorate the International Day of Women in Diplomacy, and it is also 25 years since the United Nations called for **equal participation by women in peace and security**. Today, the UNHRC reflects what is needed to overcome the deep-rooted barriers that prevent women participating in diplomacy and look at how to transform decision-making processes. As a woman in diplomacy, H.E. Ms. Claudia FUENTES JULIO has the honour to chair the first formal panel on Women and Human Rights at the UNHRC. In times of international crisis and the rise in conflict, **true peace requires the participation of women**.



OPENING REMARKS

Ms. Nada AL-NASHIF, United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights

At this critical juncture, at a time of existential threats, we find ourselves facing an unprecedented peril, a unique opportunity at the edge of a precipice. Military power can be a deterrent, but there are countless examples where it has failed to prevent conflict and achieve its immediate desired outcomes guided by national interests, leading to dramatic unintended consequences. More than ever, therefore, we need to reinvest in the **power of diplomacy**.

Diplomacy is the chief instrument of a state's foreign and trade policy. It can make the **difference between war and peace**, between exerting influence or being trampled and ignored, between sustainable prosperity or exploitation that degrades both our environment and our dignity. Clearly, representation matters. Diplomats need to be the very best possible representatives of their society, named from the very widest possible talent pool. They must also be able to reflect and distil the needs, the rights, the lived experiences of all their people. But do they?

Women, in all their diversity, have worked in diplomacy for generations. The Deputy High Commission mentions Ms. Halima El Ouarzazi of Morocco and Ms. Belela Herrera of Uruguay, of whom recently passed away, as two examples among the many that we cherish. Both dedicated their life to diplomacy, to multilateralism and human rights, at a time when it was mostly a man's world. Today, there are just **30 women foreign ministers** around the world, only 15 percent, and only 20 percent of ambassadors globally are women.

Women's contributions, as well as their right to participate equally, are often overlooked and undermined. Women diplomats continue to face **multiple barriers**, particularly in the military and security sectors, as well as at the very top rungs of the ladder. Given the disproportionate and differentiated impact of conflict and crises on women and their greater exposure to economic shocks, this discrimination damages these critical diplomatic processes.

In fact, when women do not have an equal place at the table, we all lose. That was the impetus behind Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted 25 years ago. Time and again, research has shown the benefits of **women's diplomatic leadership**. A global study conducted by **UN Women** 10 years ago found that women's participation increased by 20 percent the probability of a peace agreement lasting at least two years, and increased by 35 percent the probability of a peace agreement lasting 15 years. The math is clear. Analysis of 40 peace processes since the end of the Cold War indicated that when women had a strong role in negotiations, agreement was far more likely to be reached. Research also suggests that countries with greater gender equality are much more likely to resolve conflicts peacefully and without military force.

Yet, despite all these very obvious advantages, an **overwhelming domination of men** is still the norm in decisions relating to war and negotiations relating to peace, as you can see from this data. Meanwhile, women human rights defenders and women-led organisations that have worked as peace builders for years on bare-bones funding are facing very serious cuts, with entire programmes at jeopardy. We are also seeing increasingly coordinated, well-resourced, and **overt pushback** in countries against the equality and human rights of women, of girls, and gender-diverse people. In areas affected by conflict, violence against women, including conflict-related



sexual violence is on the rise, and everywhere we see increasing threats against women who speak their minds. This situation must change urgently.

In **Colombia**, OHCHR's office works closely with Indigenous and local communities to ensure broad and meaningful consultations and national action plans on women, peace, and security. In **eastern DRC**, we have facilitated the establishment of a group of influential women from the DRC, Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda, working together on a roadmap that addresses the root causes of conflict, which was presented to the Rwanda mediation process. Together with partners, OHCHR has trained over **100 women mediators** operating in 17 territories. In **Ethiopia**, OHCHR has supported over 120 women leaders in peace building through training and advocacy, while in **Sudan**, OHCHR continues to facilitate the participation of women, notably in peace talks in Geneva. In **Syria**, OHCHR is working to amplify the role played by women human rights defenders in transitional justice, a journey that Syrians are now fully embarking on and that we are committed to accompanying.

As the **new Agenda for Peace** affirms, securing equal participation by women in all decision-making and transforming gender-based power dynamics in peace and security will result in giant steps forward towards sustaining peace. On the occasion of the International Day of Women in Diplomacy, the Deputy High Commissioner calls on all member states to urgently take all the required measures to facilitate women's meaningful participation and ensure parity in all aspects and levels of decision-making on peace and security and in public life.

STATEMENTS BY PANELLISTS

Ms. Amrita KAPUR, Secretary-General of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

All along 25 years of the WPS Agenda, we have seen women carve out and fight to retain space in peace processes, shaped by the very inequalities that fuel conflict. Their persistence and leadership is remarkable, but it should not need to be. It should be embedded in our systems as a standard, not an exception. Yet too often we have seen over time that women's participation has often been tokenistic and unequal.

Despite decades of advocacy for systemic change, women are still often **relegated to consultative or observer roles, siloed into gender issues**, which is often code for women's issues, or included without real influence. These contributions are frequently seen as non-binding and seen as extra, first to disappear when space or funding contracts. This **shrinking space for women's leadership** reflects a deeper problem.

The root causes of conflict around the world remain unaddressed, politically, financially, and systemically. From its foundation in 1915, WILPF has emphasised that to break cycles of violence, we must address the drivers of conflict, unequal and discriminatory systems, militarism, and a dominant view of security that is rooted in power and force rather than injustice and equality. And five years ago, on the WPS anniversary in 2020, WILPF's analysis reconfirmed that **the same structural barriers** to women's meaningful participation remain.



Militarism and militarisation, **patriarchal resistance to change**, and lack of accountability, particularly for implementation of commitments. These challenges have only deepened, and while everything seems to have changed from 2020 to today, in many ways nothing has. So today we are living the consequences of ignoring these root causes of conflict.

In **Palestine**, we are witnessing an 18-month-long genocidal campaign met not with accountability or action, but with continued arms transfers to Israel, disregard for international legal obligations, and complicity in Israel's commission of international crimes. Elsewhere, hyper-masculine power-centred nationalism escalates tensions in places like **Iran, Israel, Ukraine, and India-Pakistan**. In all of these conflicts, **patriarchal militarism** is dominating, while inclusive rights-based approaches are marginalised or dismissed.

What to do when this dominant model is fuelling conflict after conflict? First, we must recognise that we have decades of evidence on what works. This is not just for resolving conflict temporarily, but for building genuine, inclusive, and sustainable peace founded on the protection of human rights, which prevents the recurrence of conflict itself. When women are meaningfully and effectively involved and their participation and decision-making capacities are facilitated, **women raise early warnings of violence**, they support de-escalation, they help prevent human rights violations and societal collapse.

These are not marginal contributions, they are essential. Women's leadership can be transformative, not when women are brought into broken systems, but when they are empowered to reimagine peace and governance itself. When women from diverse identities and backgrounds have the space to build alternatives to patriarchal and corrupt political models, they create new pathways to peace that are rooted in justice and human rights. The evidence is clear, as was just stated. When women participate meaningfully and in peace processes, the resulting **agreements are more inclusive, more rights-based**, and more sustainable.

