

CIVIL SOCIETY DIALOGUE NETWORK

Meeting on Women's Participation in Peace Processes

Brussels, 23 November 2010

Outcome Document

On 23 November a one-day EU-CSO dialogue meeting on women's participation in peace processes took place in Brussels. The meeting was organised within the framework of the Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN). CSDN is a three-year project funded by the European Commission and aims at facilitating dialogue on peacebuilding issues between civil society and the EU institutions. The Dialogue Network is open to civil society organisations active in the field of peacebuilding and is managed by EPLO, the platform of European peacebuilding organisations.

The meeting, which followed on from the 10th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), aimed broadly at improving the EU's efforts at enabling the participation of women in peace processes—going beyond peace talks to also include short- and long-term implementation of peace agreements. The first session focused on women's participation in track I and II diplomacy. During the second session, participants discussed women's participation in the short-term implementation of peace processes, such as disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programmes and peacekeeping. The third, and final, session looked at women's participation in more long-term processes, such as security sector reform (SSR).

In order to ensure true dialogue, each session consisted of a number of short presentations (including a thematic introduction and a country case study) aimed at setting the scene, followed by more lengthy open discussions where all participants were encouraged to take the floor. Participants were asked to share obstacles, lessons learned, good practices and recommendations. Lena Ag, Secretary General of Kvinna till Kvinna, facilitated the meeting on behalf of EPLO.

Approximately 50 people attended the one-day dialogue meeting. The event brought together EU officials and civil society representatives, including from organisations based in Nepal, Uganda, Kosovo, the Philippines and the Balkans. There were also representatives of UNIFEM and DCAF.

This document contains a summary of discussions and lists recommendations made during the EU-CSO dialogue meeting on women's participation in peace processes on 23rd November. For more information about this CSDN policy meeting, please contact [Sanne Tielemans](#), coordinator of EPLO's working group on Gender, Peace and Security.

Opening

Opening remarks were made by Lena Ag (Kvinna till Kvinna), Kati Leinonen (General Secretariat of the Council of the EU, DG E – External and Political-Military Affairs, human rights unit - co-coordinator of the EU Task Force on Women, Peace and Security) and Davide Zaru (European Commission, DG External Relations, human rights unit - co-coordinator EU Task Force on Women, Peace and Security).

In her opening remarks, **Lena Ag** emphasised that the EU is a complex actor involved in peace processes in different ways, including through statements, dialogue and mediation efforts, funding civil society peacebuilding projects, supporting DDR and governance reforms, election monitoring and CSDP missions. She also pointed to the impact of current EU institutional developments on the role the EU plays in relation to peace processes. Furthermore, Lena Ag stressed that Europe is a frontrunner when it comes to *efforts* to implement UNSCR 1325.

Kati Leinonen spoke on developments related to SCR 1325 at EU-level. She explained that the 'big bang' on women, peace and security took place in late 2008, under the French Presidency, when the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the EU Commissioner for External Relations adopted the *Comprehensive EU Approach to the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security* (hereafter referred to as the Comprehensive Approach). They approved a revised and operational document on SCR 1325 and 1820 in crisis management operations and adopted EU guidelines on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them. (Note: for links to these and other key documents, please check the 'further reading suggestions' section on the final page.) Kati Leinonen explained that these three key documents on SCR 1325 are complemented by documents on, for example, DDR, SSR, and the protection of civilians. She also emphasised the comprehensiveness of the EU's approach to women, peace and security issues and explained that a set of indicators has recently been developed to track implementation of the Comprehensive Approach. A first report on these indicators can be expected in 2011. Some first achievements of the Comprehensive Approach include the presence of gender advisers or focal points in crisis management missions, 1325 Open Days at delegation- and mission-level and work with regional organisations, like the African Union. According to Kati Leinonen, the next big challenge for the EU is to measure impact on the ground.

Davide Zaru added to this a word on the Gender Action Plan recently adopted by the Council of Ministers, in which SCR 1325 is listed as a key objective of external assistance. Furthermore, he highlighted different financial support initiatives, including an upcoming call on women, peace and security (WPS) under the Instrument for Stability, the launch of a project with UNIFEM on capacity building (funded through EIDHR) and a recent call for proposals under the Investing in People budget line where 1325 was listed as a specific objective. Zaru also pointed to other kinds of support to women's participation in peace processes, such as ensuring visibility of women's networks and organising regular dialogue on upcoming calls for proposals between delegations and women's organisations.

