



Newsletter 2 / 2016

TOPIC PEACETABLES SPECIAL

Dear Readers

When conflicts are brought to an end and decisions are made on what kind of peace is needed for a devastated country and a war-weary people, women are consistently excluded. Very few have ever sat at negotiating tables or been admitted as advisors. Women are the silent cleaners, the post-war housekeepers sweeping away the debris of a nation. But many are becoming tired of playing this role. They want to bring their realities, their understanding of peace, and their demands into peace talks. For more than 15 years now, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on “Women, Peace and Security” has been calling for equal representation for women in matters of civil protection, non-violence and reconstruction. However, almost no progress has been made in implementing the resolution.

The women in our network want to change this. In October, they will be holding PeaceTables in 20 countries around the world. Women will come together to analyze the political situation, make new contacts, and discuss their demands. They do not want to leave the shape of peace up to chance.

This issue of our newsletter presents the PeaceTables. We hope you find them as inspiring as we do.

Best wishes, RUTH-GABY VERMOT

Co-President of PWAG

Women Gather for a Global Debate

Discussions, insights, calls for action: This October will see women participate in PeaceTables in 20 countries around the world. During the events, they will analyze local conflicts and work together to find solutions for the peace process. PWAG will be with them every step of the way. Here we present an overview.

> The PeaceTable in **Afghanistan** will bring together around 200 people from very different backgrounds. The goal is to raise awareness of the lack of female representation in politics and society.

In cooperation with Gawharshad Institute of Higher Education

> **Bangladesh** is currently experiencing rapid industrialization. Many people are losing their land and seeking employment in the cities. Women in particular are affected by poverty and at risk of sexual violence. The PeaceTable aims to give them a platform that will allow them to network, learn more about their rights and scope for action.

In cooperation with Pragroshor

> In **Brazil**, successes in the fight for equality are at risk from the resurgence of conservative opinion. At the PeaceTable campaigns will be planned to raise awareness of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) and to lobby for laws

that prevent violence against women. This will also involve mobilizing men.

In cooperation with Associação Mulheres pela Paz

> The PeaceTable in **Burundi** will highlight the need for women to be included in the peace process. Women currently have no voice in the peace talks being held in Arusha, Tanzania. The PeaceTable will be a good opportunity for women to present their ideas and demands – a welcome contrast to always being seen as merely victims.

In cooperation with Centre Giriteka

> The PeaceTable in **Colombia** will focus on the peace talks that aim to end the long-running armed conflict, and on calls for all agreements to be implemented. With their involvement, the Colombian women want to demonstrate the political strength that they can bring to peacebuilding efforts.

In cooperation with Ruta Pacifica de las Mujeres

Top: Dialogue between women is the main focus of the PeaceTable events.

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PeaceTables are being held around the world.

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> North-eastern **India** is home to more than 30 different ethnic groups. The region has been mired in conflicts for decades. Many people have lost their lives or seen relatives die, and thousands have been forced to flee. The PeaceTable in Manipur will give local women’s organizations a louder voice.

In cooperation with STEP Trust

> The PeaceTable in **Indonesia** will focus on redefining women’s identity, culture and spirituality. The country is currently in a post-conflict situation, and many women are traumatized. The event aims to give them prospects and to expand the organizations’ network with the neighboring islands.

In cooperation with PWAG Indonesia

> **Kenya** launched an action plan on UNSCR 1325 this year. The implementation of this plan, which does not yet seem to be having a large impact, will be a key topic at the PeaceTable. The event will also look at the peace work being done by women in various conflict regions around the country, and how this might influence the 2017 elections.

In cooperation with Coalition for Peace in Africa

> **Mali** will host two PeaceTables. They will focus on the peace deal, the laws on gender equality and the national action plan on UNSCR 1325. The opportunities and problems resulting from these will be discussed in detail. Simultaneously the exhibition “1000 PeaceWomen Across the Globe” will be presented.

In cooperation with Association des Femmes pour les Initiatives de Paix

> Thanks to their talents, craftswomen are important contributors to the economy – but they are rarely represented on management boards and are thus not protected from exploitation. The PeaceTable in **Morocco** will start a dialogue between politicians and craftswomen in order to promote craftswomen’s skills and secure their presence on relevant political committees.

In cooperation with PRESMA COM

> Survivors of the civil war in **Nepal** had until June 2016 to submit their war crime cases for enquiry. At the PeaceTable, which was held in March, 20 women who had been severely affected were encouraged to submit a request and work on finding out the truth. These women will meet for a second time in October to report on how their cases are progressing.

In cooperation with Nagarik Aawaz

> For security reasons, **Nicaragua** will hold its PeaceTable in neighboring Honduras. The fundamental rights of women are at risk in both countries, and peace is fragile. The PeaceTable participants will use the opportunity to highlight injustices and human rights abuses, and to reach a global audience.

In cooperation with PWAG Latin America

> Violence towards women increased dramatically over the past year, and laws on preventing it are not being implemented. This will be the main topic of the PeaceTable in **Pakistan**, which will bring together women and men from a variety of organizations.

In cooperation with Tehrik-e-Niswan



Top: Last year's PeaceTable in Sudan was a great success. Hopefully it will happen again this year.

Top: Last year's PeaceTable in Brazil welcomed participants from different generations.