But this transformation cannot happen without support from states and the UN. UN Women's recent publication shows that within six months, **50% of women's organisations** working in fragile and conflict-affected contexts **will cease to exist**¹. The current trend of accelerated military spending is clearly at the expense of this critical work.

States and UN entities must therefore guarantee that women's participation in peace and political processes is **substantive and influential, not symbolic**, most importantly, by safeguarding civil space, especially in the face of backlash against feminist movements, women human rights defenders, and anti-gender attacks; reallocating military budgets to provide predictable, flexible, and sustainable funding for women's rights and feminist organisations, particularly those working at the grassroots level. Again, this is not just because they are women, this is because it works. This is because they have deep expertise, they have **community embeddedness**, and they have the wisdom to understand what it takes to build inclusive and sustainable peace.

Further, states and the UN entities need to take explicit measures to **hold the global arms trade and arms exporters accountable** for the impact of the weapons they are selling, and promote

¹ [New survey shows half of women's organizations aiding women in crises may shut down in six months due to global aid cuts | UN Women – Europe and Central Asia](#)



the full and effective participation of women in arms control and disarmament processes and fora. Systematically integrating human rights, peace, and women peace and security commitments, including across UN structures, to overcome the current siloed approach is important because it ensures that we make sure that the erosion across all normative interrelated frameworks is halted.

Women's leadership must be fully **institutionalised in peace processes**. That includes closing the gender gap in negotiating teams, implementing survivor-centred justice, and embedding gender equality into every stage of peace building. These are critical, not just for conflict peace building processes, but to prevent conflict in the future. It is not just about inclusion, it is about **rethinking peace itself**, and what steps we take today that are actually connected to peace, rather than fulfilling certain checklists, certain procedural requirements. In this way, by addressing the structural root causes of conflict, inequality, exclusion, and militarism, we build a peace that is not only more inclusive, but also more resilient and just.

Ms. Negina YARI, Executive Director of Window for Hope and Human Rights Defender from Afghan Women's Coordination Umbrella

Negina is a peace builder, a human rights activist, a community member. She exists and continues to survive despite three years and 10 months since the Taliban's takeover. She is surviving without access to any fundamental human rights. **No education, no work, no mobility, no political voice**. She asks herself for how long will she and other Afghan women remain invisible? The women of Afghanistan are the reality of the country. They are also affected by the current global crisis, economically, socially, and politically. With every passing day, Negina and other Afghan women lose more air to breathe.

Afghan women not only left out of the ongoing political process, they are being **deliberately erased from any and every political processes**, and any processes which is about Negina's country and her future. Women's participation in politics and peace building and civil society is now effectively criminalised. This exclusion is not happening accidentally. It is systematic and structure-based. In the key ongoing political processes about Afghanistan, which named to have political talks, no woman at the table. Most of the decisions are made without consultations, without meaningful engagement of women in Afghanistan and women in exile.

UNAMA has developed a roadmap for her country, about her future, without consulting with any Afghan inside the country and in exile. They have been failed to meaningfully include Afghan women. This is not only a national crisis. This is not only about Afghanistan, and this is not only Afghanistan's own crisis. This is a global failure. The **normalisation of no woman at the table** is not only immoral, it is dangerous for our future and for today, for all of us. It is not only about women of Afghanistan. It is about all women around the world.

Despite all the crisis, despite all the erasure, despite all the pushback, **Afghan women still have not given up**. They continue together, consult and contribute, despite being silenced, survived or sent into exile by force. They are being locked out of platforms, dialogue and decision-making. Speech, both inside Afghanistan and in exile, are excluded. Women from diaspora are treated as an afterthought and women inside the country are offered a symbolic role or no role at all. Negina shares with the Council a message from Zermineh, one Afghan women activist:



‘There is increasing pressure for us to use only one platform, but the beauty of my country is in diversity. We must not limit voices of women and their leadership to a single space. Women who once led a school, civil society organisation and peace-building process about Afghanistan are now being forced into silence or surviving into poverty or surviving into third countries.’

Zermina painfully illustrated that her leadership has been reduced to a recipe of hate. This is not what Afghan women fought for. *‘You made promises, don’t let us fail. Our failure is the failure of all mandates and resolution about women at global level.’* Symbolic roles and repeated consultations are not real engagement. It is not the real and meaningful engagement with Afghan women. Real leadership and real engagement require space, recognition and power, permission and to meaningful participate.

As an example that how Afghan women are fighting today, they are running from the UN Human Rights Council to the UN Security Council, but **no one is taking decisions**. They do not know who is taking the decision and who are the decision-maker. They are just replying that this does not fall within the UNHRC’s mandate or this is not the UNSC’s mandate. Beyond all the mandates and all the existing resolutions, Afghan women ask the Council to look at the reality. Take the decision. The decision should not be limited to one mandate or one resolution.

Ms. Genith QUITIAQUEZ, Peacebuilder and Spokesperson of the National Coordination of Indigenous Women of Colombia (CONAMIC)

Genith is an **Indigenous woman** from the Pastos people living in Southern Colombia’s mountains and jungles and as one of the many Colombian women working for sustainable and lasting peace. As an Indigenous woman, Genith managed to survive and her community continues to sow peace from their community fabrics, spiritual beliefs and their deep connection to Mother Earth. Genith is honoured to address this forum on the occasion of the International Day of Women Diplomats and to address the UNHRC from a place which has rarely been recognised.

The Indigenous community uses its ancestral spiritual beliefs as the basis of **Indigenous diplomacy** and diplomacy in general. They use the circles of the word as a path for healing and for listening. Without doubt, these are transformative political acts. Indigenous women in particular, like many other women, had to work hard to be included in debates and negotiations, despite the fact that they are the ones who have dialogues on a daily basis which make life and peace possible in their regions.

They have made **considerable efforts** at local and national level to be heard and to contribute their acts. Nevertheless, institutionalised stereotypes underpin structural discrimination making their task much more difficult. They have found different paths to have an influence. It takes more effort. They had to be creative in order to be seen and heard in the formal peace forum so that their huge contribution through their knowledge and their transformative proposals can be taken into consideration by the others.

It is against this backdrop that Genith stresses that Colombia has taken **great strides to reverse exclusion** through gender measures and the ethnic chapter of the 2016 Peace Agreement with the FARC. This was the result of collective advocacy through many women’s movements and huge contribution to the negotiations with the National Liberation Army (ELN) which unfortunately were broken off to their huge frustration. All of these processes have been



supported by women and feminists movements which allowed to push forward the **first national action plan on UNSC Resolution 1325**. They have built safeguards for Indigenous and Afro-Colombian women through that plan.

Women believe that we must define another way of doing peace politics – one that is not based on war, one that is not just about silencing the guns but changes the root causes which time and again have caused violence at local, national and international levels such as social exclusion, land grabbing, systemic racism and climate crisis. Genith underscores that **climate justice cannot be separated from justice for women**. The extractive industry, climate change and militarising our lands have a specific impact on women. They are forced out of their homes, their land, their knowledge, their bodies and their own ways of life. Defending Mother Earth is absolutely crucial for defending decent life and lasting peace.

