

Special Session of the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network 2020

ADVANCING THE WPS AGENDA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Webinar

Co-Hosted by Uruguay and Canada

13 May 2020 – 10:00- 11:30 EDT/GMT-4

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

This special session was the first opportunity for the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Focal Points Network to come together during this important year marking the 20th anniversary of landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). More than 200 participants from around the world, including WPS Focal Points and women peacebuilders, joined the session. The session opened with a warm welcome and opening remarks from the Co-Chairs: **Gwyneth Kutz**, WPS Focal Point for Canada, and **Noelia Martínez Franchi**, WPS Focal Point for Uruguay.

Gwyneth Kutz underscored that one of the great benefits of working on WPS is the opportunity to work within a strong and resilient global community of practice, committed to addressing the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. The WPS Focal Points Network is uniquely placed to do this as the Focal Points are responsible for advancing WPS priorities in the 87 UN member states and regional organizations represented within the Network.

She noted that Canada has prioritized a gender-sensitive response to COVID-19 both at home and abroad because the only way out of this crisis is by responding to the needs of all people, including women and girls. This starts with ensuring all policy choices and programming investments are informed by a robust gender analysis. As part of its domestic response package, the Government of Canada provided up to \$50 million to women's shelters and sexual assault centres. Canada is also adjusting conflict prevention and peacebuilding engagements to COVID-19 realities, and remains alert to the increased risk of abuses and violations of women's rights and attacks against women human rights defenders. Canada recognises the exceptional work carried out by women peacebuilders globally, who have pivoted their efforts to respond to the pandemic and continue to lead on calling for ceasefires and peace.

Ms. Kutz stressed that the WPS agenda offers a critical framework to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. WPS Focal Points can leverage the expertise of the Network to learn from each other and work together to respond to this crisis in a way that promotes equality, dignity, and inclusion and leads to lasting peace and security outcomes.

Noelia Martínez Franchi observed that while the Co-Chairs had planned and hoped for a face-to-face meeting this May in Canada, virtually chairing the Network during the COVID-19 crisis is an opportunity to adapt to new challenges and to bring out the best in us. The Co-Chairs will continue as planned in 2020 to address two main themes that are important for the effective implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. One is the need to protect and support women peacebuilders, an issue of great importance to all countries, including in the Americas region. The other is to support and encourage best practices for the development and implementation of results-oriented national action plans (NAPs) on WPS.

Ms. Martínez Franchi shared that the Co-Chairs plan to host a series of virtual sessions from May to September 2020 to develop recommendations on these two themes. A final closing session in the fall will be an opportunity to share conclusions. The active participation of all the Focal Points in these online sessions is encouraged and appreciated, and the Co-Chairs will share more detailed information on the program for these virtual sessions as soon as possible.

She also noted that, in preparation for their 2020 co-chair year, Uruguay and Canada hosted a regional workshop on “Opportunities for the WPS Agenda in the Americas” in December 2019 in Montevideo. Key points from the workshop that are relevant in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- It is clear that the Women, Peace and Security agenda applies not only in contexts of traditional armed conflict or post-conflict, but also for the construction and sustainability of peaceful, inclusive and tolerant societies in all our countries;
- Women's leadership is a critical component of any conflict prevention and sustainable peace initiative, and this must be strengthened in the Americas;
- In particular, the low level of women's political participation in the region was highlighted, which contrasts with the enormous leadership exercised by women in their local communities. Their engagement and leadership are important in order to respond effectively to this pandemic.

Interactive Discussion:

Moderator and Canada's Ambassador for WPS, **Jacqueline O'Neill**, began the discussion by noting the Network is a unique forum for government officials working on the WPS agenda. She encouraged engagement particularly from the Focal Points on what governments are doing to respond to COVID-19 crisis. The interactive dialogue included featured speakers:

Bineta Diop, African Union Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security

Rasha Jarhum, Founder, Peace Track Initiative, Yemen

María-Noel Vaeza, Americas Regional Director, UN Women

Oksana Potapova, Co-Founder, Theatre for Dialogue NGO, Ukraine

Each speaker was invited in turn by Ambassador O'Neill to share their perspectives on one of four key guiding questions. The questions were grounded in the two main themes for the 2020 co-chair year: *Supporting and Protecting Women Peacebuilders* and the importance of *Impact-Driven National Action Plans (NAPs)* on WPS.

