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— 2016 —
BANGKOK

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RECONSIDERING
**GENDER
EQUALITY**
AND PEACEFUL
SOCIETIES

7-8 MAY 2016, BANGKOK-THAILAND

Concept Note

Background

Sustainable Development, which aims to address pressing environmental, social and economic issues such as climate change, poverty and inequality among others, has become a central concern for the global community starting with the publication of Brundtland Report of World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1983. Since then, sustainable development has become a priority in the global arena in key international institutions such as the United Nations (UN) and the World Bank and has informed the development agenda of the UN. However, there has been an increasing awareness of the link between sustainable development and peace more recently. Because problems sustainable development agenda aims to address are often key triggers and underlying causes in many international and civil conflicts today.¹ International summits such as Rio+20 and UN Summit to adopt the Post-2015 Development Agenda include issues related to the connection between peace, security and sustainable development as some of the main development goals to be address until 2030.

Within this context, particular attention must to be given to women's concerns related to peace, security and sustainable development as it is increasingly becoming evident that the empowerment and active involvement of women is a crucial prerequisite to successful and sustainable development and peacebuilding efforts. Empirical evidence shows that conflict and war effect girls and women differently than boys and men. Women and children account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict as refugees and internally displaced persons. They are increasingly targeted by combatants and armed groups, and suffer incredibly horrific atrocities and injustices such as torture, forced pregnancy, abduction and sexual abuse and slavery. As a result of the conflict and violence, women usually become heads of households, responsible for taking care of the children and elderly alone and become sole breadwinners struggling to find water, food and shelter for their dependents. The long-term effects of war and culture of violence also adversely affect women as social fragmentation undermines networks of support and weakened institutions and law renders them vulnerable to continued abuse and neglect. Women often face threats from not only combatants but also criminals and family members. Destroyed infrastructure make it even more difficult for women to take care of their families even after the conflict subsides.

Traditionally, women have been looked upon as victims of conflict; the passive and periphery recipients of development initiatives. In reality, however, women in conflict zones, such as in Nigeria, Somalia, Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, have shown incredible resilience and have overcome significant challenges. They have become breadwinners and have taken on new roles in their social and economic lives. In many instances, women have actively played a role in reducing violence and working towards a just and equitable resolution of conflicts. As such, women have come to reposition themselves as an active shaping force of the peace and development agenda, women are now crucial agents in the formal and informal sphere of peacebuilding.

1. For more information: The report of the United Nations Secretary-General on the "Prevention of Armed Conflict" (A/55/985-S/2001/574)

While conflict and war may alter the traditional gender roles and create new opportunities for women to become more mobile and have new resources and roles in their communities, mechanisms that address women's needs are often absent or underdeveloped. Women's unique needs such as physical and economic security, psychosocial and health care, among others are largely neglected. They rarely have the same resources, political rights, authority or control over their environment that men do.

Addressing women's needs, recognizing the important role women play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, stressing the importance of their equal participation and engagement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security is a prerequisite to successful and sustainable peacebuilding efforts.

Recognizing this fact, many CSOs and UN have taken steps to address women's needs and empower and encourage active involvement of women in preventing and resolving conflicts. For example, United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, adopted in 2000 (and was followed by six additional Resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106 and 2122) recognize the disproportionate impact that war and conflicts have on women and children, and highlight the fact that women have been historically left out of peace processes and stabilization efforts. These Resolutions call for full and equal participation of women at all levels in issues ranging from early conflict prevention to post-conflict reconstruction, peace and security.

Increasingly, CSOs' and Women's peace coalitions have grown in strength and have been able to put women's concerns on the agenda of peace talks successfully. Today, the protection of women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence is recognized to be a priority challenge for humanitarian and peacekeeping practice and transitional justice mechanisms are increasingly responding to war crimes against women with more overt attention to the ways conflict affects women and with specific arrangements to protect women witnesses.

Despite these efforts, implementation of these resolutions and addressing the needs of women has been slow. Arrangements of women's security and survival needs are inadequate or absent rates of indictments and convictions for war crimes against women are still very low and reparation programs for women victims and communities are rare, economic and political opportunities for women are still lacking in many contexts. Although conflict-related sexual violence has been recognized as a 'war tactic' that threatens international peace and security and has been elevated to a place on the mainstream peace and security policy agenda practical and tactical responses are still lagging behind. There are no international mechanisms to ensure implementation of WPS resolutions as their implementation lies mainly with UN Member States and UN Security council can only encourage Member states and various stakeholders such as local, regional and international civil society organizations and networks to develop national plans and develop mechanisms to monitor their implementation (UN Women Sourcebook on Women, Peace and Security 2012).

Objectives and Expected Outcome

Istanbul Summit 2016 recognizes the urgent need to addressing the issue of Women, Peace and Security as an important component of sustainable development and proposes to invite experts and thought leaders to discuss current state of Women, Peace and Security, challenges facing women in conflict and peacebuilding and next steps. The objective of this Summit is to raise awareness of the international community to the specific concerns, needs, and challenges faced by women in the context of sustainable development, peace and security and to mobilize an international network for action to advocate in addressing these issues effectively and efficiently. Toward that end, the Summit will focus on the following themes:

Issues and Topics

Thematic Sessions:

Session 1.