Their spiritual belief teaches them that peace cannot be imposed, it is woven and it is that fabric which is made up of **women as the healing threads**. Women do not want to be just decorative participants. They want to be active participants with the power to decide. They want to have a seat at the table and to also change the way in which those tables are considered. Women propose **a peace which recognises diversity and includes care as a political principle** and puts caring for life at the very heart of what we do and not controlling people's lives.

There are promising examples from Colombia, the need to implement daily security tools which women's organisations have built on their life experience and recognise the way in which women have developed as social leaders and how their activist researchers from the Global South have been working on building peace and negotiation. Organisational processes must be supported, that means women's organisations - be they small, medium or large size - you can't change a system unless there's a clear and safety net to protect women's work and voices.

Fighting for peace is fighting for the whole society, not just for women. For this reason, women must be in the political debate at all levels. When societies move from war to peace, it's not enough just for the fighters, the combatants to negotiate, there must be negotiate which involves everyone in society to have dialogue at different levels, different stakeholders which helps us heal, rebuild, agree and search for common ways of moving forward and changing our societies.

In closing, Genith makes an **urgent appeal** to states today and international organisations. Women do not just want to be given room. They want to be recognised as being crucial to full and lasting peace. Women want effective mechanisms, budgetary allocations and real guarantees so that their voices are not just there but they have an influence, can decide, implement and change. Colombia is fostering a policy of total peace, which is a historic opportunity, but **peace will not be total nor true without recognition of the place of Indigenous women** in particular and women in general as political subjects and builders of peace in the future. The peace that women dream of is not just the end of war - it is the presence of justice, land, women and their words.

Mr. Itonde KAKOMA, President and Chief Executive Officer, Interpeace

Ms. Itonde KAKOMA considers himself privileged to lead a peace-building organisation that envisions a world whereby conflicts are prevented, managed, resolved and transformed without recourse to violence and in which **peace is posited as a credible and durable solution**. The work of Interpeace together with sister organisations is guided by a set of foundational principles.



Creating a basis for shared values, respect and contextual sensitivity, enabling trust and trustworthiness and minimum inclusion whereby **peace is grounded in the diverse perspectives, experiences and participation of all groups**, equality whereby peace is rooted in the upholding of fundamental human rights for all, accountability whereby peace is anchored in justice and ensures redress and restoration for harms committed, integrity whereby peace is built on trust, earned through responsibility, transparency and consistency, impartiality and peace is fostered by humility through awareness of biases, non-partisanship and independence.

On the occasion not only of the International Day of Women in Diplomacy, but also the anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325 which at its core recognises that **women and girls are disproportionately impacted by the ravages of war and armed conflict**, this is more so the case today whereby all indices recognise or categorise the increased number of armed conflicts globally, 120 by that of the ICRC. With these indicators, there is not only an increase in armed conflicts, but also **wars that are lasting longer and are more destructive in nature**, which raises a number of challenges.

First, the manner in which armed conflict, the conduct of hostilities are being carried out that is their adherence or non-adherence to international law has direct consequence on the possibilities and quality of peace being sought. The **prevalence of sexual violence in conflict** is a clear indicator of the complexities that any peace process will face and the intergenerational challenges that ensue. Furthermore, with wars lasting longer and more destructive, **cities, cultures, societies are being dismantled**, destroyed. This presents a further challenge in a post-conflict reconstruction agenda which - if is only focused on roads as critical as roads are, schools as necessary as schools are, or health facilities, but fails to take into account a human-centred approach – it is guaranteed that the spiral of conflict will continue.

Furthermore, a **dangerous proposal by analysts** suggests that the era of the comprehensive peace settlements, agreements is over. It is dangerous because it forces political processes in the direction of short-termism, equating peace with the necessary but not total ends in mind - the necessary such as humanitarian access and ceasefires - but the **focus on short-termism** and the rejection that comprehensive settlements are not possible limits the participation of those involved in peace processes. This means an acute focus primarily on belligerence, primarily with those holding guns, primarily men, to the exclusion of diverse participation in peace processes.

In conclusion and building upon comments from distinguished delegates and panellists, we must **move beyond peace as the mere absence of violence** and put forward a much more transformative vision for what an **intergenerational durable peace** entails.

REPLIES AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

Ms. Amrita KAPUR stresses that the 25th anniversary of the WPS Agenda does provide an opportune moment to reassess the progress of the framework, and many of the speakers have noticed how this **progress is juxtaposed against continuing structural barriers**. We must assess how has participation promoted the fundamental objective of the agenda, peace. That is, why today do we have an increasing number and longer conflicts than ever before. In this regard, the WPS Agenda has, for many different reasons, had an increased focus on security and



securitisation without an accompanying link to accountability for promoting peace – **peace not meant as negative peace, but inclusive and sustainable peace** – not just the absence of conflict, but something that is capable of preventing conflict.

This is a moment to remind ourselves that participation is actually not an end in and of itself. It is actually a means to achieve prevention of conflict in an enduring way. The reason for the continued exclusion of women remains something fundamental to address – that is, the **discriminatory structures and institutions that entrench historical power imbalances and repression**. If we focus on formal and quantitative participation of women, but that participation is embedded in patriarchal, capitalist, racist, and militarised systems, these systems cannot bring structural change capable of sustaining peace in a way that prevents the recurrence of conflict. Women's participation and quantitative representation must be part of a broader goal of structural transformation that requires reshaping institutions to be democratic, responsive, and equal, and abolishing and **transforming those institutions that perpetuate oppression and marginalisation**.

We need to systematically examine with an **intersectional approach** who is viewed as legitimate, who gets to participate, and who is influential in decision-making. In this case, we must emphasise that safeguarding civil society space is an integral part of the right of participation, and it is currently under threat like never before. In this way, the UN system, states, and donors must **support feminist activists in a non-hierarchical manner** to allow them to define their own agendas and priorities. Addressing the root causes of conflicts such as structural inequalities and violence, patriarchy, and environmental degradation is the clearest path to conflict prevention and inclusive and sustainable peace.

Ms. Negina YARI concludes with some **key recommendations** addressed to the international community. First, make women's participation a precondition for any political or peace-related spaces in Afghanistan. No process should move forward without women at the table. Second, strengthen the coordination with the UNSC and the Women, Peace and Security mechanism to ensure peace-building and human rights agendas are not operating in silos. The WPS agenda must be upheld with integrity, transparency, and accountability. Third, create and expand safe pathways for asylum, relocation, and protection of at-risk Afghan women, including women human rights defenders and civil society leaders, and forced returns to Afghanistan.