Questions from the audience were coordinated by co-Moderators Ambassador Martin Vidal of Uruguay and Annik Lussier-Rez, Deputy Director, Women, Peace and Security for Global Affairs Canada. Participants also engaged in dialogue through the chat function, sharing information, links and exchanging comments and greetings. Questions submitted and voted on ahead of the session were also integrated in the discussion.

Question 1: *How can the lessons from past successes that have increased the participation of women in peacebuilding processes apply to the COVID-19 pandemic? What about lessons from women's leadership in past infectious disease outbreaks?*

Bineta Diop, African Union (AU) Special Envoy for WPS, emphasized that data collection is crucial for planning appropriate responses to COVID-19. Looking at the history of the Ebola virus on the African continent, there were more women hospitalized than men. In the Ebola epidemic, women were the ones more affected and infected. On the African continent now, the women are the ones taking care of the

sick. Women are the family caregivers. In all countries, the majority of personnel in hospitals are women. Mme. Diop also highlighted:

- The pandemic is an issue of peace and security: it begins as a health issue, but it has an important social dimension;
- We need to understand why data is important to our planning and response. Gender dimensions and the participation of women in planning pandemic response is the number one priority;
- Many African countries have dispatched soldiers to help with pandemic responses. The military are often not welcome in the communities, although police may be;
- We should consider the roles of women in the police forces, and in security responses in general: to help distribute food, but also to sensitize our communities. Women should be at the forefront of addressing conflict;
- Violence in the home is increasing everywhere, not just on the African continent, including rape, early marriage, and violence against refugees. How are women's organizations, and how can Focal Points ensure that women's leadership is present in the pandemic response? Women should be leading on all these issues, not hidden behind and not seen as victims.

Responding to questions from the audience, Mme. Diop noted the importance of marking the 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325, and that we are all trying to adapt to the pandemic and still observe this important year. The AU still plans to host a celebration of UNSCR 1325 in October 2020, and a monthly webinar for women ministers of the African continent. Addressing a question about the move to digital engagement, she noted that we have to "live with the virus", and we still need to organize and solve problems working together. There were plans to work in 2020 with AU members who have NAPs on guidelines to support their reporting, and now they will host a steering committee for this online, with the help of UN Women.

Question 2: What are the impacts of COVID-19 on women peacebuilders, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected states? How can the WPS Focal Points Network, through concrete action points, support the efforts of national and local governments to mitigate these impacts?

Rasha Jarhum (Peace Track Initiative Founder) shared that in the context of Yemen specifically, women are leaders in calling for adequate responses to COVID-19 and larger peacebuilding efforts. In the context of the pandemic specifically, women are the early leaders in preparation and response, organizing fundraising, training, equipment for health facilities and aid distribution, supporting first responders, and generally raising awareness among the Yemeni people. There are many challenges for an effective pandemic response in Yemen: how can people be expected to wash their hands when there is no water? How can they be told to stay home when they are displaced and living in areas that are overcrowded or need to go out to secure their livelihoods? In addition to Yemen being impacted by the world's worst humanitarian crisis as well as severe flooding in the last few months, Ms. Jarhum stressed that Yemeni women are suffering in the COVID-19 pandemic and there are no health facilities to turn to. She noted Yemen has seen the de-prioritization of gender issues by donors who are focused on the pandemic response. Of note are also increasing online security concerns faced by local women peacebuilders (including blackmail and direct security threats to silence them).