Setting the Framework: (Linking) Sustainable Development and Promotion of Peace

- Defining peaceful societies in the context of sustainable development
- Centrality of Inclusion in promoting peaceful societies
- Good governance and rule of law at the national and international levels, and equal access to justice for all
- Strengthening national and international institutions, through cooperation, for capacity building at all levels to prevent violence and combating terrorism and crime

Session 2.

Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls

- Women's full and effective participation in leadership at all levels of decision-making in public life
- Economic Opportunities and Empowerment of women
- Women's Equal Access to Health Care and Education
- Reviewing and strengthening policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels

Session 3.

Women, Peace and Security

- Protection of the Rights of Women in Conflict and Elimination all forms of violence against all women and girls in public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

- Women's diverse post-conflict needs, both urgent and long-term
- Reparation for victims of violence and healing
- Women's participation and representation in various aspects of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace building

Parliamentary Roundtable (closed session):

Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality: Next-Steps

- How can we promote women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership?
- What are the Economic, healthcare and education needs of women in conflict situations
- What specific roles women can play in elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls?
- What measures do we need to take in order to address the urgent needs of women in conflict?

Working Groups:

1. Women's Full and Effective Participation and Equal Opportunities for Leadership
2. Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against All Women And Girls
3. Good Governance and the Rule of Law
4. Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women in Conflict
5. Women's Participation and Representation in Various Aspects of Conflict Prevention and Resolution

Program Format

The summit will include **sessions**, aiming to facilitate an in-depth discussion of the specific practices and methods employed by CSOs and experts of diverse backgrounds, sharing experiences and challenges. In these sessions which are organized around Setting the Framework: (Linking) Sustainable Development and Promotion of Peace; Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls; Women, Peace and Security, there will be a chance for CSOs to deliver short oral statements. CSOs will be eligible to make statements after registering on the Summit's website www.istanbulsummit.org. Also, there will be **working groups** for participants to discuss specific issues and resume them in bullet points under the supervision of moderator elected among the group. A **special session of women parliamentarians** from around the world in a roundtable format will be held. This roundtable will discuss women's empowerment and gender equality: next-steps and potential for collaborative action by lawmakers in international and national for a. The forum will issue three outcome documents: A Final Declaration prepared by the Final Declaration Preparatory Committee consisting of academics and experts, the Working Groups Outcomes which summarize the discussion of the working groups and a Call for Action of the parliamentary roundtable. The results will be submitted to the UN's relevant agencies and other stakeholders.

Organization



Journalists and Writers Foundation (JWF) was established by a group of distinguished writers, scholars, and journalists in 1994 to contribute to peaceful coexistence and dialogue by bringing together intellectuals from all political spectrums with different cultural, religious, ethnic and ideological backgrounds that belong to the many diverse disciplines in science, religion, philosophy, politics, and art. Its mission is to look for ways of building a common living space based on reconciliation and mutual respect. Currently, there are six different platforms relied upon to organize the work of the Foundation; each platform specializes in different aspects of building dialogue. These include the Abant Platform, Dialogue Eurasia, the Medialog Platform, the Intercultural Dialogue Platform, and the Women's Platform. There is also a Research Centre. To carry its national mission in the international arena, the JWF holds General Consultative Status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council, being the first and only institution to achieve this status in Turkey.



JWF Women's Platform was founded in 2009 and aims to promote dialogue and peacebuilding at the local and global scale, by providing democratic arenas for the free and fair discussion of prevailing problems, including the disintegration of the family, gender-based discrimination in various areas, the humanitarian crisis in conflict zones, and highlighting the role of women in peace building, as well as in maintaining and improving peace.

Partner



Thailand Achievement Institute (TAI) was established in August 2013 with an aim of promoting peaceful co-existence of different walks of life regardless of ethnicity, faith, color, or culture; and mutual understanding, acceptance, and appreciation of one another's beings, point of views and perspectives. We believe that out of several setbacks humanity encounters, the culprit is undoubtedly "ignorance, poverty, and disunity". Therefore, it is our first and foremost tenet and duty to realize any legitimate means by which the eradication of ignorance, poverty and disunity through education, welfare, and unity respectively can be fulfilled. For us to achieve a world where individuals not only peacefully co-exist, but also extend a warm and loving heart to those who cannot cherish the appreciation of the rights of others to life, freedom of speech, and peaceful co-existence is paramount.



Venue and Date

Venue: Bangkok- Thailand

Date: 7- 8 May, 2016

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Program

May 7, Saturday - 2016

10.00 - 10.45 Opening Ceremony

10.45 - 12.30 Setting the Framework: (Linking) Sustainable Development and Promotion of Peace

12.30 - 12.40 Family Photo

12.40 - 14.00 Lunch

14.00 - 15.45 Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls

15.45 - 16.00 Coffee Break

16.00 - 17.45 Women, Peace and Security

May 8, Sunday -2016

10.00- 13.00 Working Groups on:

1. Women's Full and Effective Participation and Equal Opportunities for Leadership
2. Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against All Women And Girls
3. Good Governance and the Rule of Law
4. Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women in Conflict
5. Women's Participation and Representation in Various Aspects of Conflict Prevention

Parliamentary Roundtable on (closed session): Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality: Next-Steps

13.00 - 14.00 Lunch

14.00 - 15.30 Parliamentary Session: Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality: Next-Steps

15:30 - 15:45 Coffee Break

15.45 - 16.30 Announcement of Final Declaration & Closing Ceremony

18.00 - 20.00 Bosphorus Cruise