Furthermore, Ms. Negina YARI calls on the UNHRC **not to compromise its legal and moral obligations towards Afghanistan**, especially regarding human rights and women's and girls' rights. By shifting global politics or geopolitics interests, Afghan women must not be forgotten. Increase coordinated diplomatic pressure on the Taliban to immediately reverse restrictions on women's and girls' rights. Leverage all international tools, sanctions, and travel bans to uphold the Taliban accountable for violation of international law and human rights. **No legitimacy and no normalisation**. Sustainable, flexible funds for women-led organisations, especially those operating underground or in exile. The exclusion of Afghan women is not just a political oversight. It is a test of your values. If you allow the erasure of Afghan women to continue, you will send a dangerous message that women's and girls' rights can be negotiated away. But if you act boldly, consistently, and in solidarity, you affirm a greater truth, no sustainable peace, and a sustainable nation without women. *'Speak with us. Stand with us. Make room for us to lead, because we are still here. We have not given up, and neither should you.'*



Mr. Itonde KAKOMA, in a spirit of interactivity, refers to the statement by Mauritius to simply re-emphasise that the **upholding of the UDHR is a bedrock for peace**. But equally so, the undermining of such norms as enshrined by law has direct bearing not only on the participation of women, but on the quality of peace they are in. Referring to **good practices**, Mr. Itonde KAKOMA highlights three key points. First, while welcoming the signing of peace agreements to bring an end to conflict, we must be more circumspect about who is at the table. This is not solely from a point of view of values that matters, or good policy equally important, but also about the realism of politics and security. The non-participation of women in peace agreements means that the likelihood of them to be sustained is limited. Secondly, men must be engaged, not solely as champions and allies, but also as students, to better understand the instruments at their disposal when in positions of authority, to better enhance the participation of women. Third, he commends the guidance on gender inclusive mediation strategies by UNDPPA.

Gender inclusive mediation lifts up at least four areas for consideration. Firstly, on the very international normative frameworks on women, peace, and security, to better understand them, learn them, and integrate them in strategy. Secondly, on mediation preparedness, at least one area, ensuring that we have a gender sensitive conflict analysis of ongoing wars. Thirdly, on process design itself, the end is not the fixation, the means to get there is equally important. So inclusive process design, not just who is at the table, but who is designing the process in itself, and to that end multi-track engagements can ensure a fuller participation. Finally, mediating agreements and having a gender lens on substantive issues, not least of which on ceasefires and peace agreements, but on the fixation around power sharing and political participation. Without a proper gender lens in this regard, then the implementation will be weakened, limited at best.

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

Views Expressed by State Delegations

Albania, taking the floor through its **Deputy Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs**, puts forward the transformative power of women's leadership in diplomacy and peacebuilding, thereby stressing the particular significance of this year's commemoration as it the 25th anniversary of UNHRC Resolution 1325, an historic milestone that reshaped global policy on women, peace, and security. Since its adoption, we have witnessed meaningful progress, national action plans, gender-responsive peace agreements, and a growing, though still insignificant, number of women serving as negotiators and mediators. Albania is proud to be part of this journey. Its second national action plan on women, peace, and security reflects Albania's strong commitment on ensuring women's full and equal participation in all aspects. Albania is investing in increasing women's representation across its institutions and working with civil society to fight gender-based violence, including online. As a member of the UNHRC and a country with a higher representation of women in government and diplomacy, Albania firmly believes women must not only be present, they must lead. Their voices are essential in achieving peace that is inclusive, just, and lasting.

Bahrain on behalf of the Arab group highly values this panel celebrating the International Day of Women in Diplomacy. Participation of women in peace and security globally has achieved a great deal, particularly in view of the Resolution 1325. However, the Arab group raises concern at certain obstacles related to women's empowerment. These obstacles impact negatively the full



participation of women and ensuring its equality with men with regards to decision-making. This includes low representation of women in international fora and threats to women's safety, particularly online. Therefore, the Arab group underscores the need to take into account the following: increase women's participation in decision-making in line with SDG 5; prevent violence against women, including digital violence; and set in place legal frameworks that ensure women's participation in diplomatic fora other than those related to peace and security. In closing, the Arab group calls upon countries to take measures to achieve this goal by improving women participation in leadership positions.

Brazil notes that despite normative progress, women remain underrepresented in peace processes, security efforts, and multilateral decision-making. This stands in contrast to the commitments made under UNSC Resolution 1325 and the CEDAW Convention. The full, equal, and meaningful inclusion of women in diplomacy is not only a matter of justice but of effectiveness. According to the UNSG's report on women, peace, and security, women's participation increases the durability of peace agreements by up to 35 percent. Brazil has adopted concrete measures - it implemented gender quotas in the Diplomatic Service entrance exams; took action against institutional harassment; and expanded women's presence in strategic negotiations. However, much more needs to be done. Brazil advocates for gender parity in all multilateral fora, greater female representation in traditionally male-dominated areas such as defence, climate, peace, and security, and the election of a woman as UNSG. Equal participation in key decision-making spaces is essential to transforming global diplomacy and ensuring peace that is truly inclusive, just, and resilient.

Canada jointly with Australia, Canada and New Zealand states that at the 25th anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, the UNHRC gathered at a time marked by the highest number of conflicts in a generation, in which women and girls are significantly impacted, there is an erosion of trust in multilateral institutions and deepening gender inequality. In this critical moment, the question of who shapes the future and whose voices are heard is more important than ever. The leadership of women and girls in all stages of peace and security processes, including negotiations, ceasefires and institution building is a precondition for durable peace. There is clear evidence that when women and girls are meaningfully included, the resulting peace agreements are more comprehensive, more durable and more inclusive. Yet after decades of global commitments, progress remains unacceptably slow. In 2023, women on average made up only 9.6 percent of negotiators, 13.7 percent of mediators and 26.6 percent of signatories to peace and ceasefire agreements. Alarming, if Colombia is excluded, that last figure plummets to just 1.5 percent. These stark statistics demonstrate the urgent need to translate promises into meaningful action.

Chile emphasises that discussing about women in diplomacy and in peace processes is not a future aspiration, but an urgent matter for now. Women have always been at the heart of struggles for peace, justice, and democracy, but continue to face structural barriers that limit their participation in decision-making. For Chile, ensuring full, egalitarian, meaningful, safe participation by women in multilateralism, and especially in peace-building, is a matter of human rights, historical justice, and efficiency. When women are sitting at the table, peace hears new voices and agreements bring justice and sustainability. Chile was therefore part of the group of countries that supported UNHRC Resolution 58/15, an important step forward towards tangible



commitments to ensure women's participation, democracy, and governance. This year we celebrate 25 years of the WPS Agenda. With women's participation in conflict prevention and peace-building, this is not a mere gesture for inclusion, but it is needed for true, lasting peace. With this conviction, Chile joins its voice to the global call that, eight decades on from purely male leadership, it is a woman's turn to become UNSG, not as a symbol, but as a tangible expression of equality, legitimacy, and justice.

China on behalf of a group of 90 countries points out that 30 years ago, the 4th World Conference on Women adopted Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPA). This October, the Global Leaders' Meeting held again in Beijing should be seen as an opportunity to reinvigorate the spirit of the Declaration and pave a broad path for empowerment of women and girls worldwide. First, we must attach great importance to the protection of women's and girls' rights and help them shake off their unfavourable situations. Second, we must oppose and eliminate all forms of discrimination, violence against women and girls, and combat violations of their rights. Thirdly, we must promote comprehensive development of women's agenda, safeguard their rights and interests in the process of development. Fourth, we must strengthen international cooperation and support the UN in prioritising women's issues, pulling new momentum for global progress in gender equality. China encourages the Council to join forces, uphold multilateralism, implement BDPA, and help women and girls to lead a wonderful and fulfilling life.

