

52nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women

Interactive dialogue

“Women’s equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding”

Friday, 29 February 2008, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

ISSUES PAPER

I. Introduction

The Commission on the Status of Women, at its fifty-second session (25 February – 7 March 2008), will evaluate progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions on “Women’s equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding”, adopted by the Commission at its forty-eighth session in 2004, through an interactive dialogue among all States and observers. This review is designed to strengthen the Commission’s role in following up on national-level implementation of actions agreed in respect of a previous priority theme and in identifying achievements, lessons learned, gaps and challenges encountered. It is expected that the dialogue will highlight good practices and strategies for further and accelerated implementation of the agreed conclusions.

II. Background

The Beijing Platform for Action¹ highlighted that “peace is inextricably linked with equality between women and men and development”. One of the six strategic objectives in the area of women and armed conflict called on Member States to “increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation”.

The twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”² called for the full participation of women in decision-making at all levels in peace processes, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security called for women’s equal participation with men and their full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. It reaffirmed the need to protect women and girls from human rights abuses, including gender-based violence. The

¹ *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II, paragraph 131

² General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

resolution also called for action to mainstream gender perspectives in relation to conflict prevention, peace negotiations and the aftermath of conflicts.

In 2005, the World Summit Outcome highlighted “the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding” and reaffirmed the commitment to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Member States also underlined “the importance of integrating a gender perspective and of women having the opportunity for equal participation and full involvement in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security, as well as the need to increase their role in decision-making at all levels.”³ As an outcome of the World Summit, the Peacebuilding Commission was established in June 2006 as an advisory body of the General Assembly and the Security Council with the goals to marshal resources at the disposal of the international community to advise and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict recovery with a special focus on reconstruction, institution-building and sustainable development in countries emerging from conflict. In the resolution that established the Peacebuilding Commission,⁴ Member States stressed the importance of women’s equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution and peacebuilding.

At its forty-eight session in 2004, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted agreed conclusions on “Women’s equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding” which put forward a series of recommendations in three areas: women’s participation in conflict prevention, in peace processes and in peacebuilding. The agreed conclusions called on Governments, entities of the United Nations system and other stakeholders to, inter alia,

- promote women’s full, equal and effective participation as actors in all peace processes, in particular negotiation, mediation and facilitation;
- ensure, in the implementation phase of a peace agreement, that all provisions concerning gender equality and the participation of women are fully complied with and that all provisions of the peace agreement, including demobilisation, disarmament, reintegration and rehabilitation, are implemented in a manner that promotes gender equality and ensures women’s full and equal participation;
- ensure equal access of women in all stages of the electoral process and to consider the adoption of measures for increasing women’s participation in elections [...];
- ensure the full participation of women on an equal basis in the reconstruction and rehabilitation process.

In 2005, in the ten-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action at the national level, Member States reported that more opportunities had been created for women and women’s organizations to contribute to the prevention of conflict and to participate in conflict resolution, peacebuilding and peace negotiations. Governments

³ A/RES/60/1, *2005 World Summit Outcome*, paragraph 116

⁴ A/RES/60/180

acting as mediators also increased women's participation in peace processes. In addition, women demonstrated their leadership in peace processes through their involvement in civil society actions.⁵

III. Format of the interactive dialogue

The interactive dialogue will be introduced by three speakers who will make presentations of 10 minutes each. Member States, entities of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations will participate in the ensuing dialogue, and will be encouraged to share their experiences in implementing the agreed conclusions on "Women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding", highlighting achievements, gaps and challenges, as well as good practices and lessons learned. Interventions from the floor will be limited to 3 minutes.

A Chairperson's summary of the interactive dialogue will be prepared.

IV. Issues for consideration

The dialogue will focus on the areas identified in the agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission in 2004: women's equal participation in peace processes and in peace building, including in countries in conflict, countries emerging from conflict, as well as countries providing mediation and other forms of support in conflict situations, as well as international organizations supporting peace processes and peacebuilding.

The following questions provide a non-exhaustive discussion guide:

- What specific steps have been taken to guarantee and improve women's participation and decision-making in peace processes and peacebuilding since the adoption of the agreed conclusions? How has the impact of such steps been monitored and measured so as to assess their effectiveness?
- What institutional frameworks exist to facilitate women's effective participation in efforts related to peace processes and peacebuilding?
- What accountability measures/mechanisms have been developed within government institutions and processes to ensure women's participation in peace processes and peacebuilding?
- What measures have been put in place to strengthen women's participation and decision-making in post-conflict institution-building processes? How have lessons from past experiences been applied?
- What examples can be provided of collaboration between State actors and civil society organizations (including women's organizations and networks) to implement the agreed conclusions? What results have been achieved?
- What are the remaining key challenges to women's participation in peace processes and peacebuilding? Which new challenges have been identified?

⁵ E/CN.6/2005/2