

**IDPS side event at the 63<sup>rd</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women**  
13:15-14:45, Tuesday 12 March 2019

## ***The Centrality of Gender Equality to National Cohesion and Sustainable Peacebuilding***

*Co-hosted by*

H.E. Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of International Development, Canada

H.E. Nabeela F. Tunis, Minister of Planning and Economic Development, Sierra Leone

### **Concept Note**

#### **Background**

The International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS) is an inclusive tripartite partnership made up of three constituencies: donor members of the OECD-DAC International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF); the g7+ group of 20 countries; and the Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS). It was instrumental in bringing about the *New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States*,<sup>1</sup> which defines the principles underpinning effective development cooperation and development partners' commitment to results in conflict affected states. In 2016 members of the IDPS reaffirmed, through the *Stockholm Declaration on Addressing Fragility and Building Peace in a Changing World*, the continued relevance of the New Deal principles in implementing Agenda 2030 (and specifically SDG 16) and committed to strengthening women's active participation in peace processes and peacebuilding, in line with the well established Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Strengthening IDPS' peacebuilding engagement through gender equality and participation**

For the first time, the IDPS is co-chaired and led by two female ministers, Sierra Leone's Minister of Planning and Economic Development, H.E. Nabeela F. Tunis, and Canada's Minister of International Development, H.E. Marie-Claude Bibeau. In early 2019, under the leadership of its co-chairs, the IDPS developed a new Vision for 2019-21, which aims at stepping up collaborative conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts. It includes gender equality and national cohesion as important pillars of peacebuilding, statebuilding and conflict prevention

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<sup>1</sup> New Deal rests on three pillars: the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSG) and the FOCUS and TRUST principles. The five PSGs are: legitimate politics; security; justice; economic foundations; and revenues and services. The FOCUS principles are: fragility assessments; one-vision, one-plan; country compacts; use the PSGs to monitor; and support political dialogue. The TRUST principles are: transparency; risk sharing and risk management; use and strengthen country systems; strengthen capacities; and timely and predictable aid.

<sup>2</sup> Since 2000 the UN Security Council has adopted eight separate resolutions as part of the WPS agenda supporting women's participation in peacebuilding, in addition to their protection during conflict.

efforts in conflict-affected situations.<sup>3</sup> This focus is underpinned by the Stockholm Declaration and the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding goals in the New Deal, one of which is ‘legitimate politics’ that foster inclusive political settlements. Agreement on this goal established a unique precedent by highlighting how critical inclusivity and gender equality are in peacebuilding in conflict affected states.

The IDPS’ focus on advancing gender equality and the WPS agenda as a core part of peacebuilding is also underpinned by a growing body of research showing that including women and women’s networks in efforts to prevent, resolve and rebuild after conflict increases the chances of sustainable peace.<sup>4</sup> It is also clear that there is a correlation between gender equality and levels of stability in societies.<sup>5</sup> Strengthening gender equality so that women are able to play meaningful roles in peace and security, in addition to public life more generally, thus presents unique opportunities to create more inclusive, cohesive and peaceful societies.

To unleash women’s potential, there is a need to recognise and remove the obstacles that hold them back. Women’s advancement in conflict affected countries has been particularly vulnerable to the effects of violence including poverty, displacement, migration and lack of access to services and education. On the other hand, there are examples of female leaders in conflict affected countries playing substantial roles in making and building peace<sup>6</sup> and women’s resilience in the face of wars, conflicts and crises has been proven time and time again. In order to unleash their full potential in building and sustaining peaceful societies, however, a change of mindset is required at the national and global levels.

The IDPS intends to play a leadership role. Its co-chairs are inviting representatives of all three IDPS constituencies to a high-level event on the margins of the 2019 Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) to highlight the importance of the gender equality theme to peacebuilding and statebuilding, and to foster linkages with the broader CSW community. g7+ countries are invited to share their perspectives on the challenges facing their countries, the unique contexts they live in, and potential entry points for progress. This is with a view to strengthening the International Dialogue’s contribution to SDG 16+ delivery.<sup>7</sup>

## **Objectives**

The event will provide an opportunity to hear a spectrum of views on the following:

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<sup>3</sup> The Vision contains three interrelated goals: placing national cohesion at the core of conflict prevention efforts; integrating gender responsive and gender transformative approaches into peacebuilding and statebuilding efforts; and increasing private sector actors’ awareness of their potential to act in a peace-positive manner.

<sup>4</sup> UN Women, [Fact Sheet: The Global Study on 1325: Key Messages, Findings, and Recommendations](#).

<sup>5</sup> UN Women, [Fact Sheet: The Global Study on 1325: Key Messages, Findings, and Recommendations](#).

<sup>6</sup> Ellen Johnson Sirleaf served as president of Liberia from 2006-18, for example.

<sup>7</sup> Goal 16 is the main goal for fostering peaceful, just and inclusive societies but it has strong links with other SDGs (focusing on social, economic and environmental progress), which play an equally important role in creating the necessary conditions for such societies. These are collectively called the SDG 16+ targets.

- The IDPS' commitment to integrating gender and national cohesion into strengthened peacebuilding and statebuilding efforts in conflict-affected countries.
- Progress/challenges in implementing SDG 16+ in conflict affected countries and the potential for advancing peace efforts through a focus on gender equality and women's participation.
- The convergence between the WPS and conflict prevention agendas and linkages between the delivery of SDG 5 and 16.
- What IDPS members can do individually and collectively to make concrete progress on this agenda in the lead up to the SDG 16 review in July 2019.

Opening speeches will focus on the gender equality and national cohesion themes as part of the IDPS 2019-21 Vision and the political leadership underpinning them. This will include a panel discussion explaining progress, challenges and opportunities in relation to gender equality and peacebuilding, with contributions from representatives of conflict affected countries undertaking Voluntary National Reviews on SDG 16 in July 2019. Speakers will be invited to frame their interventions with reference to the synergies between SDG 5 and SDG 16 implementation and review processes.

#### **Invitees**

IDPS representatives from G7+, civil society and INCAF, in addition to other invited experts on conflict/fragility and gender.

#### **Venue**

Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations, 466 Lexington Ave 20th Floor, New York, NY 10017.