

Towards Prioritizing Women, Peace and Security on the Arab Agenda Conference

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This paper is part of the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) Occasional Paper Series.

The Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World regularly publishes scholarly papers and action research on topics across a wide range of disciplines pertaining to women's empowerment and gender equality in the Arab region. Within this framework, IWSAW aims to widen the scope of research on women and gender issues, both in the Arab region and in the Arab diaspora.

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This paper is based on the proceedings of the conference *"Towards Prioritizing Women, Peace and Security on the Arab Agenda"*, which was held at Lebanese American University in Beirut from 8-10 August 2016.

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Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW)

Lebanese American University

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Given the urgency and complications facing women in the Arab region, the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) at the Lebanese American University and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) Centre for Women, in collaboration with the Danish Center for Gender, Equality, and Diversity (KVINFO) hosted an international conference to engage international, regional, and national stakeholders in strategic dialogue on women, peace and security in the Arab region, held between August 8th and 10th, 2016, in Beirut, Lebanon. "Towards Prioritizing Women, Peace and Security on the Arab Agenda" brought together experts, academics, practitioners, civil society practitioners and organizations, government representatives, and the United Nations to discuss the implications of the women, peace and security agenda in the Arab Region, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) and subsequent international conventions that obligate signatories to foreground the participation of women in all aspects of peacebuilding and security both during and after conflict.

UNSCR 1325 stressed two foundational issues: the first concerned the impact of conflict on women, the second addressed the need for all UN peacekeeping operations to increase the participation of female personnel.¹ Women's participation at the decision-making levels in all forms of post-conflict negotiations and projects must be foregrounded if peacemaking ventures are to be successful: Increasing women's visibility and participation in peacekeeping forces; creating better accessibility for women's decision-making at both the community and state levels; and simply allowing women in conflict-affected areas to interact with other women will all, without a doubt, strengthen state capacities to ensure long-term, sustainable peacebuilding projects.²

Paper I of the IWSAW Occasional Paper Series will detail the conference proceedings of "Towards Prioritizing Women, Peace and Security," and the focus on UNSCR 1325 as it has been implemented across the Arab States; the various methods of implementation across the Arab States; and the future direction of UNSCR 1325 in the region.

¹ United Nations, *UN Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security*.

² Bridges, Donna, and Debbie Horsfall. "Increasing Operational Effectiveness in UN Peacekeeping Toward a Gender-Balanced Force." *Armed Forces & Society* 36.1 (2009): 120-130.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On August 8th-10th, 2016, in Beirut, Lebanon the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) in collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Danish Center for Gender, Equality, and Diversity (KVINFO) hosted an international conference to engage international and regional stakeholders in strategic dialogue on women, peace and security in the Arab world. "Towards Prioritizing Women, Peace and Security on the Arab Agenda" brought together subject matter experts, academics, development and humanitarian practitioners, Arab civil society and non-government organizations, government officials, and various United Nations representatives to discuss the practical implications of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in the Arab region, and the work needed to ensure the participation of women at all levels of the decision-making process in relation to post-conflict negotiations and peacebuilding efforts.

This paper was developed from the conference proceedings, with additional research input and analysis provided by IWSAW Executive Director Dr. Lina Abirafeh and IWSAW staff.

INTRODUCTION: “TOWARDS PRIORITIZING WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY ON THE ARAB AGENDA”

On August 8th-10th, 2016, in Beirut, Lebanon the Institute for Women’s Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) in collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Danish Center for Gender, Equality, and Diversity (KVINFO) hosted an international conference to engage international and regional stakeholders in strategic dialogue on women, peace and security in the Arab world. “Towards Prioritizing Women, Peace and Security on the Arab Agenda” brought together subject matter experts, academics, development and humanitarian practitioners, Arab civil society and non-government organizations, government officials, and various United Nations representatives to discuss the practical implications of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, and the work needed to ensure its implementation across the region.

Opening remarks were given by the directors of IWSAW and UN EWSCWA, and the Senior Advisor of KVINFO. The IWSAW Director Dr. Lina Abirafeh, the IWSAW Assistant Director Myriam Sfeir, and the President of the Lebanese American University (LAU) Dr. Joseph Jabbra all emphasized the renewed attention U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security was receiving in the Arab region given the continuation of conflict in Syria, Yemen, and Iraq, to name just a few. Although UNSCR 1325 was indeed revolutionary, all three speakers reminded conference participants of the overwhelmingly short-lived spotlight that UNSCR 1325 received in the Arab region; across all of the Arab States, implementation of UNSCR 1325 has been uneven. The speakers again emphasized that there is no better time for advocates in the region to promote the usefulness of UNSCR 1325, and to encourage long-term, sustainable policies that protect women in conflict, and incorporate them into all peacebuilding and post-crisis efforts.

Dr. Mehrnaz el-Awady, the Director of UN ESCWA Centre for Women, used her opening remarks to remind conference participants of the very recent milestone of the Women, Peace and Security global agenda. In 2015, the international community endorsed Agenda 2030; composed of the sustainable development goals (SDGs), Agenda 2030 formally recognizes gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as a concrete development goal. SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls does more than just highlight gender equality as a development imperative, el-Awady noted: it also calls for an end to all violence against women and girls, in both the home and in public. 2015 also marked the 15-year anniversary of UNSCR 1325, bringing with it more directed attention to the development of National Action Plans (NAP), an essential component of any State’s successful implementation of UNSCR 1325. Noting the Arab Regional Strategy and Action Plan for UNSCR 1325, endorsed by the League of Arab States, el-Awady reminded participants that the Arab States have come closer to implementing UNSCR 1325, but NAPs at the State level must become a primary focus if the region is to fully incorporate UNSCR 1325, especially in light of the current conflicts.

