



Meeting of the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network on 9/10 April 2018

- Joint communiqué by the Focal Points on Women, Peace and Security -

We, the representatives of Afghanistan, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Uruguay, as well as of the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and various UN agencies have come together in Berlin, Germany, on 9 and 10 April 2018. This year's capital meeting of the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network, organized by Germany, the 2018 Chair of the Network, in close collaboration with Spain and Namibia, and with UN Women, is dedicated to "**Building Alliances to Advance the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.**" The meeting includes civil society participants representing local, national and international organizations.

The Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network was initiated by Spain in October 2015 during the high-level review of the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and was launched in 2016. It is a cross-regional forum of States and of international and regional organizations, which provides a space for sharing and exchanging lessons learned and best practices to advance the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security. The Network's primary objective is to assist Member States and regional organizations to improve and strengthen the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda at the origin of decision-making processes, in close cooperation with the United Nations system, civil society and other stakeholders.

This year's capital meeting builds on discussions at the foundational meeting of the Network in September 2016 in New York, the first Network meeting in Alicante, Spain in April 2017, the meeting on the margins of the UN General Assembly in September 2017, as well as the expert-level meeting with New York-based women, peace and security experts in November 2017. The meeting was opened by the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, Heiko Maas. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Margot Wallström, delivered a keynote address on the second day.

1) The focal points recognized the **substantial role that regional organizations** play in supporting Member States. They underscored the critical need for collaboration between regional organizations and their members in implementing the women, peace and security agenda and the important platforms that regional organizations provide for Member States to share good practices and lessons learned. The meeting also provided an opportunity for representatives of regional organizations to exchange best practices in different settings.

2) Focal points highlighted the **important contributions that civil society actors** have made at the international, national and local levels to the women, peace and security agenda. Focal points voiced their concern about the shrinking spaces for civil society, increasing security risks for women's human rights defenders, and expressed the need to focus on conflict prevention and sustainable peacebuilding. Furthermore, the importance of engaging young women leaders from civil society was highlighted by focal points.

Focal points welcomed the momentum for women's participation in political and peace processes generated by women mediator networks, including the Nordic Women Mediators network, the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network, FemWise-Africa, the African Women Leaders Network and civil society networks. Focal points underscored that women's meaningful involvement, from grassroots to leadership roles, is critical to mediation processes, the security sector and transitional justice, countering violent extremism narratives, reconstruction and reconciliation processes, and therefore to building and sustaining peace.

3) Focal points underlined the **importance of comprehensive gender-sensitive conflict analysis and budgeting processes** to ensure the implementation of strategic priorities, including capacity building and appropriate financing for the women, peace and security agenda across sectors.



Focal Points also emphasized that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as a legally binding instrument for states parties, can complement **national and regional accountability mechanisms** on the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. Focal points agreed that, inter alia, a **streamlined approach to the different reporting mechanisms and consultation processes** on women, peace and security will foster an enabling environment for accountability for Member States and regional organizations.

Focal points also recognized the importance of gender advisors in peacekeeping operations, as well as the need to support increased women's participation in UN Peacekeeping Operations.

4) Focal points noted that **action plans at the national, but also at the local level**, can be useful tools to transform UN Security Council resolution 1325 into practical action. They agreed that specific timelines, aligned indicators, adequate budgets and the active involvement of civil society actors are key components for a successful action plan. Focal points emphasized the importance of a strategic positioning of the office leading the implementation of national action plans and strategies. Increased engagement of parliamentarians can also build political will, ownership and sustainability of women, peace and security priorities.

Finally, focal points discussed how to **promote accountability for conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence as a key aspect of conflict prevention**. In addition to predictable resources, protection of victims, professionalization of data collection and evidence finding, the link between ending impunity and the assurance of livelihoods was underlined by focal points as critical to deterring perpetrators, building justice and addressing root causes of gender inequality and discrimination.

Throughout the discussions, participants emphasized the importance of **building alliances at the national, regional and international level** to implement UN Security Council resolution 1325. Focal points emphasized the importance of the semi-annual WPS Focal Points Network meetings to build partnerships and underlined the importance of using the momentum created by the Network meetings to ensure continuity in implementation throughout the year.

Focal points emphasized the importance of linking the discussions in Berlin to United Nations processes, particularly given the direct relevance of the women, peace and security agenda to the work of the UN Security Council. To this end, a **de-briefing will be organized by the WPS Focal Points Network in New York in May 2018**, co-hosted by Germany, Spain and Namibia, as the Network troika.

The focal points welcomed that new members have joined the Network in the weeks prior to the Berlin meeting, which now consists more than 80 members comprising Member States and regional organizations. They called on other Member States and regional organizations to join the Network, and to work in close cooperation with the United Nations system, civil society and other stakeholders, to promote the women, peace and security agenda.