Denmark on behalf of the Nordic-Baltic states stresses the holding of this commemoration at a time when the world faces unprecedented levels of armed conflict and human rights violations and where women and girls often pay the highest price. Yet women remain significantly underrepresented in peace and security efforts as has also been underlined by the panellists today. The Nordic-Baltic states welcome this time the opportunity to commemorate the International Day of Women in Diplomacy and address the structural barriers hindering women's leadership in peace processes. This year we mark the 25th anniversary of landmark UNSC Resolution 1325, which recognised the indispensable role of women in lasting peace and security. Despite progress, much remains to be done to translate this commitment into tangible results. Thus, the Nordic-Baltic states stress the urgent need to accelerate efforts towards ensuring women's full, equal, and meaningful participation and leadership, thereby advancing the full and effective realisation of all human rights, gender equality, and sustainable peace globally. The group stand ready to support and advance these essential goals.

Egypt stresses the importance of women in diplomacy as well as the removal of all obstacles to women's full participation in peace processes. Egypt has worked on women's empowerment and involvement in decision-making, which helped in moving towards fairer societies and a more comprehensive and diversified view of peace processes. Recently, there has been a very increase in women in the Egyptian diplomacy, with now half of Egypt's diplomats around the world being women. The Egyptian Ministry supports women in diplomacy and many of them have reached the rank of ministers or ambassadors. Egypt is convinced that women's involvement in peace processes is absolutely vital for finding lasting solutions. Egypt provides training courses for women so that they can have access to decision-making positions. The country is building the capacity of its women managers, in the firm belief that women play a vital role in building fairer and more inclusive societies.



Guatemala attaches great importance to this commemoration as a co-sponsor of the creation of this International Day in New York and Geneva. Guatemala's diplomatic women have played an active, transformative role in multilateral and bilateral diplomacy - from permanent missions to participating in peacekeeping. Women have played an active role in defending human rights and building consensus, making diplomacy more inclusive, sustainable, and fair. Although they provide valuable points of view and an inclusive approach to negotiations, women continue to face structural and cultural barriers which limit their full participation with exclusion, discrimination, and gender-based violence. Guatemala is aware of the ongoing challenges for full participation by women in decision-making posts. However, states must cooperate and step up efforts to ensure full, equitable participation by women in all fields. Guatemala reiterates its commitment to supporting initiatives that strengthen women's participation. Guatemala's statement draws to a close with a powerful quote from H.E. Ms. Karin Herrera, Vice-President of Guatemala – *'When a woman makes progress, we all make progress.'*

Japan expresses its sincere appreciation to the panellists for their valuable insights as we commemorate the International Day of Women in Diplomacy. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325, Japan reaffirms its strong commitment to ensuring the full, equal, and meaningful participation of all women in peace and security, including in decision-making. Japan recognises that despite decades of progress, structural barriers and discriminatory practises continue to limit women's access to leadership in diplomacy and conflict resolution. As a country deeply committed to advancing gender equality and human rights, Japan believes that empowering women in line with the WPS Agenda is essential for achieving sustainable peace and protecting and promoting the human rights of all. Japan continues to implement its national action plan on the WPS Agenda. In this regard, jointly with Norway, Japan co-chairs the WPS Focal Point Network and hosted its capital level meeting in Tokyo last February, where participants reaffirmed the importance of women's role in peace mediation and addressed emerging issues such as disaster response, AI, and cyber security. As we also commemorate the Beijing+30, Japan remains dedicated to working closely with all stakeholders, including civil society, to fully implement the commitments set out in those landmark frameworks to protect and promote human rights of all, especially women and girls.

Kuwait on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) notes that this commemoration comes at a time when women are facing increasing challenges, particularly in relation to armed conflicts. Women and girls are paying a high price in terms of loss of life due to escalation of violence and the collapse of protection systems. The GCC calls for women's empowerment and ensuring their participation in diplomacy as well as their role in peacebuilding and achieving development. The GCC achieved important progress in this regard that was translated in the increase of the number of women in leadership and official positions. Women are highly represented in decision-making apparatuses. This reflects the Council's view that women participation reinforces the efficacy of international law. Reinforcing this orientation means overcoming obstacles, providing further empowerment and institutional environment that ensure women participation at equal footing with men. The GCC expresses the will to cooperate with international regional partners to exchange expertise and in order to reinforce women participation in diplomacy while making women's empowerment a priority in our efforts that aim to safeguard international peace and security.



Kyrgyzstan on behalf of the members of the Organisation of Turkic States (OTS) notes that, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the BDPA, the OTS reaffirms its commitment to the equal enjoyment of all human rights by women and girls. The OTS recognises the role of women as agents of peace. The full, equal, safe, and meaningful participation of women in decision-making at all levels of peace and security, including conflict prevention and resolution, mediation, and in peace operations is essential to achieve sustainable peace. OTS members are determined to pursue their efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls and to advance their full and equal participation in all areas of life, including diplomacy. They also emphasise that promoting women's economic empowerment is crucial for enabling commitment to effective participation in leadership and governance. The OTS reaffirms its commitment to advancing these goals and welcomes the initiative of Kyrgyzstan in presenting the draft resolution addressing this issue.

Mauritius delivers a statement on behalf of the **core group of the HRC Resolution 58/15** titled 'Women, Diplomacy, and Human Rights' also comprising of Chile, Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, Spain, and Slovenia. The core group welcomes the first official commemoration of the International Day of Women in Diplomacy, paying tribute to the women who contributed to the framing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a document which lies at the bedrock of peace, security, and human rights. Despite women's contribution to the world's peace and security agenda, it is estimated that it will take probably 200 years more to close the global gender gap in the workplace. The core group believes that women's inclusion, participation, and diplomacy are essential in building an inclusive and peaceful society. It therefore calls for the recognition of the contribution and the role played by women in conflict prevention, peace, and reconciliation processes, disaster responses, as well as in fostering inclusive, sustainable, effective, multilateral decision-making process, including the UNHRC. Finally, the core group calls on the UNHRC to consider transformative measures to ensure equal and meaningful participation, leadership, and empowerment of women across all spheres. It further calls on the United Nations and other international organisations in Geneva to continue supporting women in their work in Geneva with a view to achieving once and for all gender equality.

Moldova reaffirms its commitment to gender equality in all aspects of life, including in the peace processes. Revitalising the implementation of the WPS Agenda through concrete measures is an important part of our shared endeavour. As we mark the 25th anniversary of the Resolution 1325, we remind ourselves that WPS implementation is crucial to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of peace-building efforts. Moldova is committed to achieving gender equality. In 2025, Moldova ranked seventh in the Global Gender Gap published by the World Economic Forum recently and climbed 11 places in the 2023-2024 WPS Index. Moldova attaches great importance to implementing the 1325 Resolution. The 2023-2027 National Programme aims at reducing gender stereotypes in the defence sector, integrating gender perspectives into defence policies, preventing discrimination and gender-based violence, and enhance women's participation in peace-building and international missions. While seeing many improvements, Moldova recognises the challenges that exist and is committed to advance in this regard.