Session I – Participation at and beyond the negotiating table

Women's participation in track I and II diplomacy

The first session looked at participation at and beyond the negotiating table and discussed women's participation in track I and II diplomacy. It centred on identifying obstacles to women's participation in official peace talks as well as highlighting the importance of inclusive decision-making, going beyond the official negotiating table. Facilitation and a thematic introduction were provided by Kristian Herbolzheimer, Adviser on Peace Processes at Conciliation Resources. To kick off discussions, Raissa Jajurie, the Mindanao Coordinator of the Centre for Alternative Legal Assistance (SALIGAN), and Mike San Agustin McCrea, Team Leader Instrument for Stability at the Foreign Policy Instruments Service at the European Commission, presented on the situation in the Philippines.

In his introduction, **Kristian Herbolzheimer** emphasised that humanity has a long tradition of war-making, while the practice of pro-actively constructing peace is a relatively young one. Herbolzheimer said that the approach to peace processes needs to become more circular, more context-specific and more inclusive. He emphasised that the male-dominated approach to peace negotiations has reached its threshold.

Raissa Jajurie followed with a presentation on the Philippines case study, focusing in particular on the peace process between the government of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Raissa Jajurie, herself a Moro woman (meaning she comes from one of the ethno-linguistic groups that are native to Mindanao), stressed that women in the Philippines play an active role in track II diplomacy as they basically run the peace-oriented CSOs and human rights groups. Women's groups have been active in advocacy around UNSCR 1325, human rights documentation, grassroots mediation, humanitarian assistance and articulation of their own agenda. When it comes to track I initiatives, however, women continue to be under-represented. While MILF has no policy prohibiting women to sit

on their panel, there is still the patriarchal idea that women should not be in the forefront of decision-making. Jajurie called for the EU and European CSOs to support local initiatives, especially by women's organisations. She also stressed the need to take a context-sensitive and inclusive approach to peacebuilding.

Mike San Agustin McCrea, in his remarks, set out women's position in the Philippines as strong. He stated that the Philippine society is relatively open and that women are often better educated than men and well-represented in government. However, he also explained that in certain parts of the country there is a move to traditionalism, resulting in the removal of women from the public sphere. When it comes to EU involvement in peace processes in the Philippines, Mike San Agustin McCrea explained that the EU works with different CSOs to support them in their efforts, such as the HD centre, Nonviolent Peaceforce and the Mindanao Peoples Caucus. He also stressed the leading role the EU is playing in relation to the Mindanao Trust Fund component dealing with development and reconstruction.

Remarks Session I

- Women's experiences and perspectives enrich discussions on peace and security matters. Women's participation can result in attention being paid to different issues, such as gender based violence.
- The mere inclusion of women in peace talks does not guarantee meaningful participation. To ensure meaningful participation, women should be assigned to positions with more responsibility and there should be support for capacity-building activities.
- Bringing women to the table does not necessarily result in the inclusion of a gender perspective in peace processes. International actors should have a good understanding of gender issues.
- Women are not a homogenous group. In those cases where women are able to join the formal processes, it is often only the elite who get to participate. These women do not necessarily represent women coming from different economic, religious and ethnic backgrounds.
- Current peace talk practices are to be questioned. The argument for not including women at the table is now often that women cannot be found in high-level positions.
- National and grassroots peace initiatives need to be better connected.
- There should be a move from planning *for* to planning *with* women in conflict-affected areas.

Recommendations Session I

The EU, playing an important role in numerous peace processes, should come with a stronger message regarding women's participation in peace processes.

- The EU should provide political and financial support for women's participation in all peace and security related processes. For example, the EU needs to make participation of women a specific objective and condition of its action in relation to peace processes. Political support should be given to local initiatives, especially women's organisations, as this provides legitimacy and confidence.
- The EU should also make it easier for grassroots organisations to obtain funding. Application procedures are often lengthy and require a lot of work.
- The EU should ensure active participation of indigenous women's groups in peace and security processes.
- The EU should increase the number of women in top positions in its own peace and security structures as this enhances the EU's legitimacy and provides women in conflict-affected countries with role models.

The EU should work on its understanding of gender issues.

- The EU should increase its competence regarding gender issues in peace processes, including by appointing a permanent gender advisor on peace processes.
- Instead of applying ready-made, one-size-fits-all interventions, the EU should have a deep

- understanding of local contexts.
- Long-term development initiatives such as women's access to education should be supported more actively as they are key to women's participation in peace processes. The EU should not trade off women's rights in difficult contexts.