The final opening remarks were given by Connie Carøe Christiansen, a Senior Advisor at KVINFO. Dr. Christiansen emphasized that international organization and state-level policy makers cannot just implement UNSCR 1325; women must be included in decision-making processes, as their inclusion is pivotal to the success of UNSCR 1325. Dr. Christiansen further pointed out that women's participation around the negotiation table is not enough to secure influence, neither is it the only way that women and women's groups are able to influence the politics of peace-making – which is just that, a political process. Women's path to influence on peace-making is multiple, and women's contribution to conflict resolution often occurs in a semi-public or private sphere. The conversations and dialogue which women tend to initiate on a local and everyday level secure that peace is embedded in a given society. However, this should not delude us into assuming that we need to include women because essentially, they are peace-makers. Women are not just peaceful, but women are entitled to have influence on the formation of their own societies before, during and after conflict. Women need to be included as equal partners in peace processes and agreements simply because they are citizens of their own societies on a par with men.

Over three days, the conference held eight panel discussions and culminated with the Beirut Call for Action, which listed a number of demands for Arab governments, legislators and policymakers to fully implement UNSCR 1325, which includes providing the necessary resources for enforcement. The next section will serve as a brief overview of UNSCR 1325, and will be followed by a breakdown of each of the panel topics and panelists. Following the conference proceedings, the paper will conclude with the Beirut Call for Action as drafted by conference participants.

BACKGROUND: UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325

In October 2000, the United Nations Security Council adopted the first resolution specifically addressing the needs of women in conflict settings. United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) foregrounds the disproportionate effect of emergencies on women, and demands that all UN Member States ensure the participation of women at all levels of decision-making in peace processes and in the prevention of conflict. UNSCR1325 also calls on all state and non-state parties to conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence (GBV), when prevalence of GBV is known to increase dramatically. UNSCR 1325:

1. *Urges* Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict;
2. *Urges* Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical, and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programs, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children's Fund, and by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies;

3. *Calls* on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia:
 - (a) The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction;
 - (b) Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements;
 - (c) Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary.³

To ensure collaboration and coordination among Member States and United Nations organizations, the Interagency Network on Women and Gender Equality established the Interagency Taskforce on Women, Peace and Security, which is chaired by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. The Taskforce subsequently developed an Action Plan on national implementation of the resolution among Member States in 2003.

Alongside UNSCR 1325, the UN Security Council has adopted six other resolutions focused on women, peace and security:

1. Security Council resolution 1820 (2008)
UNSCR1820 explicitly links sexual violence as a tactic of war, and highlights that sexual violence in conflict constitutes a war crime and demands parties to armed conflict to immediately take appropriate measures to protect civilians from sexual violence, including training troops and enforcing disciplinary measures.
2. Security Council resolution 1888 (2009)
UNSCR 1888 demands that peacekeeping missions protect women and children from sexual violence during armed conflict, and requests that the Secretary-General appoint a special representative on sexual violence during armed conflict (Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict).
3. Security Council resolution 1889 (2009);
A follow up to UNSCR 1325, UNSCR 1889 calls for further strengthening of women's participation in peace processes and the development of indicators to measure progress on UNSCR 1325.
4. Security Council resolution 1960 (2010);
UNSCR 1960 further reaffirms a commitment to preventing sexual- and gender-based violence against women in conflict-affected zones.

³ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement>.

5. Security Council resolution 2106 (2013)
UNSCR 2106 further reaffirms a commitment to preventing sexual- and gender-based violence against women in conflict-affected zones.
6. Security Council resolution 2122 (2013)
UNSCR 2122 strengthens the reporting mechanisms on the progress relative to the implementation of UNSCR 1325 for both Member States and international organizations.⁴

UNSCR 1325 in the Arab States

There are a number of documented uses of UNSCR 1325 across the Arab States by both state-affiliated and non-state organizations; however, as the UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People in Jerusalem notes: [A] large gap still exists between women's abilities to use UNSCR 1325 to make visible their activities and ideas on peace and security, and the normative patriarchal peace-building discourses and praxis that fixedly define notions of 'peace-making' and more recently 'state-building'.⁵

Even though Member States across the Arab region have committed to ensuring gender-responsive programming and policies in conflict settings, these commitments are often not operational.⁶ In the Occupied Palestinian Territories, for example, the International Women's Commission for a Just and Lasting Peace – formed in response to UNSCR 1325, and using it as its foundation – ultimately disbanded only a few years after their formation, as many of the groups calls to action and suggested policy changes went unheard and unacknowledged by international organizations in the Territories, the Palestinian leadership, or the Israelis. In Iraq, the Rafidayn Women's Coalition Association made reference to a similar problem in their work with UNSCR 1325; as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria and other militant groups continue to escalate fighting, security – especially for women – is minimal. The lack of security has left the Women's Coalition without adequate participation by Iraqi women, and without safe spaces to hold meetings. A result of both an inability to provide protections for women, and the more usual lack of acknowledgement paid to women's demands, the Iraqi State has all but invalidated the Women's Coalition Association's work on UNSCR 1325:

Our main challenge is [that the] [w]ar has disrupted government commitments to implement antiviolenence, women's rights, and development strategies. There is no budget, and the state is not interested in following through on its commitments to CEDAW

⁴ United Nations Peacekeeping: Women, Peace and Security.
<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/issues/women/wps.shtml>.

⁵ Farr, Vanessa. "UNSCR 1325 and Women's Peace Activism in the Occupied Palestinian Territory." *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, vol. 13, no. 4, 2011.

⁶ Aharoni, Sarai B. "Internal Variation in Norm Localization: Implementing Security Council Resolution 1325 in Israel." *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*, vol. 21, no. 1, 2014.

committee recommendations...Moreover, international organizations have shut down most of their projects, pulled out a number of their representatives, and limited their work to relief, with no commitment to long-term development or rehabilitation.⁷

Across the Arab States, limited government commitment to ensuring the implementation of UNSCR 1325 is overwhelmingly the case. In place like Lebanon, which has a vibrant civil society and many active non-government organizations (NGOs), government stalling has prevented the development of a National Action Plan implementing UNSCR 1325. Without a civil code, legislative frameworks are divided according to the 18 formally recognized religious sects in Lebanon, making it doubly hard to promote the development of a NAP in Lebanon. In countries that are neither at war nor in “protracted conflict,” UNSCR 1325 is often perceived as irrelevant; in Egypt and Tunisia, plans for a NAP have not been put into place, even though activists continue to demand their governments – as Member States – make prolonged, dedicated efforts to implementing UNSCR 1325.