Morocco sees this commemoration as an opportunity for discussing the barriers which prevent women's full participation in diplomacy as a vector for human rights, peace, and security. Negative stereotypes and discrimination often lead to women being underrepresented in



diplomacy. In order to build a modern and democratic society, Morocco has made women's effective participation in diplomacy a priority. This political direction is reflected in an increase in the number of women in decision-making posts in the diplomatic service. Women are 43% of Morocco's diplomatic service with over 30% female ambassadors. In addition, the number of women have increased from 25% to 40% over the past 10 years in decision-making posts.

North Macedonia recalls that the women, peace, and security agenda has come a long way since the adoption of the landmark resolution 25 years ago. Yet, as today's panellists have underscored, significant challenges remain in ensuring women's full, equal, and meaningful participation in peace processes. North Macedonia has been dedicated to incorporating gender perspectives into its security and foreign policies. Its Second National Action Plan promotes women's leadership in government institutions and aims to reconcile growing international commitments through a holistic implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. Since 2012, the proportion of women in the Army has increased from 5 to over 10 percent. Today, women make up to 5 percent of North Macedonia's military personnel deployed to international peace missions. Progress is also evident in senior leadership roles. Women have led the Ministry of Defence itself, and for the first time in the country's history, a woman serves as President of the state. The status of women is a direct reflection of the maturity and inclusiveness of our societies. Although women remain underrepresented in decision-making roles, we must continue to advance their inclusion as leaders in diplomacy and to advocate for their equal participation in governance, just as in all other areas of public life.

Paraguay notes that beyond progress, women continue to face compounded, interconnected, and interrelated forms of exclusion and inequality, which are structural barriers to their full participation. A clear example is in peace processes and decision-makers. Whilst women's inclusion has contributed to more lasting and sustainable agreements, this participation continues to be insufficient. In order to redress this disparity, we must incorporate gender into policies, plans, and programmes of state institutions. Women's empowerment at local level is key for creating real impacts at the international level. Paraguay joins the call to step up efforts for full, equal, and meaningful participation of women in decision making at international level.

Qatar welcomes the holding of this panel dedicated to women's contribution with a focus on peacebuilding. Women's participation in upholding peace is crucial for a global, fair peace. Women's participation reflects a strategic vision for investing in women's capacities. On the basis of its efforts for diplomacy, Qatar has sought to ensure that women can be involved in the diplomatic service. Qatar is committed to investing in education, capacity-building, and providing opportunities. Committed to ensuring that young women can enter professions, Qatar has strengthened women's participation in the treaty bodies and other bodies.

Slovenia is honoured to contribute to this timely discussion commemorating the International Day of Women in Diplomacy, also as a member of the core group of the resolution that helped create its mandate. Despite clear evidence of women's vital contributions to peacebuilding and peacekeeping, persistent barriers continue to limit our participation in decision-making processes. These include discriminatory social norms, lack of access to resources, and exposure to gender-based violence. To overcome these barriers, we must take concerted actions. In that regard, Slovenia welcomes action-orientated CEDAW General Recommendation No. 40. Strengthening legal protection and dismantling structural inequalities are essential. It is equally



important to support and empower women from diverse backgrounds, particularly those in conflict-affected and underrepresented communities. We must invest in education, encourage mentorship and leadership training, as well as work in close partnership with civil society and other actors to ensure women's full, equal, safe and meaningful participation at all levels and stages of peace processes. Slovenia works hand-in-hand in that regard with countries supporting the WPS Agenda. Women remain a crucial and underutilised asset in efforts for peace and in today's insecure world. Slovenia remains deeply committed to empowering women and to seek a gender-based approach to shaping a peaceful and just future for generations to come.

Spain reaffirms its commitment to the feminist foreign policy that addresses the root causes of gender inequalities and seeks to transform stereotypes that keep women out of decision-making and leadership. Spain, like other delegations, believes that there is no sustainable peace without women's participation, and there needs to be agreement on this. Spain has been part of the negotiations for women's peace and security. The country is now drafting its third national plan. Spain seeks to ensure that women have a seat at the negotiating table, strengthen local leadership, and protect human rights defenders in conflict. It is important to have support for regional networks of women mediators, and Spain finances training programmes for mediation. Investing in women is investing in conflict prevention and lasting peace.

Thailand joins the international community in commemorating the international days of women in diplomacy and reaffirms its commitment to promoting women's meaningful participation in peace and security efforts. Thailand shares concerns that women's participation in peace processes is often symbolic, lacking real decision-making power. Women also face growing challenges to their security and rights. To overcome this barrier, we must set clear inclusion targets, raise awareness, and strengthen gender-responsive and rights-based mechanisms to ensure women's equal voice, particularly in peace buildings. Over the years, Thailand has taken concrete steps to implement the WPS Agenda, its national policy, and the national action agenda on WPS, prioritising women's participation and protection. Locally, Thailand supports women's roles in peace building, WPS training. Internationally, Thai female personnel serve in the UN peacekeeping mission. Thailand also partners with the UN Women to exhibit women's empowerment centres in border areas to build leadership and strengthen resilience. Together, we can empower and make the WPS Agenda a reality.

Timor-Leste on behalf of ASEAN recognises the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women and emphasises the importance of women's equal, full, and effective participation at all stages of peace processes, given their necessary role in the prevention and resolution of conflict, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, as embodied in relevant UNSC resolutions. ASEAN promotes a culture of peace and prevention that educates and empowers people, detects and prevents armed conflicts, and sustains peace through a cross- sectoral, comprehensive, and integrated approach. ASEAN remains committed to continuing addressing the root causes of armed conflicts while building the capacity of women as peacebuilders, either as mediators, negotiators, or first responders at the regional, national, and local levels. In 2022, ASEAN adopted the Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace, and Security, providing clear regional guidance while allowing flexibility for national and local adaptation based on peace and security realities. This September, Malaysia will host the second ASEAN Women, Peace, and Security Summit in Kuala Lumpur to advance its collective efforts to empower women in peacebuilding and



leadership roles across the region. Finally, ASEAN calls for strengthened cooperation with regional intergovernmental organisations and development partners in advancing the Women, Peace, and Security agenda to better protect women and girls from violence, discrimination, and social exclusion.

The **United Kingdom** takes the floor through **H.E. Baroness Harriet Harman, UK Special Envoy for Women and Girls**, who honours the role of women in leadership, decision-making and diplomacy. Trailblazing women in diplomacy, politics and governments and women peace builders and activists like those heard from today have striven and have made so much progress yet more progress is needed. It is well-known that women suffer disproportionately in conflict with sexual violence, displacement and impacts on their health and their livelihoods. Yet for the most part women do not have a seat at the table to bring about peace, making up just 16% of negotiators in processes led or co-led by the UN. Yet we know that when women are part of peace processes the resulting agreement is more than three times more likely to succeed. It is not just that women are not included, they are actively silenced and excluded, facing active obstruction to their participation with threats, violence and reprisals including online. We must challenge this and change it. As penholder of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda at the UNSC, the UK is determined to champion women's effective and safe participation in all spheres of decision making. As we approach the 25th anniversary of the agenda we must work together - women and their male allies - to promote and defend women's and girls' rights and actively resist the misogynist insurgency which seeks to roll back women's hard-won advances.