Ms. Jarhum observed recent peace processes led by the UN Envoy in Yemen demonstrated a marked decrease in women's participation from 30% to only one woman. Gender advisors were invited by the UN Envoy but did not actively participate and were excluded from the opening and closing ceremonies. Now even with the move to use of digital spaces for peace talks /dialogue, Ms. Jarhum noted that women continue to be excluded from these processes. Excuses include there is no infrastructure for the inclusion

of women in the diaspora - there is no “bandwidth” for this. Ms. Jarhum made the following recommendations to the WPS Focal Points:

- There can be no excuse for excluding women from peace processes. The international community has many tools to help support their participation, including through UNSC resolutions on Yemen;
- Support Yemen’s National Action Plan (NAP) process, both technically and financially. This includes encouraging strong input on the NAP from civil society;
- Increased donor support is needed for Yemeni women’s peacebuilding organizations, with long term and sustainable protection programs (not just emergency, short term funding); and
- Dedicate separate COVID-19 funding without compromising gender justice programs and core and flexible support for women’s organizations.

In response to questions from the audience, Ms. Jarhum confirmed there have been lockdowns in response to the COVID-19 pandemic but these are primarily security measures (such as a curfew starting at eight in the evening and ending at six in the morning). People largely do not adhere to government instructions not to go out, including to mosques or markets. They say they are scared but indifferent to the pandemic given other hardships and dangers. Their livelihoods are their main priority right now.

Ms. Jarhum also noted that while the WPS agenda is supported in Yemen, as in many countries it has not been implemented. Funding for Yemen is focused on humanitarian assistance and even in this, gender and GBV clusters have the lowest financial support. She observed this version of humanitarian aid means much of the aid goes directly to armed groups on the frontlines instead of helping the people. Direct funding to women’s organizations would be more effective, including to support their work on ceasefires and humanitarian corridors in Yemen.

Question 3: *Why is the WPS agenda a critical framework to help respond to the COVID-19 crisis? How can the Focal Points Network advance the WPS agenda as a critical framework to help respond to the COVID-19 crisis?*

María-Noel Vaeza (Americas Regional Director, UN Women) noted the pandemic has highlighted how our economic systems rely on the care work that women do. Women are 90% of caregivers for families. They are 75% of health workers on the frontlines of the health system but are paid 25% less than men for the same jobs. COVID-19 has highlighted existing discrimination and inequalities in all societies, however, not just for women. The pandemic hit the Latin American and Caribbean region in a context of existing social unrest. Ms. Vaeza noted a concern about authoritarian approaches to using emergency powers in many countries. On the other hand, the region is also seeing innovation in protecting human rights and democracy, supported by civil society efforts. She hopes the UN Security Council will support the UN Secretary-General’s call for a global ceasefire, and called upon everyone to demonstrate support for this call.

Ms. Vaeza noted that NAPs should be high-impact and crisis-responsive. She also emphasized the importance of:

- Meaningful engagement with civil society in the development of NAPs;
- The increased participation and representation of women in the military and police, and a return to community policing efforts rather than private police;
- COVID-19 responses that include women leaders, in order to benefit from their experience with crisis response, conflict prevention, and mediation; and
- Defending human rights defenders.

Question 4: How can national or regional action plans on WPS be utilized to address the security implications of pandemics? What are some of the crucial security issues faced by women and/or marginalized communities?

Oksana Potapova (Theatre for Dialogue NGO Co-Founder), speaking from the Ukrainian perspective in particular, emphasized this pandemic is a crucial opportunity for women activists to help shape the “normal” that we return to. On the situation in Ukraine during the COVID-19 pandemic, she highlighted that:

- Women peacebuilders and women’s organizations are a crucial resource in terms of assessing the needs of communities; they are responding to the pandemic with feminist analysis and research, and yet they are not consulted by the government in decisions related to the pandemic.
- The pandemic has resulted in an increase in domestic and gender-based violence but there is no rapid response to this from the governments. Police are focused on other issues, including enforcing quarantines. Women’s safety and security must be a priority and embedded in the implementation of the WPS agenda
- Hate speech and risks of violence are increasing against marginalized communities, particularly in conflict-affected areas. These groups are being blamed for the pandemic (e.g. targeting the LGBTQ+ community, ethnic minorities and migrants).