In addition to insufficient political will and organization across the Arab States, a recent report by the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 found a number of socioeconomic factors affecting the ways that UNSCR 1325 is perceived among Arab men and women. In interviews of CSO and NGO workers in Iraq, Egypt, Tunisia, and the Palestinian territories, respondents overwhelmingly attributed uneven implementation of UNSCR 1325 due to lack of awareness, and a general lack of knowledge about the resolution and its purported goals.⁸ Further, all interviewees stressed the importance of providing trainings for both men and women on UNSCR 1325, and its importance for peacebuilding in the Arab States, as rural and urban divides, religious and secular affiliations, and socioeconomic status, to name a few, all contribute to how men and women in the Arab world respond to UNSCR 1325.⁹

DAY ONE: WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY IN CONTEXT

Panel I: Introducing Women, Peace and Security

This panel focused on the many ways that UN Security Council Resolution 1325 has been implemented across the Arab States. Panelists were asked to address the existing mechanisms, and the possibilities for improving existing mechanisms for implementing UNSCR 1325 in the everyday lives of women and girls across the region. Dr. Samira Aghacy,

⁷ Abbas, HH. "Rafidayn Women's Coalition Association." *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2015.

⁸ Izen, S., Parker, R. and Paul M. Rayman. "UNSCR 1325 in the Middle East and North Africa: Women and Security." *United States Institute of Peace Special Report*, Special Report 388, 2016.
<https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR388-UNSCR-1325-in-the-Middle-East-and-North-Africa-Women-and-Security.pdf>.

⁹ Ibid. 8, p. 3

the moderator for this panel, posed questions to the panelists about the tools and possible support systems available in the Arab States for sustainable, long-term implementation of UNSCR 1325.

Dr. Nicola Pratt, a lecturer at the University of Warwick and specialist on the Middle East and feminist international relations, began her presentation *Women, Peace and Security: Which Women? Whose Peace? And Whose Security?* with a critical lens focused on the language of UNSCR 1325, and the many ways it delimits the actual agency of women in conflict settings. A creation of international agencies, UNSCR mimics and borrows from colonial discourse which idealizes the trope of the “white savior;” referencing the feminist scholar Gayatri Spivak, who coins the phrase “White men saving Brown women from Brown men,” UNSCR 1325 promotes the stereotype of Brown women – and in this case, specifically Arab Muslim women – as victims of male-perpetrated violence, subsequently unable to save themselves and therefore in need of help from Westerners. This critique however is not to detract from the importance of UNSCR 1325; as Pratt notes, the revolutionary aspects of UNSCR 1325 are the ways that women are reframed as active participants in, and vital contributors to peacebuilding and post-conflict resolutions.

But here, too, Pratt warns of the potential cooptation of UNSCR 1325 by governments not genuinely interested in the empowerment and protection of women and girls. Citing a joint project she completed with Dr. Nadjie al-Ali, a senior lecturer at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London, on post-war Iraq following the 2003 U.S. Invasion, UNSCR 1325 was implemented insofar as it remained distinct from the geopolitical goals of the U.S. and the U.K. in Iraq. In other words, women were included in peacebuilding efforts and decision-making processes in a way that supported the liberal notions of the U.K. and the U.S. as progressive, “women-friendly” countries, but were not included in any genuine manner with the goal of effectively ending the continued violence in Iraq. Similarly, in Syria the UN established a Syrian Women’s Advisory Board of 12 women with the express role of advising the UN special envoy that continues to oversee the peace talks between non-government and government factions; though superficially the group satisfies many of the demands of UNSCR 1325, Syrian women overwhelmingly accuse the Advisory Board of being exclusive, and an underwhelming representative of the true population of Syrian women, limiting the overall effectiveness that the Advisory Board might have potentially had.

Concluding her discussion, Dr. Pratt re-emphasized that her critical gaze toward UNSCR 1325 is in no way claiming that the resolution is no longer useful; instead she invited fellow conference participants to take this as an opportunity to re-engage with UNSCR 1325 in a manner that challenges policymakers and activists to find a context-specific implementation mechanism that will encourage long-term sustainability of the resolution in the Arab States.

Second to speak was Dr. Mehrinaz el-Awady, Director of UN ESCWA Centre for Women in Beirut. Dr. el-Awady provided an opportunity for conference participants to take an in-depth look at the many ways that UNSCR 1325 has been extended, edited and repackaged

through a number of subsequent resolutions, adding to the scope of UNSCR 1325.¹⁰ Therein lies the comprehensiveness of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, el-Awady noted, especially as UNSCR 1325 and its many subsequent resolutions established four main pillars vital to any successful implementation of UNSCR: Prevention, Protection, Participation, and Relief and Recovery. These four pillars might even be repackaged into three major categories as a potential starting point for a new paradigm for implementing UNSCR 1325 in the Arab States. These three categories are as follows: Protection and Human Rights, Peace and Security and Gender-Equality and Women's Empowerment. Reframing the four original focus pillars in this way might allow for a reconceptualization of different implementation methods and mechanisms, especially crucial in places like the Arab States, where strong regional support already exists but as of yet has been unable to consistently implement and enforce UNSCR 1325. In her final comments, Dr. el-Awady urged conference participants to turn to local NGOs and CSOs, especially women-led organizations, that have done a significant amount of work in creating and preparing research manuals on implementation strategies and NAPs in the Arab States.

Panel II: The Role of Institutions

In this panel, moderated by Raidan al-Saqqaf, Social Affairs Officer, Women, Peace and Security Centre for Women at UN ESCWA, asked the three panelists to consider the role of both government and non-government institutions in advancing UNSCR 1325 in the Arab States.