There should be better cooperation and coordination between EU Delegations and civil society organisations in conflict-affected areas.

- Civil society organisations should always go and see EU Delegations to figure out what is there and check whether women's rights or WPS issues are included as priorities in a call. CSOs can also put forward proposals to the EU.
- EU Delegations, in turn, need to more actively engage with civil society. Delegations should regularly share information and consult with civil society organisations, including local women's groups. They should also be actively looking for possibilities to work together with CSOs, instead of just asking CSOs to knock on their doors.
- EU Delegations should make more active use of all women, peace and security tools available and be held to account for (in)actions in this respect.

Session II – Implementation of Peace Agreements – DDR, peacekeeping...

Women's participation in immediate and short-term implementation of peace agreements

Using Nepal as a starting point, session II explored how to improve the participation of women in immediate and short-term implementation of peace agreements. This session included a focus on the gendered dimensions of DDR efforts as well as peacekeeping missions. It also paid attention to the effects of the exclusion of women from official talks on peace agreements' implementation processes. Furthermore, there was attention for UNSCR 1325 national action plans (NAPs).

Rosy Cave, Head of Saferworld's Asia programme, facilitated and thematically introduced this session. In her introduction, Cave focused on ways to improve women's participation and the inclusion of a gender perspective in the implementation of peace agreements. For example, she stressed that the EU must strengthen the participation of women in peace and security matters, such as in the implementation of its CSDP missions, make gender-mainstreaming a priority instead of leaving it to being a tick-the-box exercise and include gender advisers that have direct links to the heads of mission or delegation. Furthermore, she called for the EU to have regular consultations with women's groups, improve its resources and expertise in gender issues for the missions and have more women in its missions in general, particularly in senior positions. Cave argued that the EU should recognise the role of women as part of the fighting forces and take their needs into account when planning and implementing reintegration activities, as well as ensure their representation in SSR activities.

Indu Pant, Senior Gender Advisor at CARE Nepal, presented the key findings of a study into women's participation in the peace process in Nepal, conducted by CARE. She stressed that women were notably absent from the peace talks. Though women leaders were very much involved in mobilising the Nepali people for peace, and women were clearly affected by the conflict, they were missing from the negotiations. Hierarchical structures were among the reasons that kept them from taking a place at the table. Interviews with local women showed that the peace process was regarded as only being concerned with the interests of the powerful, not with those of normal people. Today, few women participate in politics at decision-making level. Committees set up to ensure implementation of the peace agreement also see little meaningful participation from women. And women who do have a seat at the decision-making table are often side-lined. Furthermore, reintegration programmes often lack a gender perspective and they are also not community-based. Pant also pointed to the need for justice for women who were victims of sexual and gender based violence and the role the international community in this respect. Ending on a positive note, Pant explained that the government of Nepal has produced a good national action plan (NAP) for implementation of UNSCR 1325.

Bandana Rana from Saathi, an organisation advocating for women's rights and working to reduce violence against women in Nepal, added to Pant's analysis. Rana pointed to some further positive developments, including the adoption of an election law resulting in an increase in participation of women in e.g. the constitutional assembly, legislation on domestic violence and a gender based violence action plan. Regarding Nepal's NAP, Rana, who advised the government on the plan, stressed the cooperative and participatory nature of its development.

Remarks Session II

- To ensure meaningful participation in decision-making, women should be selected on the basis of skills and topical expertise.
- Women's organisations need training in practical skills, such as organisational management, in order to be more effective.
- There are numerous socio-economic preconditions for political participation. For example, women's participation in decision-making can be hindered by structural obstacles, such as limited daily availability of electricity.
- Women's groups should not only be included in WPS discussions but also in all decision-making processes related to peace and security.
- Post-conflict projects should always budget for women's needs.
- In lessons learned processes there should be attention to how women's participation can be (further) encouraged.
- The development of national and regional action plans or strategies for implementation of UNSCR 1325 and related commitments, when based on an inclusive approach, can help further women's participation in post-conflict situations. In order to be fully efficient and maximise impacts, all action plans and/or strategies for implementation of UNSCR 1325 should include: specific and realistic goals, objectives and priority actions; timelines; a dedicated budget; indicators, benchmarks and targets; clear lines of responsibility; a results-oriented and transparent reporting and monitoring mechanism; and mechanisms for civil society participation in the implementation, monitoring and review of the plan or strategy.
- Women are often not recognised as active combatants. Female ex-combatants' special needs should be addressed in DDR activities. DDR programmes should also involve communities and take into account combatants' dependants.
- It is crucial to pay attention to issues like land rights in the early phases of implementation. Post-conflict situations may offer brief windows of opportunity to make positive changes.