Bottom: To complement the dialogue, dance and theatre performances are included in the PeaceTable in Pakistan.

Bottom: In 2015, women who hadn't communicated in years, due to the post-conflict situation in Indonesia, were finally able to share their experiences.

> The path to a democratic system in the occupied territories will be the main topic at the PeaceTable in **Palestine**. The event will discuss ways in which women can participate in the national dialogue between political and religious parties, and their influence on social reconciliation. It will also address the economic and social challenges that could prevent women from participating.

In cooperation with MASARAT

> In **Somalia**, political, religious and cultural power structures are severely limiting the important influence that women have traditionally had in society. As part of the PeaceTable event, an entire month will be dedicated to training sessions and forums designed to educate women and make them a more accepted part of their communities.

In cooperation with Somali Youth Development Network

> **Sri Lanka's** post-war reconstruction has been going on for many years, and again it is women who have been particularly affected by the conflict. The PeaceTable here aims to give women a space in which they can express their needs and work together on strategies that will guarantee them a place in peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts at all levels of society.

In cooperation with Association of War Affected Women

> The unstable political situation in **Sudan** is hampering communication with the woman organizing the PeaceTable there. At the time of going to press, it was not clear whether and in what form the event will take place.

In cooperation with Community Development Association

> The PeaceTable in **Tunisia** will mark the end of an awareness-raising campaign that examines the opportunities and challenges of

women's political participation in a local context. The idea is to encourage women to participate in the 2017 elections as voters, candidates and observers.

In cooperation with League of Tunisian Women Voters

> Participants at the PeaceTable in **Vanuatu** will address the rights of women as individuals, in marriage, in the family and in society. The event will be held on Constitution Day and will also mark the start of the campaign "16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence."

In cooperation with Women Against Crime and Corruption

Take Women Seriously!

The **#WomenSeriously** campaign draws attention to the fact that women continue to be shut out of most peace talks. This is despite the fact that they could bring a wealth of knowledge, valuable life experience, and fresh perspectives to conflict transformation.

But although they face difficulties, women still find ways of formulating their demands and playing a part in important processes.

The Peace Table events aim to encourage hundreds of thousands of women across all ages to get involved in peace processes and demand their seat at the negotiating table. The PeaceTables are part of this important global movement.

For more information about the PeaceTables, write to us at info@1000peacewomen.org or call us on +41 31 312 02 40. You can also visit our website to find out more about the project and the **#WomenSeriously** campaign.



Apropos

Solidarity

Peace needs us – and we need you! Please support our work by making a donation or by buying a “peace share”.

Many thanks!

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Swift: KBBE CH 22

IBAN: CH79 0079 0016 2484 3428 5

Contact

PeaceWomen Across the Globe
International Secretariat
Maulbeerstrasse 14
3011 Bern, Switzerland

T +41 31 312 02 40
F +41 31 312 01 39

info@1000peacewomen.org
www.1000peacewomen.org

EDITING Andrea Grossenbacher, Tanja Mirabile, Meike Sahling, Judith Schmid
TRANSLATION Jen Metcalf
IMAGES PWAG
DESIGN zala-grafik.ch

You will find further information about our events and activities on our website, where we also present our PeaceWoman of the Month:
www.1000peacewomen.org



Our **blog** provides information on the work of our global network:
www.1000peacewomen.com



Visit us on Facebook at
PeaceWomen Across the Globe

From Theory to Action

Approaches to peace

Policymakers and academics now recognize that if peace negotiations are to secure peace, they must include women. Processes can only bring about lasting effects if all social groups and levels¹ are involved. This requires comprehensive approaches that take the needs of as many people as possible into account. With the PeaceTables, PWAG aims to promote women’s involvement and also show that various approaches are possible. The following are two of the methods that will be used at the PeaceTables:

1. Dialogue as a tool for developing peace

The dialogue is structured on clear rules, and the aim is to develop recommendations and actions. Dialogue is about developing relationships and trust between all levels of society so that everyone’s needs, including those of women, can be incorporated into negotiations. Reciprocal questions are quickly resolved, and results are channeled into subsequent processes.

2. Arts-based conflict transformation

Another option is to incorporate creative, artistic elements such as dance, theatre, painting, storytelling, and music. Particularly in cases where communication between conflict parties or social levels seems difficult, this route allows participants to express their needs non-verbally.

¹ This is about incorporating governmental, organizational, academic, and grassroots levels. The specialist term is “tracks” – one usually talks of “multi-track approaches”.

Save the date

PeaceTable in Switzerland

Bern, October 27, 2016

This year PWAG will also be organizing a PeaceTable in Switzerland.

Women who have participated in peace talks or were active on the sidelines will report on their experiences at the event in Bern. This will be followed by a discussion between experts, politicians, and interested parties. They will look at the requirements that are set out in UNSCR 1325, how they can be successfully implemented, and the role that Switzerland should play. Working at various tables, participants will formulate demands that will then be submitted to politicians. We will also present the PeaceTables being held around the world.

Anyone who is interested in this topic, works in the field, or simply wants to learn more is very welcome to join us at the event. As with the international PeaceTables, we will discuss the involvement of women in all three levels of society. We also want to strengthen networking and dialogue between those who are involved in peace work and in the “Women, Peace and Security” agenda.

More information will be available soon.

Top: Women and men at the dialogue forum in Egypt.