The first speaker, Mervat Rishmawi, a senior consultant in the field of human rights law and an expert on Women, Peace and Security, started her presentation *ESCWA: Delivering for Development in Conflict-Affected LDCs: The Role of Governance and State-building* by introducing three interconnected themes inherent to UNSCR 1325: Women, Peace and Security; gender equality and women and girls' empowerment; and sustainable development. In order to realize full potential in any of the three categories, work must be done simultaneously in the other two categories. This interconnectedness shows the critical role both government and non-government institutions play in implementing and enforcing UNSCR 1325. In this regard, the National Action Plans (NAPs) become powerful tools for outlining the specific roles and responsibilities of different institutions in the process of implementing and enforcing UNSCR 1325. NAPs identify priorities, allocate resources, and create the mechanisms needed to respond appropriately to exacerbated conflict or high-risk situations for women and girls in post-conflict settings. Further, Rishmawi stressed that non-government institutions must be included in the development and implementation of NAPs, including but not limited to human rights organizations and reporting institutions – especially those that are responsible for drafting CEDAW shadow reports – national women

¹⁰ See Background: UN Security Council Resolution 1325, p. 8 of this document.

machineries and advisory groups, and village- and city-level women's organizations. These organizations provide the critical insight necessary for creating a NAP reactive and responsive to the needs and desires of the women and girls it seeks to empower.

The second speaker, Salma al-Nims, from the Jordanian Commission for Women's Affairs, spoke about the Jordanian experience with advancing a NAP, giving participants a chance to learn about and discuss a regional example of UNSCR 1325 implementation and enforcement. Al-Nims focused on the Jordanian National Commission for Women's (JNCW) role in advancing the national dialogue around a UNSCR 1325 NAP. A well-seated organization in Jordanian civil society, the JNCW has still faced a number of institutional and cultural barriers while implementing UNSCR 1325 and a National Action Plan. Even after the creation of a government-sanctioned special coalition of experts amassed with the goal of forwarding the development of a Jordanian NAP, the JNCW has still not been able to successfully install a Jordanian NAP. Recently, however, in 2016 the JNCW was able to commission a dialogue series in municipalities across Jordan that surveyed current UNSCR 1325-related work in Jordan, encouraging new momentum surrounding a Jordanian NAP; this dialogue series resulted in a co-authored publication by the JNCW and UN Women (2016) "Women Peace, and Security in Jordan: A Resolution in Action" which produced two key recommendations for inclusion in the Jordanian NAP, first, participation of women at all levels of decision-making in Jordan, and two, a primary focus on providing relief and recovery in response to the refugee crisis of the Syrian Civil War.¹¹

The last speaker, Colonel Ziad Kaed Bey, spoke on the role of the Lebanese Internal Security Forces (ISF) in promoting and implementing UNSCR 1325. Colonel Kaed Bey, who serves as both a colonel in the ISF and the head of the ISF Training Department and the Human Rights' Department, spoke of the general underrepresentation of women not only in political positions, but in military and police forces as well. These imbalances, he noted, are made worse by the many religious and cultural traditions in Lebanon that adhere to a strict gender division of labor; in other words, many people see positions in the ISF as inappropriate for women, as it can be dangerous. Further, he noted, conflict and instability in and around Lebanon have continued to reinforce the popular notion that the status-quo is better than new and potentially "disruptive" social changes, making it harder for NGOs and CSOs dedicated to UNSCR 1325 to penetrate government-level entities with concrete plans for a Lebanese NAP, or general implementation of UNSCR.

¹¹ The Jordanian National Commission for Women, UN Women. "Women, Peace and Security in Jordan: A Resolution in Action." March 2016. <http://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20jordan/attachments/publications/2016/8/en%20un%20women%20and%20jncw%20-%20wps%20in%20jordan%20a%20resolution%20in%20action%20-%20national%20dialogue%20-%202016.pdf?vs=1228>.

Given these barriers, the ISF has made substantial progress in implementing UNSCR 1325. Colonel Kaed Bey listed two primary examples, (1) the enrollment women within the ISF beginning in 2012, and (2) taking proactive measures to train ISF soldiers on how to properly respond to reported cases of GBV. In places like Lebanon, where legislative measures are often deferred to religious authorities and courts, state institutions such as the ISF become the vanguard for country-level implementation and enforcement of UNSCR 1325.

Panel III: Regional Experiences on the Role of Institutions

The final panel of the day was composed of four activists from four different Arab States, each of which discussed their own experiences relative to the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in their respective countries. The first speaker, Reema Nazzal, from the Palestinian Women's Union, spoke of her experiences in Palestine, where implementation of UNSCR 1325 has remained a priority for feminist activists since the early 2000s. Nazzal discussed the strategies of various women's groups in Palestine to collaborate under the umbrella of UNSCR 1325 as a means of elevating the issues of women and girls in Palestine to an international level. As a country living under occupation, women's organizations have lobbied heavily for the implementation and enforcement of UNSCR 1325; this led to the approval of an official Palestinian NAP in May of 2015, making it the second Arab State to adopt a NAP.

The second panelist, Ilham Hammadi, from the NGO Al-Amal in Iraq, spoke on Iraq's Emergency Plan to implement UNSCR 1325. Iraq is officially the first Arab State to adopt a NAP, with the help of women's and human rights organizations in collaboration with the UN. However, as the conflict with ISIS continued to plague Iraq, the government sanctioned the 2015 Emergency Plan, as full implementation of UNSCR 1325 according to the NAP was not completed. As Hammadi notes, while these are indeed very big steps for the Iraqi government, there is still limited evidence of implementation and enforcement of UNSCR 1325 in Iraq, given the security situation, and the lack of government transparency. Further, the Iraqi government is now focused on the current crisis with ISIS and the war unfolding in Syria, draining the government of resources and motivation to focus on UNSCR 1325.

Wafa Makki, the Head of the National Authority for Sudanese Women Parliamentarians, spoke of the Sudanese Parliament's role in promoting and advocating for UNSCR 1325. Similarly to prior panelists, Ali emphasized the importance of Sudanese institutions in promoting UNSCR 1325, specifically NGOs and CSOs focused on women's and human rights. Sudan is currently in negotiations with local CSOs, NGOs, and national-level women's organizations to draft a National Action Plan.

The final panelist, Rita Chemaly, a member of the National Lebanese Commission for Women, spoke of UNSCR 1325 implementation in Lebanon. Although Lebanon does not have a NAP, the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW) was asked by the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs to develop the NAP. In 2011, the NCLW came up with a 10-year national strategy that depends on serious coordination between and collaboration

with multiple women's and human rights NGOs and CSOs in Lebanon to draft it. The NAP draft will focus heavily on accountability and transparency, ensuring that the Lebanese government follows the plan closely, and provides CSOs and NGOs with the necessary support for implementing UNSCR 1325.