On NAPs, Ms. Potapova noted:

- We need a paradigm shift, including adjusting existing NAPs to changing realities on the ground based on a more holistic, gender-responsive, care-based approach to human security);
- More and better data is needed to gauge the security needs of the communities, and women’s organizations are an important source of this information for an accurate needs-assessment using feminist analysis.
- Working together to ensure effective NAP design and implementation is a matter of effective democracy. We need working, effective mechanisms for consultation on NAPs.

When asked by the audience about the opportunities that arise from this pandemic, she said this is our chance as researchers and activists to change our approach to pandemic response and back this up with data. The pandemic has made the invisible care work done by women visible and this is important to continue to do. Gender stereotypes affect the distribution of work and with evidence we can make the case for reform.

On military funding, Ms. Potapova noted that Ukraine is trying to find a balance between strengthening its army and other needs. She shared that women in conflict-affected areas of Ukraine say, aside from the shelling, they worry most about their economic instability. There are also worries about more risks of violence towards marginalized groups, including women and women activists in particular, related to both an increased military presence and economic instability.

Responses from the “Troika” Focal Points

Ambassador O’Neill invited the past and future chairs of the Network to share their reflections on the discussions. Representing Namibia (2019 Chair), Nekwaya Iileka noted that COVID-19 has exposed and intensified existing and structural inequalities in all countries. However, we should use this time to re-prioritize, including to highlight and demonstrate the relevance and importance of the WPS agenda and to think beyond 2020. She agreed that data collection is very important, as is gender-responsive budgeting. This is an opportunity to explore how digital spaces can increase and elevate the role of women peacebuilders, human rights defenders and civil society organizations. We can create new tables that

don't have the same limitations on participation. The current crisis is also an opportunity to examine interrelated health, social, and political consequences that contribute to conflict. She concluded that it will be important to ensure the new international women's peace centre in Namibia is robust and flexible in its approach and design.

Yannick Reichenau, the WPS Focal Point for Switzerland (2021 Co-Chair) thanked the participants for all the food for thought, and for action, and agreed that we must continue to defend the human rights defenders. The impact of the pandemic on conflict zones is severe, but it can also provide an important opportunity to create successful ceasefire agreements. This is one of the areas where Switzerland has been active and has had success in helping to support ceasefires through its good offices.

Charlotte Lobe, WPS Focal Points for South Africa (2021 Co-Chair), joined Mme. Diop's call to focus our COVID-19 response on the world's most vulnerable people, including those who live in conflict and are forced to flee war. We need to think deeply about how we provide critical support to them. Learning from past epidemics, we know women are disproportionately affected. She stressed that NAPs should be used as key instruments in the fight against the pandemic and that human security and state security are inherently linked – you cannot have one without the other. Ms. Lobe noted that women are not observers to conflict and therefore, should not be observers to peace processes. The same principle applies to pandemic response: women are not observers in this pandemic and can't be relegated to the periphery when we consider pandemic preparedness and humanitarian and security responses.

Conclusion of the Special Session

The WPS Focal Points for Canada and Uruguay thanked everyone for engaging in a frank and robust discussion that will support the Focal Points summary recommendations for 2020, including to the UN Secretary General's report on WPS. Noelia Martínez Franchi assured participants that what we have learned in this special session will inform our future discussions in 2020. She reiterated that regional approaches are very important and encouraged participants from the Americas in particular to continue to advance the WPS agenda.

Gwyneth Kutz shared an outline of plans for the upcoming online sessions of the Network in 2020, including:

- A high level, inter-generational panel to mark the 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in June,
- A working group session on protecting and supporting women peacebuilders in July;
- A working group session on impact-driven National Action Plans in August, and
- A final "wrap-up" session in the fall to summarize the Network results and recommendations for action in 2020

A smaller, in person meeting of the Network may still be possible in the fall in Ottawa and the Co-Chairs' decision on this will be informed by public health guidance. Ms. Kutz thanked Co-Chair Uruguay for their positive collaboration: "we couldn't ask for a better partner." Quoting Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister Champagne, she noted that a crisis "doesn't change your values, it amplifies them". The true mark of character is revealed in rough times and not smooth sailing. The same can be said of countries and networks, and this Network is a demonstration of a tremendous global group of women and men who are dedicated to peace. She concluded that Canada looks forward to working together with Uruguay through the Network during the rest of this year.

