



CONCEPT NOTE

WPS Focal Points Network Sixth Capital-Level Meeting ***Reclaiming Women, Peace and Security: Defining a Path Forward***

21-22 October 2024 | United Nations Headquarters | New York
Interpretation will be available in English, French, Spanish.

Introduction

The WPS Focal Points Network will hold its Sixth Capital-Level Meeting in New York under the theme *Reclaiming Women, Peace and Security: Defining a Path Forward*. The event will be hosted by the Network's 2024 Leadership Quad, comprising the United States of America, Romania, Switzerland, and South Africa, in collaboration with UN Women as the Network Secretariat.

Background

The adoption of [United Nations Security Council resolution 1325](#) (2000) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) heralded a commitment by governments to fully recognize and support the full, equal and meaningful role that women play in preventing and resolving armed conflicts, in peacebuilding, peacekeeping, post-conflict reconstruction and humanitarian response, and in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, at local, national, and international levels. Adopted five years after the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#) (1995), which highlighted women and armed conflict as one of 12 critical areas of concern, Resolution 1325 – as well as subsequent women, peace and security resolutions and [CEDAW General recommendation No. 30](#) on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations (2013) – affirm that women have a right to lead, participate, and be protected in all areas and at all levels of peace and security processes – before, during, and after conflict. This is essential for peaceful and sustainable societies. In other words, excluding women from peace and security efforts will render those efforts unsustainable and result in a less peaceful world.

Context

Since 2000, the UN Security Council has consistently called on Member States to take decisive action to realize the full promise of the WPS agenda. Twenty-four years on, over half of UN Member States and territories ([110](#)) have adopted a WPS national action plan (NAP) at least once. As of September 2024, 87 per cent of States in the WPS Focal Points Network had [adopted a NAP](#) and 70 per cent of regional organizations had adopted a regional action plan or strategy. These plans and strategies outline key commitments on participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery, among others. Many more members are expected to adopt action plans by 2025.

However, while the advancement and development of the global WPS agenda has progressed over the past 24 years, the world has not become more peaceful or a safer place – particularly not for women. This is evidenced, among other issues, by the fact that the world is experiencing a record number of armed conflicts and the related impacts on women and other marginalized populations and groups.¹ Civilian casualties in armed conflicts surged by 72 per cent in 2023 and the number of women killed in armed

¹ In 2023, the number of conflicts involving states totaled 59, the highest number since 1946. Source: Uppsala Conflict Data Program, Uppsala University: <https://www.uu.se/en/press/press-releases/2024/2024-06-03-ucdp-record-number-of-armed-conflicts-in-the-world>

conflict increased for the first time since 2015.² Marking the twelfth consecutive annual increase, the number of people forced to leave their homes due to conflict, violence, human rights violations, persecution, disasters, and the impact of climate change was at 120 million in May 2024, and children experienced an unprecedented level of grave violations in 2023. There was a 50 per cent increase in UN-verified cases of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) in 2023 compared to 2022.³

Objective

The WPS Focal Points Network has grown to 103 members since its announcement on the 15th anniversary of Resolution 1325 in 2015. The Network is now the largest one of its kind of Member States and regional organizations [dedicated to advancing the WPS agenda](#) through collaboration and coordination between members and with civil society, sharing knowledge, building expertise, and developing innovative approaches to ensure that the WPS agenda remains fit for purpose to address ongoing peace and security challenges.

This year's Sixth Capital-Level Meeting will take place at a critical time – a year before the 25th anniversary of Resolution 1325 and the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action. It also takes place at a time when women peacebuilders around the world are calling for more decisive action from Member States and regional organizations to fully implement the WPS agenda and to honor commitments that ensure women's full, equal, and meaningful inclusion in preventing and resolving armed conflicts, in peacebuilding, peacekeeping, post-conflict reconstruction and humanitarian response.

Following the [High-Level Side Event of the Network held on September 25, 2024 on the margins of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly](#), which addressed the same theme, the capital-level meeting will bring together WPS national and regional focal points, alongside civil society and UN representatives. The meeting will focus on technical discussions and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned to implement existing WPS commitments, as well as explore new investments to advance the WPS normative framework.

Format

The meeting will be in-person only with a mix of plenary and breakout sessions. The opening and closing plenary sessions will be livestreamed. Some sessions are limited to focal points only and a select number of participants.

² The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2024/>

³ <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/statement/remarks-of-srsg-pramila-patten-at-the-security-council-open-debate-on-preventing-conflict-related-sexual-violence-through-demilitarization-and-gender-responsive-arms-control-new-york/>