DAY TWO: TOWARDS A NEW PARADIGM ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

This session began with a video-conference presentation by Janet Benshoof, the President of the Global Justice Center in New York, who spoke on what is needed to reconstruct UNSCR 1325 into a more useful and effective framework for protecting and empowering women and girls in the Arab States. Benshoof named three distinct features of UNSCR 1325 that have the potential to serve as the foundation for a new paradigm for implementation and enforcement of UNSCR 1325, including but not limited to the ways that UNSCR 1325 demands that the Geneva Conventions be updated to take into account the disproportionate impact of war and conflict on women and girls.

Panel IV: The Role of UNSCR 1325 in Response to WPS in Times of Peace

This panel began with a discussion of how "peace" is very strictly defined; in its normative usage, peace means a lack of war and conflict. However, as the moderator Rania Al-Jazairi (ESCWA-Lebanon) noted, peace does not totally account for human security. The four panelists discussed the ways that UNSCR 1325 can be used during peacetime to ensure human security, despite the continued focus on using UNSCR 1325 during times of conflict and war.

The first panelist, Colonel Elie al-Asmar of the Lebanese ISF, spoke on the importance of UNSCR 1325 to security forces in Lebanon, and the security sector more generally. Al-Asmar stressed that successful implementation of UNSCR 1325 depends heavily on the cooperation of security forces and Lebanese civil society in order to use UNSCR 1325 most efficiently to ensure human security. Al-Asmar discussed the ways that the ISF was working specifically on the prevention aspect of UNSCR 1325; in Lebanon, recent work has been devoted to passing a new civil code that protects women from domestic violence in the home, and in public. The ISF, he noted will continue to use UNSCR 1325 in its future work.

The second panelist, Nada Darwazeh from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Lebanon began her presentation by discussing the complementarity of UNSCR 1325 and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and that the only potential difference is that many people have constructed UNSCR 1325 as an international convention only applicable during times of conflict. Both conventions depend heavily on a human rights framework, which Darwazeh argues is the best framework available to support women and girls both in times of conflict and in times of peace. Darwazeh also notes that the human rights framework provides a very clear list of rights that all persons are guaranteed, and thus makes it much easier for the UN and other

international human rights groups to check whether or not states who are party to either of the two conventions are providing these rights to all people living within that state.

Connie Christiansen, Senior Advisor of KVINFO, discussed UNSCR 1325 in peacetime countries – such as Denmark and the other Nordic countries. Denmark became the first country to develop a UNSCR NAP and has now elaborated three NAPs, the latest of which spans 2014-2019. Dr. Christiansen stressed that although Denmark and other Nordic countries normally do not perceive themselves as a warring party, they have participated in war in other countries, and these operations are the main target of the Danish NAPs. The Nordic countries have not considered how the UNSCR 1325 could be relevant for internal purposes. In a radicalization of the Women Peace and Security agenda, domestic and international commitment to gender equality and security cannot be separated – thus some aspects of the WPS agenda is relevant for the Nordic countries. Further, deconstruction of stereotypical gender roles and consideration of local intersectional variations (not just gender but also religious, LGBT, and other social identities) would form part, as well as a rethinking of masculine militaries – a challenge and reform of the masculine military culture.

The fourth and final panelist, Mavic Cabrera-Balleza, from the Global Network of Women Peace-Builders in the United States, spoke about the ways that UNSCR 1325 implementation has been carried out at local levels, for example at the municipal or governorate levels and the village council. This approach, known as localization and currently implemented in 11 countries, allows local constituencies to be directly involved with how implementation of UNSCR 1325 will take place in their day-to-day lives; this creates a much greater community buy-in to the goals of UNSCR 1325 and greater community solidarity with women's and human rights organizations dedicated to implementing UNSCR 1325. Local incorporation of UNSCR 1325 has also taken the form of organizations lobbying for greater women's political representation at both the local and national levels in states that observe UNSCR 1325. Similarly to the CEDAW convention, UNSCR 1325 in times of stability supports the empowerment of women and girls, once again reaffirming the importance of ensuring gender equality in states that are party to either of these conventions.

Panel V: The Role of UNSCR 1325 in Responding to WPS in Times of Conflict

This panel discussed three current conflicts taking place in the Arab States, and the ways in which UNSCR 1325 both has and has not worked. Each of the panelists made calls to the UN and other international organizations to put pressure on Arab governments to abide by the recommendations set forth in the UNSCR 1325, to ensure that women and girls in the Arab States receive the protections they need in times of conflict.

A Yazidi activist, Rangeen Shokri, the first panelist, discussed the atrocities suffered by the Yazidi population in Iraq at the hands of ISIS, especially after the fall of Mosul into ISIS control. Shokri noted that despite the many horrible cases of sexual- and gender-based violence suffered at the hands of ISIS, the Iraqi government – which is a signatory to UNSCR

1325 and has an Emergency NAP in place – has been wholly underequipped to handle the crisis, leaving many Yazidis, especially women and girls, at an even higher risk of violence.

The second panelist, Rana Khalaf, from the Middle East and North Africa Program at Chatham House in London, described an eerily similar situation for women and girls in Syria. Khalaf also stressed the need to focus on the increasing mobilization of CSOs and NGOs dedicated to providing Syrian women and girls the support they need during the Syrian crisis. As part of her earlier research, Khalaf mapped out over 90 CSOs and NGOs operating in Syria, and another 80 organizations who emerged over social media outlets, including radio and print magazines. However, without any backing from international institutions and human rights, empowering women and girls in Syria cannot be completely successful: these organizations, already functioning without the support of the Syrian government, are unable to sustain their activities in such a turbulent environment.