Background

The Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network launched in September 2016 as a unique forum for national and regional representatives (Focal Points) to share best practices and lessons learned on the WPS agenda. There are 87 members of the Network from UN member states and regional organizations. The Focal Points are responsible for WPS implementation (frequently through national action plans and strategies on WPS) within their respective governments and regional organizations. The UN and civil society also play an active role in the Network, with UN Women serving as Secretariat.

Canada and Uruguay are Co-Chairs of the WPS Focal Points Network for 2020 – the 20th anniversary of landmark UNSC Resolution 1325, the first of 10 UNSC resolutions that form the WPS agenda. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the annual capital-based Network meeting scheduled to take place in Ottawa on 12-13 May 2020 will transition to a series of online engagements over the spring, summer and fall. These online sessions will focus on two main themes for this year's Network discussions: supporting and protecting women peacebuilders, and the power of impact-driven national action plans.



This friendship symbol celebrates the partnership of Canada and Uruguay as Co-Chairs of the WPS Focal Points Network in 2020 and represents the spirit of collaboration and cooperation. Designed by Uruguayan graphic designer, Gabriel Benderski, the symbol is also inspired by the indigenous Bunchberry flowering plant found in all regions of Canada and the combined color palette of the Canadian and Uruguayan national flags.

ANNEX A

Summary: Participants' Questions and Comments

The Co-Chairs wish to thank all the participants who shared their input during the May 13 special session. This is a summary version of the numerous written questions and comments received from WPS Focal Points and civil society participants. This input will inform upcoming working group sessions of the Network and final recommendations in 2020.

- **Supporting Women and Women Peacebuilders**

Madame Wazhma Frogh, **Women and Peace Studies Organization, Afghanistan** asked the Focal Points Network platform to support Afghan women affected by violence, the COVID-19 crisis and to help address their exclusion from peace negotiations. She pointed out the terrible attack on a maternity hospital May 12 in Kabul that killed infants and pregnant women.

Devanna De La Puente, **UN Verification Mission in Colombia**, noted the importance of considering the mental health and emotional burden of women human rights defenders (WHRDs) and peacebuilders who face multiple challenges of providing for themselves and their families during the pandemic crisis, providing support to their communities and organisations, and protecting themselves from attacks. These issues negatively impact the ability of WHRDs to continue to participate in the implementation of peace processes.

Katarina Skoko, **Office of UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth**, highlighted that young women peacebuilders who work on the frontlines do not operate in safe environments, and this issue is worsened due to COVID-19 and various government restrictions that negatively impact the civic space. What can we do to provide better protection and support to young women peacebuilders?

Emily Opati, **Kenya**, asked: What are some of the specific measures applied in the regions to deal with women in refugee camps during these difficult times, as well as street families?

Ireland's Conflict Resolution Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs, asked, "How do we ensure women's economic empowerment during the crisis and make women peacebuilders equipped to "Build Back Better" during the period of recovery?"

Referencing the Global Women's Forum hosted by Austria in Vienna in February 2020, Larissa Lassman, **Austria**, wanted to know if there are plans to facilitate regular exchange between women peacebuilders during the COVID-19 crisis.

- **Global Responses to COVID-19**

Clara Cabrera, **Spain**, called for the WPS agenda to be mainstreamed in the global response to COVID-19. She shared that Spain is working on a resolution in the UN General Assembly on Women and Girls and the COVID-19 response addressing the importance of women's participation in all decisions on COVID-19 response and recovery measures, support to women peacebuilders, how to improve digital access, and the reinforcement of mechanisms and services to address SGBV.

Australia's new Ambassador for Gender Equality and WPS Focal Point, Julie-Ann Guivarra, requested more information on how the Focal Points Network is taking forward recommendations from the UNSG's report and the independent review, which identified three factors to ensure successful implementation: the degree to which gender equality is prioritized and sufficiently resourced; the presence of accountability; and the presence and influence of gender expertise. She asked, "How will we support this collectively in the COVID-19 context?"