Viet Nam states that despite progress in promoting gender equality, women's participation in diplomacy and peace process remains uneven across the region. Structural barriers, under-representation in decision-making, and the lack of adequate support for women's leadership continue to hinder inclusive and sustainable outcomes. In many contexts, women working in conflict-affected areas also face greater challenges in asset and protection. In Vietnam, the promotion of gender equality is a consistent priority. Its National Strategy on Gender Equality for 2021 and 2030 set clear goals to increase the representation of women in leadership roles across sectors, including in foreign affairs. Vietnamese women diplomats have actively contributed to multilateral forums, including the United Nations and ASEAN, and have taken part in activities related to peacekeeping, humanitarian affairs, and international cooperation. Viet Nam believes that empowering women in diplomacy contributes to more balanced and effective international relations and conflict resolution.

Zambia notes that despite the proven benefits of women's participation in peace processes, they continue to face significant structural, cultural, and political barriers to leadership in these critical efforts. To address these barriers, we must dismantle systemic discrimination by challenging patriarchal norms, reforming discriminatory laws and policies, ensuring that peace negotiations are inclusive by design. Quotas and legal mandates for women's representation must be accompanied by capacity-building, access to networks, and protection from gender-based violence. True progress requires political will, adequate resourcing, and accountability. Governments, international organisations, and civil society must work together to create enabling environments where women, including marginalised and from conflict-affected communities, can lead as negotiators, mediators, and decision-makers. Only then can we build peace that is inclusive, just, and sustainable.



Views Expressed by intergovernmental Organizations

The **European Union** is committed to gender equality which is integral to all its diplomatic and political efforts. The EU honours pioneers such as Simone Veil, the first woman to lead an EU institution and Marga Klompé, a key negotiator of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The EU is proud to have women leading the European Commission, the European Parliament and numerous other positions across the EU and its member states, including as its High Representative for Foreign Affairs. The EU affirms that true inclusion in peace processes requires integrating women's and girls' rights and concerns into decision making, including by respecting commitments arising from the BDPA and its review conferences, the WPS Agenda and subsequent resolutions. The full and equal enjoyment of all human rights by all women and girls and their full empowerment must be upheld at all times and their full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership secured in all peace and security efforts. The EU is dedicated to inclusivity by integrating a gender and human rights perspective and driving gender responsive leadership in its common security and defence policy missions. This year, the EU signed the UN Common Pledge for women's full, equal and meaningful participation in peace processes.

UN Women emphasizes that through diplomacy, women have made significant contributions to human rights, development, and sustainable peace. Nearly 25 years ago, the adoption of UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security recognised the importance of women's participation in peace processes. Yet women's representation in peace processes remains far below the minimum one-third target. A recent three-year review of the peace processes globally shows that eight out of ten negotiations and seven out of ten mediation efforts included no women at all, despite research showing that women's participation leads to more sustainable peace. Beyond representation, women's participation must be meaningful. Their perspectives must be considered in agenda setting, the substance of negotiation, and in peace agreements. Agreements are negotiated at formal tables, but peace is built within communities, initiated, led, and safeguarded by women. Women's leadership at the community level must therefore be made visible. UN Women welcomes CEDAW Recommendation No. 40 on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems, including in peace and security, and other normative frameworks that advance the elimination of barriers to women's leadership in peace processes. UN Women calls for increased resourcing and stronger accountability and action from all peace actors to advance women's full, equal, and meaningful participation in peace processes.

Views Expressed by Non-Governmental Organizations

Equilibre & Populations speaks on behalf of the **Francophone Feminist Alliance**, which seeks to strengthen the participation of French-speaking feminists in multilateral fora. This day invites us to reconsider power structures. Often, despite women's direct impact in conflict and their essential role on the ground, they are relegated to the margins in negotiations. Obstacles persist with cultural patriarchal and stereotypical gender-based norms, gender-based violence, the absence of female role models, limited access to education, and a lack of political will. There are solutions. The Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS Agenda) must be fully implemented with quotas for systematic inclusion of women's strategic posts. Strengthening women's leadership in peace-building sustainably sheds light on their historical contributions, deconstructs stereotypes, and creates role models for future generations. There must be efforts,



together with governmental institutions, to document their progress and promote mentorship. The facts speak for themselves. Women's participation significantly contributes to durable peace agreements, bringing inclusive perspectives. When will we see a truly inclusive feminist diplomacy, rather than a symbolic one?

International Committee for the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas explains that in 1840, the Hawaiian Kingdom Constitution, the Kingdom is permanently confirmed to King Kamehameha III and his heirs and no others. As a direct descendant of a named heir of Kamehameha III, and as a woman, the speaker has a constitutional right to be diplomatically recognised and to participate equally with sovereign equality. In this capacity, she diplomatically protests against the misuse of UN mechanisms to place structural barriers to deny equal participation and leadership by the Hawaiian Kingdom's rightful women heirs for peace and protections provided under the Geneva Conventions. The unilateral declaration principle established that declarations made by foreign ministers or higher are binding in international law. In 1993, US President Clinton signed the Apology Bill, admitting that the Indigenous Hawaiian people never directly relinquished their claims to and their inherent sovereignty of the Hawaiian Islands or government to the United States of America. Thus, the Hawaiian Islands remain a sovereign, independent nation in continuity under an unlawful U.S. foreign occupation. The geographical description of Hawai'i, the 50th state, in Article 73E, Report A4226, excludes all the Hawaiian Islands from its description. CEDAW includes addressing colonialism, apartheid, and foreign occupation. As such, UNGA Resolution 1469 must be reviewed with immediate protections for Hawaiian nationals and their private property.

The **Al-Salam Foundation** stresses that Bahrain's 1963 citizenship law is a pressing concern. It actively discriminates against women, denying them the right to pass their nationality to children born to foreign fathers, except when the paternity is unknown. This policy violates fundamental human rights and puts children at risk of statelessness, denying them equal access to education, healthcare, and employment. As a result, families become entrenched in intergenerational cycles of poverty and marginalisation. Meanwhile, mothers' fears of losing their children are exacerbated by Bahrain's family law, which denies them any guardianship rights. Though women's movements persistently advocate for reform, their efforts are limited by restrictive civil society laws and an environment where calls for equality are often conflated with treason. Although Bahrain has committed to gender equality and the right to nationality under treaties like CEDAW, its current citizenship law remains fundamentally incompatible with the Convention's principles. The Foundation urges Bahrain to honour its international obligations by amending its nationality and family laws to end gender discrimination, and calls for accountability to guarantee effective reform.

The **ACT Alliance** points out that today, as we continue to witness violence and conflicts tearing communities apart, we reaffirm a truth recognised 25 years ago through UNSC Resolution 3025. Peace is neither sustainable nor just without the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women. Yet, women and girls in all their diversity continue to be sidelined in peace processes, and gender transformative action is still rare in peace agreements. At a time when authoritarianism rises and civic space shrinks, the global pushback against gender equality is intensifying. Women and girls, including human rights defenders from faith communities, face threats and systematic barriers rooted in discriminatory laws, policies, norms and practises.