The third panelist, Ghida Anani, the Director of ABAAD in Lebanon, spoke about the shortcomings of UNSCR 1325 in times of conflict as a direct effect of its shortcomings in times of peace. In other words, Anani argued for a re-centering of focus on gender equality, and the empowerment of girls and women in times of peace and not just in times of war and conflict. Echoing Dr. Nicola Pratt's calls for a critical analysis of UNSCR 1325 from Day 1 of the conference, Anani, too, wondered about the implementation of UNSCR 1325, and whether or not UNSCR 1325 – in the ways it is currently being mobilized – will ever successfully position women in places of decision-making power, and actually empower girls and women in conflict zones. Further, she warned that if UNSCR 1325 is not implemented with a careful eye towards a human rights framework, it might actually further the vulnerability of girls and women in conflict zones. As a concluding thought, Anani emphasized that UNSCR 1325 is not a rigid tool set in stone: it should absolutely be manipulated and formatted to fit the context-specific needs and desires of girls and women.

The final panelist, Sarah Abdelgelil, from the Cairo Centre for Conflict Prevention in Egypt, spoke of the role of independent research and activist institutions in implementing and enforcing UN conventions and resolutions like UNSCR 1325. Abdelgelil emphasized the importance of using a WPS framework in all peacetime and war-time projects; echoing thoughts similar to Ghida Anani, Abdelgelil noted that all projects are inherently stronger if they incorporate a WPS framework from the start. Abdelgelil also called for stronger collaboration with, and cooperation between Arab States, including but not limited to regional organizations, governments, NGOs and CSOs, specifically the League of Arab States and the African Union. As conflicts in the region consistently become more and more interconnected, the successfulness in combatting these problems will only be as strong as the number of organizations and alliances made and kept between the Arab States.

Panel VI: Current Peace Processes and the Role of Women

Moderated by Dr. Vida Hamd, a counsellor to the Embassy of the Netherlands on political and humanitarian issues, this panel spoke on current peace processes taking place across the region, and the ways that UNSCR 1325 can boost such efforts.

The first speaker, Asma Khalifa, from the Women's Movement in Libya, addressed the fallout of the Libyan revolution, and the ways that women were ultimately left behind in the post-conflict transition. Khalifa made note of the ironies accompanying the post-Ghaddafi era in Libya in relation to the social position of women, specifically, that Libyan women actually enjoyed a number of political freedoms under Ghaddafi that have now been revoked not because Libyan society does not endorse gender equality, but because anything associated with the reign of Gaddafi is considered corrupt, and rightfully so. But in the power vacuum that followed Gaddafi's removal, women have been largely removed from the public sphere, and are woefully underrepresented in positions with decision-making capabilities. The women's movement has had to go underground, and start nearly from point zero once again; challenges such as intergenerational communication – with older and younger generations of women at odds with each other – have left the women's movement divided and unorganized. In this regard, UNSCR 1325 proves useful in establishing a peacetime agenda that includes women from all socioeconomic backgrounds in processes of peacekeeping and at upper levels of decision-making in the Libyan state; UNSCR 1325 presents a powerful opportunity to coordinate the currently discrete facets of the women's movement in Libya.

The second speaker, Sabah al-Hallak, from the Syria Special Advisory Board, spoke further about the role of Syrian women in peace negotiations brokered by the UN. Al-Hallak enumerated two main issues with UNSCR 1325 from the viewpoint of Syrian women working to end the conflict, the first that UNSCR 1325 absolutely is drafted under the assumption that there is a functioning state government in place that is (1) able to implement the agreement, and (2) is going to put the rights of women first. In Syria, especially since the start of the war, this is not possible, al-Hallak noted. Many different factions are currently vying for power, meaning women and women's rights more generally have been pushed to the back counter for now. Second, UNSCR 1325 also assumes that State governments are democratic; here, she worries, post-conflict Syria will fall short. Democracy must be completely representative and transparent; citing the trajectory of the current conflict, al-Hallak once again worries that no such representative government will come to fruition in time to give women and girls the necessary protections against violence that they need. On a more positive note, al-Hallak mentioned that Syrian women are absolute evidence that the ideological claim of UNSCR 1325 is solid: peacekeeping efforts are more successful when women are included, and represented at decision-making positions in politics. Al-Hallak cited the Syrian Women's Initiative for Peace and Democracy and the Coalition of Syrian Women for Democracy; both groups have achieved a number of huge accomplishments, including the creation of an advisory women's council that reports

directly to the UN Envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura. The two groups have also ensured that each delegation to the peace talks – including the opposition’s and the government’s – now include at least three women; the opposition’s delegation has also put together a consultative commission where women represent nearly half (44%) of the members.

The last panelist, Jamila Rajaa, a civil society and peacebuilding activist from Yemen, spoke on the role of women in the Yemeni peace process and cease-fire negotiations. Rajaa began her discussion by reminding conference participants of the critical role Yemeni women played in the Yemeni uprisings that saw the removal of ex-President Ali Abudllah Saleh. Similar to the Libyan example though, women were immediately pushed to the side once the revolution occurred. Now, women’s coordination across Yemen is stifled and struggling to survive, given the horrible security consequences and the fact that the violence is spread between a number of different ethnic and religious factions, leaving many women extremely vulnerable to violence as a result. Rajaa does discuss, on a more positive note, the very important Gulf initiative and the National Dialogue – the process put into place after Saleh’s removal with the intention to produce a new Yemeni Constitution – which required 30% women’s representation throughout the process. Yemeni women have – albeit in a very limited capacity – been party to most of the cease-fire negotiations throughout the duration of the Yemeni crisis: in October 2015, the Women’s Coalition for Security and Peace participated in negotiations, which included 45 Yemeni women. Rajaa concluded by stressing the importance of maintaining the presence of Yemeni women in all current and future peace processes and negotiations, to ensure the demands and needs of women and girls in Yemen are foregrounded during all discussions.

DAY THREE: WOMEN’S VOICES IN PEACES PROCESSES

Panel VII: Towards Expanding Women’s Participation in Peace Processes

Mohammad Naciri, the Acting Regional Director of UN Women Arab States, began day three by reiterating the very high rates of conflict across the Arab region, and the disproportionate impact of this violence on women and girls in the region. Further, Naciri made note of the very low participation rates of Arab women in peace negotiations and processes across the region, asking panelists how UNSCR 1325 might be able to create a stronger platform for Arab women in current conflicts across the region to participate in a fuller capacity.