- **Ceasefire Agreements and Peace Processes**

Lina Ekomo, **Women Leadership Network in Central African Republic**, asked about strategies to influence positions of armed groups who refuse to respect ceasefire agreements in the COVID-19 context. This situation prevents women's access to water for their families where the rivers and fountains are far from the houses.

Mirsad Jacevic, **Inclusive Security**, asked how the Focal Points Network, which includes many donor countries, can help put pressure on the ongoing peace process in Yemen to include voices of women peacebuilders.

Madeleine Rees, **Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)**, raised the question of continued arms transfers by governments.

- **Access to Information Technology**

Mohammed Mayas, **Jordan**, emphasized the need for actions to improve access to basic communications and the internet, noting that ongoing lockdowns have impeded easy access to humanitarian and gender-based violence services. He noted that while the world is adapting to online solutions, some women still do not have access to mobile phones to report abuse.

- **Prioritizing WPS Funding**

Nirupam Nath, **Bangladesh**, noted that continued financing for advancing the WPS agenda will be a key priority to advance WPS agenda during COVID-19. Questions: How can the UN and other multilateral financial organizations help mobilize the critical funding needed in developing countries?, How can NAPs help to better absorb the shocks of the pandemic in terms of reprioritizing and working in a more challenging environment, including financial constraints?

Beth Woroniuk, **Women's Peace and Security Network (WPSN) -Canada**, asked what can be done to address the funding gap for WPS. "Do we need a public site that actually documents what each government is dedicating to this agenda? What positive incentives might work?"

Sanam Anderlini, **International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)**, noted that the latest survey from the Alliance for Peacebuilding shows 70% of peacebuilding NGOs are facing closure in the next 12-24 months. Yet peacebuilding approaches and local actors are absolutely critical in dealing with COVID-19 and dealing with rising extremism. She asked, "What are WPS focal points and governments doing collectively to

strengthen the peacebuilding sector?”, “What appetite is there for shifting funds from ‘military security/national security’ to peacebuilding?”

Mavic Cabrera-Balleza, **Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP)**, noted that the “COVID-19 crisis is a great opportunity to emphasize that a human security response— as opposed to national security— is inherent to the WPS agenda. How can the WPS Focal Points Network call on their own governments to reduce funding for Defense Ministries and military and allocate more for the implementation of the WPS agenda —especially civil society efforts?”

- **COVID-19 and Security Sector Responses**

Helen Kezie-Nwoha, **Women’s International Peace Centre, Uganda**, noted the use of the military in the COVID-19 response has led to increased human rights violations in some countries in Africa. She suggested a global analysis of the gender dimensions of the use of military in COVID-19 response.

Comfort Asare, **Ghana**, shared that it has been difficult for some women to follow the safety protocols for COVID-19 put in place by the government. She shared that there have been near clashes with security agencies and welcomed information on better approaches to address such situations.

Rachel Vincent, **Nobel Women’s Initiative**, pointed out the high level of militarized response to COVID-19 in Mexico and other countries in the region, with particular impact on Indigenous women. She asked if this will be raised and addressed by Focal Points, as it has direct impact on women, peace and security in the region—as well as on food insecurity and resulting social unrest.

- **National Action Plans**

A key question for the Focal Points from Silvina Aguirre, **Argentina**, is how pandemic response can be included in National Action Plans (NAPs) on WPS.

Fatima Aksira, **Borno Women Development Initiative, Nigeria** commented that while there are “beautiful” NAPs, implementation still remains a challenge. She shared that in Nigeria, state action plans (SAPs) are the most challenging to implement and there is need to support local initiatives and support local advocacy with state governments to ensure implementation. She welcomes good practices and lessons learned on this that can be shared.

- **Women’s Participation in Peacekeeping**

Nirupam Nath, **Bangladesh**, asked how incentives can be used to address country-specific barriers that prevent more women from joining peacekeeping missions.

- **Violent Extremism**

Olivia Matthews, **Canada**, asked how WPS NAPs and focal points can respond to the rise of violent extremism in relation to COVID - particularly xenophobic violence.