Recommendations Session II

The EU needs to also ensure the inclusion of women and a gender perspective in decision-making processes after a peace agreement has been concluded.

- The international community, including the EU, should advocate for gender quotas as well as introduce quotas in their own institutions.
- The EU should put gender issues at the centre of its bilateral and multilateral dialogues.
- EU progress reports, prepared annually to assess what each (potential) candidate for EU membership has achieved and areas where more effort is required, can also be a valuable tool for implementation of UNSCR 1325. Besides a specific section on WPS issues, a gender perspective needs to be included in every part of the report. Civil society, including women's organisations, should always be consulted in preparation of the evaluation.

The EU needs to support (further) implementation of UNSCR 1325, within and outside the EU.

- As implementation of 1325 NAPs has not progressed in many countries, the EU and the international community at large should look into positive measures ('carrots') to encourage progress on implementation.

WPS issues and gender-mainstreaming must be considered a priority for EU CSDP missions and not a matter of ticking-the-box.

- EU mission mandates and evaluation reports should always include clear reference to implementation of UNSCR 1325.
- All missions should have competent gender advisers / units, adjusted to the size of the mission.
- Gender advisers always need to be directly linked to the heads of mission and other senior staff and be included in key discussions, such as strategic planning meetings.
- Sufficient financial and human resources need to be made available for gender work.
- EU missions need to regularly inform and consult with CSOs, including women's groups.
- Equal secondary provisions should be provided to staff in CSDP missions.

The EU needs to make sure that DDR programmes pay special attention to women's needs.

Session III – Building Institutions / States

Women's participation in building states and institutions

The third session dealt with women's participation in institution- and statebuilding efforts, both in post-conflict environments (SSR, post-conflict politics, etc.) and in relation to peace and security institutions in Europe (e.g. EEAS). This session was facilitated and introduced by Steven Schoofs, Gender Manager at International Alert. Ariana Qosaj Mustafa, Director of Special Research at KIPRED, and Arnaud-Pierre Appriou of the Kosovo team at DG Enlargement, European Commission, spoke on Kosovo.

In his introduction, **Steven Schoofs** emphasised that the EU and the rest of the international community should bring women's participation to the centre of state- and peacebuilding agendas. For Schoofs only the inclusive, accountable and democratic kind of peace can bring stability, hence women's participation in peace- and statebuilding processes is essential. He argued that statebuilding should always reflect women's concerns and use women's capacity. Furthermore, he urged the EU to strengthen the access and inclusion of women - not only in numbers but also qualitatively, by offering training and assigning women to senior posts.

Subsequently, **Ariana Qosaj Mustafa** presented the findings of a recent study conducted by KIPRED and FRIDE on the impact of statebuilding on women and the opportunities and policy options for promoting women's citizenship in state-building processes in Kosovo. In her presentation Qosaj Mustafa recalled some of the challenges and inequalities that women face in Kosovo, such as high employment rate, low literacy rate, domestic violence and trafficking, affecting women's participation in decision-making. Even though the recent years have brought some positive changes, such as a quota for the Kosovo Assembly, the overall picture is that women remain under-represented and ignored in politics. As an example, she took Kosovo's Security Strategy, which almost completely overlooks women's security concerns. Qosaj Mustafa called for better thinking on how to make women's voices heard in decentralisation efforts.

The third session's final presenter was **Arnaud-Pierre Appriou** from the Kosovo Team at DG Enlargement of the European Commission. He emphasised the EU's strong involvement in Kosovo. He also pointed out that future EU membership is conditioned on Kosovo's respect for European values, including women's rights and gender equality. Appriou presented briefly the different tools and efforts that the EU and its MS have adopted and pushed for regarding women's participation in Kosovo's statebuilding. He also explained that the EU is working to help strengthen Kosovo's public administration as there are issues with law enforcement in Kosovo.

Remarks Session III

- Besides paying attention to the need to include *women* in statebuilding processes, there should also be thinking about the inclusion of other vulnerable groups, including ethnic minorities.

- Decentralisation can be used as a peacebuilding strategy. It is important to consider how women and other underrepresented groups can be included in related processes.
- Where resources are limited, gender training should be provided to heads and senior level staff, as lower level officers are supposed to follow orders.