The first panelist Afrah al-Zouba, the First National Dialogue Conference (NDC) Secretary General in Yemen, presented the case for UNHCR 1325 in Yemen through a set of mechanisms and tools specific to the Yemeni context. These included, first, the creation of women’s and human rights and humanitarian aid organizational networks, to increase coordination between all entities working in Yemen; an example of this al-Zouba noted would be the semi-official network approved by the UN called *al-tawafuq al-nassawi* – a political network of organizations. Such a network will allow women’s groups and

organizations to better coordinate which actions to take next in the Yemeni conflict, and to minimize repetition of programming and aid distribution in the same areas or at the same time by multiple organizations. Second, she discussed the ways that activists are using UNSCR 1325 to encourage small-group organizing: for example, al-Zouba noted the success that small women's delegations have had organizing in relation to peace processes and negotiations, such as the seven Yemeni women that participated in GCC-led peace talks on Yemen. Third, al-Zouba emphasized that the UNSCR 1325 includes young men and women, and this should absolutely be foregrounded in any future work done under the auspices of the UN and UNSCR 1325. The inclusion of younger generations will encourage long-term sustainability of all peacemaking processes and negotiations. Fourth, al-Zouba discussed the many advantages of using social media to discuss the role of women in peacemaking processes and negotiations, for example using Twitter and Facebook hashtags such as "Do not return without peace" (لا تعودوا إلا بسلام). Al-Zouba's final point discussed the importance of Coordinating with international bodies such as the Bureau of the UN Envoy, UN Women, UNFPA, among others, to ensure that women's voices are heard, and utilized in all international bodies operating in Yemen as a result of the conflict.

Al-Zouba concluded that Yemeni women should not forget the political and social progress they had made after the revolution and the removal of ex-President Saleh.

The second panelist Magda el-Sanousi, Chief of Women's Empowerment Section for the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), returned to the Libyan context once again, this time to discuss the specific political role Libyan women have played during the dialogues following the removal of Ghaddafi. El-Sanousi explained the UN model for the dialogue, and the reasons why this format was successful in creating space for Libyan women to participate; composed of a number of various "tracks," political groups participated in different sets of discussions and negotiations, for example in relation to the "security track" or the "political track," to name two of the big ones. The various tracks allowed women to participate in each, albeit to a very limited degree: in the political track, only three women participated (out of a total of 23 participants); in the security track, no women participated; and in the municipality track, after a lot of negotiation, only 2 women participated consistently. On a more positive note, el-Sanousi did remind conference participants that there was a women's track as well, and that this had been very instrumental during the National Dialogue process; unfortunately, this committee faced many of the same critiques women's committees across the Arab States have faced, mainly, that they were not fully representative of the entire population of Libyan women, and that their concerns and any outputs from their work were pushed to the side in favor of those tracks deemed more important, for example the security track and the political track. In conclusion, el-Sanousi made a call to international organizations, especially the UN, that are participating in Yemeni peace talks and negotiations to make sure that women are equally represented during these processes, in order to ensure the sustainability of any negotiations or outcomes.

The third panelist, Emna Jebblaoui, The Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTR), spoke on post-revolution Tunisia. Jebblaoui reported that Tunisia faces a unique set of challenges in implementing UNSCR 1325, as the country does not have experience with open war and conflict, but instead faces a number of what she called “hybrid” conflicts: these conflicts are not only convoluted (e.g. which groups are representative of which Tunisian citizens and non-citizens), but violence becomes much more widespread, as the groups themselves are not always entirely sure of which groups are aligned with the current government, and which are actively opposed. This has, unfortunately, led to the popular belief by policymakers and stakeholders that UNSCR 1325 might not be totally appropriate as a foundational framework in Tunisia; however, Jebblaoui urges, the role of UNSCR 1325 in Tunisia is critical. First, Jebblaoui noted that as of May 2015, Tunisia started to seriously consider drafting a NAP; following this decision, and the Women, Peace and Security Conference in February, Tunisian NGOs, CSOs, and government allies decided to embark on a UNSCR 1325 Awareness Campaign across the country, focusing on Tunisian legislative and political systems as the main targets. From this campaign came the recommendation to form a Coordination Commission with the assistance of the Women’s Affairs bureau and the UN High Commission for Human Rights. Jebblaoui noted that hopefully now, as the process is finally underway, we can hope to see some conclusions and products within the next year or so. In the final part of her presentation, Jebblaoui also spoke of the relatively recent trend of radicalism among young women and girls in Tunisia, and of the ways the WPS agenda can help stabilize the country in a way that can deter radicalization. Importantly, Jebblaoui noted, borrowing from al-Zouba’s presentation at the beginning of the panel, the inclusion of both young men and women in one project taking place in Southern Tunisia has proven that the successful implementation of UNSCR 1325 depends not just on women’s participation, but men’s as well, as this encourages more community and village “buy-in” of the new projects.

The last panelist, Lina Al-Qudwa, a Programme Specialist at UNDP Regional Hub based out of Jordan, concluded by discussing the critical role of civil society in implementing UNSCR 1325, and how the UNDP is working to support these organizations in the Arab States. The UNDP has recognized the important role it plays in the work of these local and regional CSOs, and has installed a number of regional networks that allow these organizations, and especially women’s organizations, to collaborate and coordinate with each other on new projects, and strategies for future work. One such regional project supported by UNDP, *Musharka*, focuses on providing support to organizations that are dedicated to women’s political participation and advancing the WPS agenda by promoting women to positions with decision-making power at both the local and national government levels. With this kind of support, CSOs can put even more pressure on governments to dedicate resources and time to ensuring the implementation and enforcement of UNSCR 1325. In conclusion, Al-Qudwa reminded conference participants of the 2030 Agenda’s central pledge, “Leaving No One Behind,” and that Arab states must recognize that this most certainly includes

young girls and women; UNSCR 1325 must be foregrounded in all policy discussions and government developments if we are to fully realize such a call to leave no one behind.

Panel VIII: The Need for a New Paradigm on WPS in the Arab World

In the final panel discussion, panelists were asked to discuss ideas for a new paradigm for UNSCR 1325 implementation and enforcement based on the past and current work of UN Women, and other UN organizations dedicated to promoting UNSCR 1325.

