

Ambassadorial-level consultation of the Peacebuilding Commission

2020 Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture

“Full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peacebuilding”

Statement of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

New York, 1 May 2020

Excellencies,

As the world is facing a global health crisis which will have unprecedented impact, the Kingdom of the Netherlands remains ever more committed to support United Nations peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts.

On the eve of the 20th anniversary year of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, we are reminded that the implementation of all elements of the Women, Peace and Security agenda is a precondition for achieving sustainable peace.

The 2020 review of the Peacebuilding Architecture provides an excellent opportunity to learn from achievements made and ongoing challenges in the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. We would therefore like to highlight three areas of concern for the 2020 review.

1. Integration of the WPS-agenda in peacebuilding and sustaining peace

First, the Kingdom of the Netherlands is committed to the full implementation of all elements of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. While we applaud the references made to gender responsive peacebuilding and the Seven-Point Action plan on gender-responsive peacebuilding in the Secretary-General's 2018 and 2019 reports on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, we see that other aspects of the WPS-agenda remain underexposed.

In order to fully benefit from what UNSCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions have to offer, we call upon the Secretary-General to pay increased attention to the leadership and special protection needs of women and girls, as well as the prevention aspects of the WPS-agenda, in its forthcoming peacebuilding and sustaining peace report. Mitigating the negative impact of the covid-19 pandemic makes this even more pressing.

2. The need for participation of women at all levels

Peace is more sustainable if women are involved in the making of it and women's organizations and women human rights defenders play a key role in promoting peace and security. As such, they should be able to meaningfully participate in decision-making around peace and security at all levels.

While women have long been involved in peacebuilding initiatives at the local level, they remain largely excluded from formal peace processes. Besides increasing women's representation in formal peace processes, it is crucial to better link grassroots women-led

peacebuilding initiatives to processes at the national and regional levels, in order to render them more representative of women's needs and priorities, and to ensure sustainable peace.

3. Towards an enabling environment for full, equal and meaningful participation

However, emphasizing the importance of women's participation in peacebuilding is not enough. For women to truly be able to meaningfully participate in peacebuilding and sustaining peace, there needs to be an enabling environment that allows them to claim that space. Women need to have access to education, they need to be economically empowered, they need access to health care, including mental health and psychosocial support and sexual and reproductive healthcare services, they need protection against sexual and gender-based violence, and, last but not least, they need to experience the (civic) space to raise their voices. If, and only if, we adopt a broad and integrated approach to questions of peace, security, and development, can we reach peace, security and development that are truly sustainable.

Allow me here to refer also to the theme of the Dutch consultation to the PBA Review, being the importance of a psychosocial lens for any peacebuilding effort and the potential of full integration of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in peacebuilding efforts. Quality MHPSS is a powerful, highly contextual and gender-responsive tool to strengthen individual and community resilience and to identify and address the specific needs women and girls may have, considering the many risks (such as SGBV) they face, particularly in conflict situations.

In closing, we thank the Chair of Peacebuilding Commission for providing us with the opportunity to deliver a written statement on this important topic.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

H.E. Karel J.G. van Oosterom

Permanent Representative of The Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations