



Civil Society Dialogue Network

Member State Meeting

EU Approach to Women, Peace and Security: Lessons Identified and Way Forward

Wednesday 14 December 2022 (11.30 – 16.30 CET)

**Scandic Hotel Grand Central,
Kungsgatan 70, 11120 Stockholm, Sweden**

Concept Note

Background

Conflict and war have devastating consequences for people around the world. Given the diversity of humankind, the experiences of conflict differ and intersect with other social factors and aspects of identity. Conflict, war and fragility impact gender roles and often go hand in hand with violations of the rights of women and vulnerable groups. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated gender and other inequalities.

The EU is committed to promoting gender equality as a key political objective in its external action and common foreign and security policy (CFSP)¹, and the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda is one of the focus areas of the EU's third Gender Action Plan (GAP III)² adopted in 2020. The implementation of GAP III runs parallel to the programming under Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument-Global Europe (NDICI-GE). Implementation of these commitments is a constant challenge, and results achieved cannot be taken for granted. As GAP III states, 'there is not a single country in the world that is close to achieving by 2030 gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls'.

The role of the EU Member States in implementing the EU commitments is important. Sweden has expressed its commitment to the promotion of gender equality in its external action, as well as to ensuring the implementation of the WPS agenda through GAP III. Sweden and Spain have proposed an 'EU year of Gender Equality' in 2023. Furthermore, support to and co-operation with civil society, including women-led civil society organisations (CSOs), is fundamental to the implementation of the WPS agenda.

During 2023, a mid-term review of the GAP III is expected, and a mid-term review of NDICI-GE will take place in 2024. These two reviews will be important mechanisms for assessing the EU's

¹ EU GENDER ACTION PLAN (GAP) III – AN AMBITIOUS AGENDA FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN EU EXTERNAL ACTION ([online](#))

² The GAP III combines gender mainstreaming, targeted actions and political dialogue. Gender inequality is understood as a root cause and driver of conflict and fragility.

level of implementation of its objectives and values related to gender equality and women's empowerment in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

Objectives

The overall objective is to share insights and recommendations for strengthening EU support to gender equality and women's empowerment in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The meeting will provide inputs into the mid-term review of GAP III in 2023 and of NDICI-GE in 2024. This overall objective will be achieved by two main objectives:

- Share lessons identified and good practices for improving women's empowerment and gender equality in peacebuilding and conflict prevention in fragile and conflict-affected contexts;
- Formulate recommendations on how to enhance the roles of CSOs and EU Member States as partners to the EU in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, in view of enhancing the implementation of the WPS agenda.

Participants

The meeting will bring together approximately 30 participants, including experts from EPLO member organisations and other civil society organisations, other peace and security experts, and officials from both the EC and the EEAS, and Swedish government.

Format and Structure

The meeting will take the form of a facilitated round-table discussion under the Chatham House Rule. The meeting will be held in English.

Outcomes

A report of the meeting will be shared with all participants and published on the EPLO website.

Wednesday 14 November

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| 11.30 – 12.00 | Registration |
| 12.00 – 13.00 | Networking lunch |
| 13.00 – 13.20 | <p>Opening remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jonathan Cohen, Executive Director, Conciliation Resources • Petra Tötterman Andorff, Secretary General, the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation • H.E. Sofia Calltorp, Ambassador for Gender Equality, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs |
| 13.20 – 13.30 | Tour de table (introductions) |
| 13.30 – 14.15 | <p>Session 1 – EU approach to women, peace and security</p> <p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Janna Greve, Policy Officer, ISP.2, European External Action Service • Jörgen Frotzler, Director, Section for Conflict Issues and UN Security Policy UD-FN-KS / Department for UN Policy, Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs <p>This session captures the EU's approach to WPS. In particular, the following questions will be discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the different EU external action tools, policies and support mechanisms for addressing WPS? What is the role and relevance of WPS agenda and GAP III in the current global security environment? • How does the EU work with its Member States and CSOs as partners for gender equality and women's empowerment in peacebuilding and conflict prevention in fragile and conflict-affected contexts? |
| 14.15 – 15.15 | <p>Session 2 – Lessons identified from EU instruments contributing to the achievement of WPS agenda and the roles of CSOs and Member States as partners to the EU in fragile and conflict-affected contexts (small groups)</p> <p>This session aims at sharing insights gained during the concrete implementation of the WPS agenda on the ground in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. The following topics may be discussed:</p> |

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has the EU engaged with local CSOs and Member States in fragile and conflict-affected settings with a focus on gender equality and women's empowerment? • Concrete examples of best practice regarding cooperation, dialogue and funding with women-led civil society on peacebuilding and conflict prevention in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. |
| 15.15 – 15.30 | Coffee and tea |
| 15.30 – 16.15 | <p>Session 3 – Recommendations and the way forward (plenary)</p> <p>This session will aim at sharing recommendations for achieving the EU commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment in peacebuilding and conflict prevention. These recommendations should feed into the expected mid-term review of GAP III in 2023 and of NDICI-GE in 2024. In particular, the following questions will be discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can EU WPS-related processes and instruments, as well as their implementation, be strengthened? • How can the partnerships between the EU, its Member States and CSOs be strengthened to jointly advance the WPS agenda and thus the role of women in peacebuilding and conflict prevention? |
| 16.15 – 16.30 | <p>Closing remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sophie Borel, Crisis Response Planner, Service for Foreign Policy Instruments, FPI.2 - Stability and Peace - Crisis response, Conflict Prevention and Peace Building, European Commission (EC) • Judy McCallum, Executive Director, Life & Peace Institute • EPLO |

Civil Society Dialogue Network

The Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) is a mechanism for dialogue between civil society and EU policy-makers on issues related to peace and conflict. It is co-financed by the European Union (Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace). It is managed by the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), a civil society network, in co-operation with the European Commission (EC) and the European External Action Service (EEAS). The fourth phase of the CSDN will last from 2020 to 2023. For more information, please visit the [EPLO website](#).