



Transformative Aspirations for 2030: Grounding Global Commitments

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GLOBAL COMMITMENTS

Eyes on 2030

SDGs (September 2015) > We resolve, between now and 2030 ...

- to end poverty and hunger everywhere;
- to combat inequalities within and among countries;
- to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies;
- to protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and
- to ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources
- to create conditions for sustainable, inclusive and sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and decent work for all

CSW Political Declaration, March 2015 >

Commit to accelerate and achieve the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in order to achieve concrete results in each review cycle, and strive for the full realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women by 2030.

CHALLENGES

Slow progress on equality

UN Secretary-General's synthesis report on the 20-year implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action:

- Change towards gender equality has not been deep enough, nor has it been irreversible.
- Discrimination in legislation persists in many countries, particularly in the area of family law.
- Increasing educational attainment by women and their rising participation in the labour market have not been matched by better conditions of employment, prospects for advancement and equal pay.
- At the current rate of progress, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO), it would take more than 75 years to reach equal remuneration for work of equal value.

Increasing militarization

UN Secretary General report on WPS (2015):

- National spending on military defence surpasses investments for sustainable peace and development.
- In 2014, the global military spending was thirteen times higher than development aid allocations.
- A world “shaped by global counter-terrorism campaigns and sophisticated weapons technology that redefine the scope of the battlefield and blur lines between soldiers and weapons”.
- Rise in use of military force to settle disputes through unilateral military operations and the tripling of the UN’s peacekeeping budget over the past 15 years (Coomaraswamy, 2015).

Weaknesses in implementing WPS

- Out of 53 countries with National Action Plans, only 11 with specified budget for implementation and 8 from the Asia Pacific region
- UN peacebuilding fund has fallen short of its own target of a minimum of 15 per cent for projects whose principal objective is to address women's specific needs and advance gender equality > only 2.1 per cent of the Peacebuilding Fund's interventions met this criteria in 2011
- Regional action plans: West African States, African Union, European Union, NATO, Arab States, and Pacific Islands Forum (2010-2015) > Asia?

SITUATION ON THE GROUND IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The nature of conflicts in Asia and the Pacific: Study results by The Asia Foundation (2013)

- longest running in the world
- mostly occur within rather than across borders, often in the peripheries of nations, at the subnational level
- highly asymmetrical in terms of the balance of power between government forces on the one side and minority groups on the other
- emerging in the context of strong states and ambitious development agendas
- often unrecognized by national governments and not addressed by the international system for peace and security

Common areas of concern by Asia Pacific women in conflict-affected communities

1. Accountability and combating impunity
2. Militarization, small arms and the continuum of violence in everyday life
3. Structural inequalities, climate injustice and their links to development policies and practices
4. Rising cultural and religious fundamentalisms
5. Victim/survivor recovery
6. Women's full and meaningful participation in building peace and security

Asia Pacific women's arenas of engagement in diverse contexts of conflict & post-conflict



Consistent views on peace among 3 women working to transform conflict: Nepal, Sri Lanka and Indonesia (Aceh)

- Community at front and center
- Truth as the foundation for just and lasting peace
- Personal autonomy in the face of multiple forms of power inequalities
- Conflict is not singular and neither is the process of making peace

Source: APWAPS Peer to Peer Conversations, 2015

THE WAY FORWARD

The Global Study on WPS: Coomaraswamy

- The Women, Peace and Security agenda must be respected as a human rights mandate, rather than as part of a military strategy
- Recognition that the root causes of conflicts have become more complex, from systemic discrimination to climate change and the prevalence of identity politics, which in their extreme form are deeply conservative and reactionary towards women and their rights
- Advocates for an end to the cycle of militarization, for the prioritization on the prevention of conflict, and for support of national transformative justice agendas
- The work of peacebuilding must be localized

Global Study: Financial recommendations

1. Provide dedicated core financing for women's organizations in conflict-affected and crisis settings that reflects the priorities and needs of those working at the local level.
2. Provide direct financial support to facilitate women leaders briefing the Security Council on thematic and country-specific deliberations.
3. Support women's organizations to participate in donor conferences and ensure gender-related priorities are reflected in compacts, needs assessments and consolidated appeals.

What about for the Asia Pacific context?

Suggestions of concrete steps ...

1. Ensure critical input and active participation in all the review mechanisms for SDGs and BPFA by women's rights advocates > UN ESCAP
2. Effective integration of the WPS agenda into human rights reporting and protection > CEDAW General Recommendation 30
3. Promote local implementation of the Security Council resolutions on WPS and provide direct support for women on the ground working to transform conflict
4. Develop knowledge building capacities and processes by women in situations of conflict and post-conflict that are empowering, reciprocal, authentic and insightful
5. Advocate for a regional action plan by UN ESCAP integrating BPFA, WPS and SDGs?