These trends undermine democratic principles and the potential for lasting peace. As a faith-based alliance who is rooted within communities, the Foundation affirms that transformative solutions must be locally led. Grassroots, women's organisations, faith-based actors, youth movements, and persons with disabilities are not just participants, they are essential peace builders. As we mark the 25th anniversary of Resolution 3025, the Foundation emphasises the importance of turning principles into action and commitments into change.

The **Human Rights Research League** also draws the Council's attention to the adoption - 25 years ago - of landmark UNSC Resolution 1325, which, along with nine ensuing resolutions, make up the WPS Agenda. Resolution 1325 urged member states to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict, and called on all actors involved to adopt 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. In a number of authoritarian states, and in particular those enforcing misogynistic policies, women's human rights are trampled upon, and women's equal participation in public life may only be fully achieved by removing an oppressive regime and replacing it with democratic and inclusive governance. However, especially if such change is to truly benefit women and girls, it cannot be brought about by foreign intervention, nor by appeasing authoritarian regimes' cosmetic or purely symbolic policy gestures, but by supporting women-led democratic transitions, as, for example, the 2022 uprisings in Iran were a courageous and promising start-up.

Stitching Choice for Youth and Sexuality recalls that women's contributions to diplomacy and peace-building have long been overlooked, and women face significant barriers to meaningful participation in decision-making. Without diverse voices of women, peace agreements lack legitimacy, inclusivity, and sustainability. But what about young women and girls? Where are their diverse voices? One out of every four young people live in conflict-affected countries. From Palestine and Ukraine to Sudan and Afghanistan, women, including young women and girls, are bearing the brunt of conflicts, war, and the global rollback of human rights. Their sexual and reproductive health and rights are being violated, as conflict brings an increased rate of sexual and gender-based violence, child early and forced marriages, and more harmful practises that infringe upon bodily autonomy and integrity. Furthermore, their education, which sets them up for the future, is disrupted, such as in Afghanistan, where 1.1 million girls are without schooling since the 2021 ban. Without the voices and meaningful participation of youth, peace-building efforts will continue to fail to improve the lived realities of all young women and girls. Young people are consistently overlooked, underestimated, and dismissed for leadership and decision-making. Did this not frustrate you as a young person? Stitching Choice calls on states to ensure the meaningful participation of young women and girls in all their diversity through all levels of peace and security processes. Their voices and experiences deserve to be heard.

Plan International gives the floor to a youth advocate of the Chilean UN cohort, who states that leadership is not born in boardrooms. It began in classrooms, in communities, in the quiet resilience of girls who survive and resist conflict. If we seek resistible peace, we must recognise that women's participation in the peace process began in girlhood. A life-cycle approach allows us to nurture leadership from the earliest moment of awareness and experience. Girls are not bystanders to war. They are often targeted by it, whether through displacement, violence, or the



disruption of education and family structures. Girls' experiences are specific and devastating. Ignoring their voices is not only unjust, it is a strategic failure in designing peace. To dismantle barriers to women's leadership, Plan International urges states to open the doors for young women in diplomacy, with pathways lit for girls and young women to follow. Create opportunities that are not only available, but accessible, inclusive, and relevant to girls' life. Invest in education, mentorship programmes, and robust protection that reach girls in underserved areas. There is no peace without reservation. Let us commit, not just in principle, but in policy, to equip, empower, and elevate girls and young women on all stages of peace building.

Asociación HazteOir.org recalls article 6 ICCPR setting out that every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his right to life. As the UNHRC rightly focusses on protecting women from violence, we must also ask, where is the voice for the millions of unborn girls? According to WHO, around 73 million abortions occur globally each year. The WHO reports that 30% of the infant population is wiped out. This is not a single nation's issue. The Association is deeply concerned that public funds continue to support abortion organisations such as Planned Parenthood, although officially designated for reproductive health. In practise, these funds sustain a massive abortion industry. The WPS Agenda permits the international community to support survivors and invest in their dignity. The defunding abortion through the One Big Beautiful Bill now before the US Congress represents a vital step toward respect for life in the use of public funds. It deserves not only national but international attention, especially in bodies like the UNHRC. The Association urges the UNHRC to reaffirm the foundational principle that human rights begin with the right of life and promote health care policies that support both mother and child.

The **Réseau Unité pour le Développement de Mauritanie** recalls that women and girls around the world continue to face significant and evolving challenges to their human rights, from gender-based violence and workplace discrimination to threats against a productive right and unequal access to education and health care. Systematic barriers persist in every region. Recent reports highlight a troubling backlash against women's rights with rising levels of discrimination, weakened legal protection, and an understandable support system in conflict zones like Sudan, South Sudan, DRC, and the Sahel. Non-state armed groups are systematically violating the rights of women. Women are especially vulnerable to violence, and globally, women and girls are killed in 10 minutes by a partner or family member. These realities underscore the urgent need to reverse the legal framework and effective implementation to safeguard the right of dignity of all women. To advance the global progress, the Réseau calls on the state to ratify the fully implementation of the CEDAW Convention and, for African states, the Maputo Protocol. Universal ratification and the effective domestication of these two instruments are essential steps to unwind.

Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan (RSKS) emphasizes that the International Day of Women and Diplomacy, we must bring the barrier limiting women's leadership in peace efforts. RSKS has witnessed firsthand how investing in education, vocational training, and community leadership programmes empowers women to become architects of peace and agents of change within their own communities. RSKS witnesses daily the transformative power of investing in women. RSKS appreciates India's national initiatives like promoting girls' education and skill development missions and robust legal frameworks supporting women's rights. We must move beyond



symbolic inclusion to genuine sustained addressing by women in diplomacy, governance, and peacebuilding. RSKS urges the UNHRC to support innovative community-driven approaches and include grassroots organisation in peace strategies as they build trusted, sustainable, and inclusive change for the ground up. Women are not only victims of conflict, they are peacebuilders, negotiators, and leaders. Let us not commemorate their potential only in words, but act decisively to dismantle the barriers they face.

Al-Basher Foundation for Development explains that in occupied Western Sahara, Saharawi women are targeted with gender-based violence institutionalised in a deeply traditional society. With the weaponization of norms, women find themselves being targeted by means of deprivation of social and economic rights, slandering campaigns, intimidation, harassment, and threats targeting not only them but also their children and male relatives. In addition to arbitrary arrests, detention, police violence takes a distinct form when aimed at women, targeting often sensitive parts of their bodies and with the aim of endangering them. Women defenders report that after having been subjected to police violence, they are often blocked from receiving health care in occupied Western Sahara. At the hospital, they are turned away due to them being Sahrawis and human rights defenders. This goes to the very core of the gender dimension of care and support system, which is close to non-existent for Saharawi women defenders living in occupied Western Sahara. The Foundation invites the Working Group to pay closer attention to women's rights and access to care and support system in times of occupation and conflict, and to assess what kind of steps can be taken to provide women defenders with increased support and protection.

FACTS & FIGURES ON ID PARTICIPATION

25 State Delegations

2 Inter-Governmental Organizations

11 Non-Governmental Organizations