Recommendations Session III

The EU should ensure that women are able to meaningfully participate in state- and institution building discussions and processes, at all levels.

- When supporting the design and reform of governance institutions, the EU should support the participation of women in representative institutions and official public-sector entities, including via quotas and other special measures.
- The EU should actively support the development of gender mechanisms in conflict-affected countries.
- In EU missions and delegations, gender focal points and/or officers should always be included in strategic planning meetings and other key decision-making processes.
- The EU should work to increase the number of women in its own peacebuilding organs. The EU is currently involved in important institutional reform processes. In the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS), attention should be paid to including a gender perspective and a specific WPS unit, as well as ensuring women's equal participation in the Service. Gender quotas for EU top jobs should be considered. Attention to gender equality and gender-sensitivity will increase the EU's legitimacy with respect to the WPS-agenda.

The EU should push for judicial reforms in post-conflict situations as it is often the women who suffer from gaps in the judicial system.

Closing

In the final session, participants emphasised their appreciation for the opportunity to dialogue. Participants from conflict-affected countries stressed they were happy 'to meet the person called EU' and to be able to raise points directly in an open dialogue.

Lena Ag provided closing remarks. She summarised the event by emphasising the need to recognise, include and fund women in peace processes. Firstly, Ag argued that international recognition of the work of women peace activists can provide protection and moral support and bolster credibility. Secondly, she emphasised the need for female peace negotiators and mediators, as well as attention for women's experiences at the negotiating table. She questioned the practice of automatically inviting to the table those who resort to violence and destruct. Ag also highlighted the window of opportunity to eliminate inequalities and discrimination in law and in practice in the early post-conflict days. Furthermore, she insisted on increasing the participation of CSO representatives, including women's organisations, in peace talks. Every track I process, Ag argued, should be mirrored in a track II process. Thirdly, Lena Ag stressed that women peacebuilders are falling through the funding cracks. Women's peace and security work, she explained, differs from standard humanitarian and development work. The resources that are available from donors often compel women to structure their work as projects, limiting their flexibility to be innovative and responsive to events. Although more funding is now available for the WPS agenda, most of it does not reach activists on the ground. Ag stressed the need for long-term, predictable support and capacity development as well as core funding. To finish off, she emphasised the need for high-level leadership, for example through a special WPS position (e.g. EU Special Representative) with a clear mandate to promote, monitor and report on the implementation of UNSCR 1325, matched with adequate resources.

Further Reading Suggestions

For more CSO recommendations, please consult:

- '10 Points on 10 Years UNSCR 1325 in Europe – CSO Position Paper on Europe-wide Implementation of UNSCR 1325', August 2010.
[http://www.eplo.org/assets/files/2.%20Activities/Working%20Groups/GPS/CSO Position Paper 10 Points on 10 Years UNSCR 1325 in Europe 1008.pdf](http://www.eplo.org/assets/files/2.%20Activities/Working%20Groups/GPS/CSO%20Position%20Paper%2010%20Points%20on%2010%20Years%20UNSCR%201325%20in%20Europe%201008.pdf)
- CARE, 'From Resolution to Reality: Lessons learned from Afghanistan, Nepal and Uganda on women's participation in peacebuilding and post-conflict governance', October 2010.
<http://www.careinternational.org.uk/news-and-press/latest-press-releases/1554-no-peace-without-women-care-report>
- FRIDE project on state-building and women's citizenship
 - Project website:
<http://www.fride.org/project/17/strengthening-women's-citizenship-in-the-context-of-state-building>
 - KIPRED/FRIDE, 'Strengthening Women's Citizenship in the Context of State-building: Kosovo Security Sector and Decentralisation', July 2010
http://www.kipred.net/web/upload/Kosovo_womens_citizenship_state_building.pdf
- Initiative on Quiet Diplomacy, 'SCR 1325 and Women's Participation: Operational Guidelines for Conflict Resolution and Peace Processes', October 2010.
http://www.iqdiplomacy.org/images/stories/handbook/pdf/scr1325_iqd.pdf

For more information about the EU and women's participation in peace processes, please consult:

- Website of the Council of the European Union on Women, Peace and Security
<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=1886&lang=en>
 - 'Comprehensive approach to the EU implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security':
<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/08/st15/st15671-re01.en08.pdf>
 - 'Implementation of UNSCR 1325 as reinforced by UNSCR 1820 in the context of ESDP':
<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/08/st15/st15782-re03.en08.pdf>
 - 'EU guidelines on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them':
<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/08/st16/st16173.en08.pdf>