Mohammad Naciri started his presentation with a call for *all* organizations working on issues related to the implementation and enforcement of UNSCR 1325 to think seriously about better collaboration, and sustained dialogue, which includes the sharing of results, best practices, and problems experienced during project or program implementation. It should not only be at conferences – such as this one – that multiple organizations – international, national, CSO, NGO, academic institutions, or otherwise – come together to discuss the progress being made around implementing and promoting UNSCR 1325. Following this call, he discussed a recent study published in 2015 which provided evidence that peace durability increases by 35% in cases where women were involved at both the decision-making levels and at the participant level; with such a huge rate of success, Naciri urged conference participants to continue foregrounding UNSCR 1325 implementation and enforcement throughout the Arab States, especially as conflicts continue to plague the region.

The final speaker, Raidan al-Saqqaf, Social Affairs Officer, Women, Peace and Security Centre for Women at UN ESCWA, concluded the conference with a review of all of the topics discussed throughout the three-day conference. Al-Saqqaf pointed out the key points of the conference, focusing on the many ways that conference presenters showed how women across the Arab States have participated in peacemaking processes and negotiations.

Closing Remarks

In the closing session, Dr. Lina AbiRafeh, Director of the Institute for Women’s Studies in the Arab World, highlighted the key points of the conference, and presented the “Beirut Call for Action,” a list of recommendations for Arab States, policymakers and stakeholders to better implement and enforce UNSCR 1325 in the Arab World. After reading the “Beirut Call for Action,” Dr. AbiRafeh stressed the need to continue the dialogue started during this conference in the work and everyday lives of conference participants, and to keep the momentum around UNSCR 1325 going.

THE BEIRUT CALL for ACTION: PRIORITIZING WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY ON THE ARAB AGENDA

Given the urgency and complications facing women in the Arab region, the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) at the Lebanese American University and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) Centre for Women, in collaboration with the Danish Center for Gender, Equality, and Diversity (KVINFO) hosted an international conference to engage international, regional, and national stakeholders in strategic dialogue on women, peace and security in the Arab region, held between August 8 and 10, 2016, in Beirut, Lebanon. "Towards Prioritizing Women, Peace and Security on the Arab Agenda" brought together experts, academics, practitioners, civil society, government, and the United Nations to discuss implications of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, that encompasses UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions together with other international obligations in the Arab region, which collectively forms the Women, Peace and Security agenda, and plans to ensure the participation of women in all aspects of peace and security. This event is part of a continuing regional discussion on Women, Peace and Security, reflecting the commitments of the partners to advancing the discussion. A detailed summary of conference proceedings will be published on the organizers' websites.

In recognition of the causes and long-lasting consequences of conflict, violent extremism, and occupation, conference participants acknowledge the need for long-term sustained results for women in the Arab world. As we continue to strive for gender justice, peace, and security, we call on Arab States, the United Nations, League of Arab States, civil society, policymakers, and practitioners to resource, action, and embed the below recommendations to ensure the inclusion of all women in peace and security initiatives across the Arab World.

I. Localize the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

1. Expand evidence-based research on Women, Peace and Security focusing on the complex socio-political dynamics involved in the everyday lives of women and men. This should include research on indicators related to early warning systems, with particular emphasis on refugees, displaced populations, minorities, survivors and those at risk of violence and other vulnerable groups.
2. Introduce a new paradigm that promotes a culture of peace, and tackles issues of violent extremism, radical religious discourse, and the active protection of women from violence. This must include documenting the experiences of women in peace and security, women who engage in peace building processes, and women involved in violence.
3. Address knowledge gaps on the role of institutions, including educational, legal, judicial, and security sector institutions, with regard to their responsibilities to advance the Women, Peace and Security agenda at the local level. Raise awareness and build capacity of the relevant institutions based on the findings of this research.

4. Document, publish, and disseminate technical materials and information briefs on the role of various institutions in advancing the agenda to encourage inclusive national, regional, and triangular dialogues with all stakeholders.
5. Support cross-sectoral, grassroots-level activities on Women, Peace and Security across the region. These activities should focus on service-delivery and preventing violent extremism for most vulnerable groups, enable the organization and development of civil society and other informal structures, and ensure collaboration among local government agencies, civil society, women's groups, and other stakeholders.

II. Promote Women Activism in Peace and in War

1. Expand knowledge on militarized masculinities as the dominant paradigm in war as well as the gender divide in politics of conflict, and how to engage men in Women, Peace and Security issues as allies and advocates of equality and gender justice.
2. Provide targeted training and ongoing capacity development in order to strengthen the contributions of institutions and individuals to advance the Women, Peace and Security agenda.
3. Promote legislative and institutional reforms that position women in decision-making and peace processes. These include ratifying international frameworks and removing discriminatory reservations - such as the Rome Statute on the International Criminal Court.
4. Recognize the key role of civil society in all aspects of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, and strengthen their capacities and protect their rights to speak out and contribute to the implementation of the agenda.
5. Promote the design, funding, and implementation of National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security to act as vehicles to coordinate, guide, and report on national progress. These action plans should ensure that are created to engage women at all levels, especially leadership and decision-making, as well as voice their experiences within these spaces.
6. Engage in capacity development activities that ensure that Women have a seat and an influential role in global policy discourse and in all global and regional discussions on peace and security. And support regional and national public campaigns and building networks and coalitions that advocate for the role of women in peace-building processes and security initiatives, including through social media and other avenues.

III. Institutionalizing Collaborations on Women, Peace and Security

1. Establish partnerships with security sector institutions, judiciary, parliaments, civil society working on socio-economic, good governance, and public affairs on relating to a new paradigm on Women, Peace and Security.
2. Promote and support multi-stakeholder partnerships to include traditional and non-traditional partners, such as academia, media, and the private sector to promote tolerance peace achievements and tolerance.
3. Facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences, best practices, and lessons learned among countries of the region and beyond, with a focus on cross-border experience-sharing and coordination. This collaboration can focus on common

advocacy and engaging young people, and highlight and address the atrocities committed against women in Arab states.

4. Facilitate cross-sectoral collaborations to ensure the inclusion of women in all peace and security aspects, with a view to strengthening service delivery and social cohesion at the local levels. This should include the creation of permanent coordination structures at various levels.



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