ANNEX B Participants' Reference Links

- **Oksana Potapova, Ukraine, Theatre for Dialogue NGO**
 - OSCE report on implementation of 1325:
<https://www.osce.org/secretariat/444577?download=true>
 - Feminist response to COVID-19 website: <https://www.feministcovidresponse.com/>
- **Beth Woroniuk, Canada, Women, Peace & Security Network Canada**
<http://www.hilltimes.com/2020/05/13/an-act-of-care-reframing-global-efforts-to-contain-covid-19>
- **Bandana Rana, Nepal, 1325 Action Group Nepal and CEDAW Committee**
CEDAW Committee's Guidance note on COVID 19
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/cedaw/pages/cedawindex.aspx>
- **Pravina Makan-Lakha, South Africa, ACCORD**
ACCORD's COVID-19 Conflict and Resilience Monitor
<https://www.accord.org.za/covid-19/>
- **Sanam Naraghi-Anderlini, United States of America, International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)**
 - Reports on women peace builders and covid19 on the ICAN website:
<https://icanpeacework.org/> We hold a weekly call with our partner women peace builder in 40 countries & collate their responses each week.
 - Overview of WPS in the age of Corona - with reference to gender responsiveness, the military v. human security issues and women's leadership please see LSE blog:
<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/wps/2020/03/25/women-peace-and-security-in-the-time-of-corona/>
 - Updates and examples of women peace builders in the time of COVID-19:
<https://icanpeacework.org/2020/04/08/how-are-women-peacebuilders-responding-to-covid-19/>
- **Eva Tabbasam, United Kingdom, Gender Action for Peace and Security**
The GAPS 'Call to Action: Now and the Future, COVID-19 and Gender Equality, Global Peace and Security' paper: <https://gaps-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Call-to-Action-Now-and-the-Future-COVID-19-and-WPS-1.pdf> The paper sets out the already immediate and long-term impacts of COVID-19 with recommendations to the international community, including the UK Government to implement as they respond to this global pandemic.
- **Rasha Jarhum, Yemen, Peace Track Initiative**
https://twitter.com/Peace_Track/status/1258426310554275841?s=20 more about my informal brief to UNSC last week with support from UK mission

- **Marcela Donadio, Argentina, RESDAL**
Sharing data on states of exception and the role of the military in this crisis in Latin America and Africa, <https://www.resdal.org/ing/assets/BoletinCOVIDi.pdf>
- **Marie-Noel Vaeza, Panama, ONU Mujeres**
 - Strategies for the prevention of violence against women in the context of COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean:
<https://lac.unwomen.org/en/digiteca/publicaciones/2020/04/prevencion-de-la-violencia-contra-las-mujeres-frente-a-covid-19>
 - COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean: How to Incorporate Women and Gender Equality in the Management of the Crisis Response:
<https://lac.unwomen.org/en/digiteca/publicaciones/2020/03/covid-como-incorporar-a-las-mujeres-y-la-igualdad-de-genero-en-la-gestion-de-respuesta>
- **Zarin Hamid, United States of America, WILPF**
Feminist peace perspectives on the crisis and its root causes, and our strategy for building a better world: <https://www.wilpf.org/covid-19/>
- **Amarsanaa Darisuren, Austria, OSCE**
OSCE's latest blog titled "Response to the COVID-19 crisis must be inclusive":
<https://www.osce.org/blog/response-to-covid19-crisis-must-be-inclusive>
- **Marcos Gomez Martinez, Spain, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation**
The Pandemic's Gender Imperative: <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/covid19-pandemic-gender-differences-by-ann-linde-and-arancha-gonzalez-2020-05>
- **Dinah Lakehal, United States, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders**
COVID-19 Mitigation and Adaptation Strategy and Appeal: <https://gnwp.org/publications/covid19-strategy/>
- **Annika Schabbauer, Sweden, Operation 1325**
Joint Statement: Corona pandemic urgently demands an inclusive human security response -
<https://operation1325.se/en/nyheter/corona-pandemic-urgently-demands-an-inclusive-human-security-response>