



PeaceWomen Across the Globe
 FRIEDENSFRAUEN WELTWEIT
 نساء من أجل السلام عبر العالم
 Femmes de Paix Around du Monde
 Женщины мира за мир на земле
 MUJERES DE PAZ EN EL MUNDO
 Mulheres pela Paz ao redor do Mundo
 DONNE DI PACE NEL MONDO
 ピースウーマン—国境を越え平和をつくる女たち
 全球和平妇女

Newsletter 1/2018

FOCUS PEACE WORK IN NEPAL

Women, justice and the search for truth

"Coming together is the beginning ... Staying together is progress ... and working together is success" says Dr Chhatra Amatya, Vice-President of Nagarik Aawaz. PeaceWomen Across the Globe can only but agree with the words of its partner organisation. There has been close cooperation for several years, with the aim of giving women a voice in the protracted Nepalese peace process.

The peace process in Nepal is less in the public eye than that described in the last two newsletters in the Philippines or Colombia. The end of the civil war is a good ten years back. But Nepal is still on the long, slow road to a peaceful society.

A look back: In 1996, the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) presented to the then government a list of demands, including an end to the monarchy, Nepal's declaration as a secular state, various social reforms and the drafting of a new constitution. After being ignored by the government, the Maoists declared an armed uprising. In 2006, the civil war ended with a peace agreement, in 2008 the monarchy was abolished and the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal came into being. Since then, political instability and frequent changes of government have shaped the country. Only since 2013, when a constituent assembly was elected and in 2015 when the new constitution was adopted, has the situation calmed. However, the severe earthquake in April 2015 set Nepal's economic and social development back years, and thus the peace process too.

The peace agreement

The 2006 Peace Agreement obliges the signatories to reappraise human rights abuses committed during the civil war, to compensate those affected

and to dissolve the rebel army. For the approximately 20'000 Maoist combatants in the assembly camps, including 4'000 women and 3'000 children and adolescents, there was a reintegration package including schooling and vocational training, job offers and severance pay. In 2012 the last camp was closed. Most of the former combatants received severance payments and only a few were taken on by the state security forces.

Women's rights are human rights

Since then, the peace process has stagnated. The government has not complied with the demands of Nepal's human rights organisations, to clarify the fate of those abducted and murdered in the war. There is a climate of impunity.

During the armed uprising, 17'625 people were killed, 78'675 were displaced, 1'302 disappeared and 4'305 now suffer from disabilities. Many people were abducted and tortured during the armed conflict, including many women. So far, there are no numbers indicating how many women were affected by sexual and physical violence. In 2015, with almost ten years delay, the transitional justice commissions required by the peace agreement were launched. Since then they have been the hope of the many people still waiting for justice and truth.

Top: Women in Nepal



FOCUS PEACE WORK IN NEPAL

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Despite the existence of international human rights instruments, it is often difficult for women to gain the necessary space and recognition to get their concerns heard in the peace process. Many women in Nepal have been rejected by commissions or harassed in investigations. There are no safe spaces where women can report on the violence they have experienced. Women in rural areas are, in particular, insufficiently informed about their rights or cannot make their way to the commissions for cultural or financial reasons, or are afraid of stigmatisation. In 2017, commissions were opened in each province and their terms extended until February 2019. It is now high time to listen to the voices of all conflict-affected women in Nepal through, for example, dialogue programmes such as Women's PeaceTables.

Peace work and establishing the truth

Women are affected differently to men by war. They are less often active fighters; instead, their socio-economic rights are violated by violent conflict. In addition, they experience violence differently to men: sexual violence, rape, sex slavery, forced marriage and forced pregnancies. Nevertheless – and as PeaceWomen Across the Globe (PWAG) repeatedly points out – peace negotiations and peace processes are a male dominated area. Despite human rights instruments that guarantee the participation of women, women rarely play a role, no matter what they did in the conflict.

PWAG, together with its partner organisation Nagarik Aawaz, has been working for women and their rights in Nepal for several years. Since 2015, Nagarik Aawaz has organised Women's PeaceTables, bringing together the commissions and stakeholders of the conflict and drafting recommendations for dealing with the conflict from a gender perspective. In 2018, Women's PeaceTables will be organised in each of the country's seven provinces, followed by one at the national level. There will also be a meeting in November in Kathmandu of Women's PeaceTables representatives from South Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The aim is an active exchange and mutual learning process for the participation

of women in peace processes, as well as the establishment of a strong network of active peace women. Both projects are being carried out in close cooperation with PWAG. In this way, PeaceWomen Across the Globe is demonstrating its commitment to the promotion of women's participation in peacebuilding, the exchange of experience among globally active peace women and to the visibility of their peace work. PWAG looks forward to further cooperation!



Nagarik Aawaz is a non-profit organisation founded in 2001 by Rita Thapa, one of the 1000 women nominated for the Nobel Prize. The organisation gives voice to the needs of women affected by conflict and displaced women, thereby pioneering peace work in Nepal.

Top left: Tibetan Prayer Flags
Top centre and right: Impressions of the Women's PeaceTable in Nepal about gender-just dealing with the conflict



FOCUS **WOMEN'S PEACETABLES 2018 – 2021**

Between 2015 and 2017, PeaceWomen Across the Globe worked with local partner organisations around the world to launch 60 Women's PeaceTables in over 30 conflict-affected countries. In Afghanistan, the DRC, Colombia, the Philippines, Palestine, Nepal and many other countries, women came together to share their experiences of conflict, gain more knowledge about their rights and forge joint peacebuilding strategies.

On the basis of the positive response, PeaceWomen Across the Globe PWAG is now building a new, global programme that integrates the past positive experiences of the Women's PeaceTables and other projects, such as the Dialogue Fora in Egypt.

The 2018–2021 Women's Peace Table WPT programme consists of the following three interconnected programmatic strands:

I. Consolidation of the Women's PeaceTables on conflict transformation

In individual focal countries, and on the basis of experience drawn from the WPTs, the programme is being consolidated. Each year, Nepal, Colombia and the Philippines will host three to seven local WPT focused on women's concerns in on-going peace processes. These concerns will then be conveyed to an annual National Women's PeaceTable, with the participation of key decision-makers at country capital level, accompanied by advocacy campaigns. Gender-just dealing with the conflict and an exchange of experience between the three partner organisations will be central. As the Nepal example shows, in this way more women become informed about their rights in on-going peace processes, including those women living in remote regions. The aim is to design and implement common strategies to outline these rights. Such a longer-term continuous perspective makes it possible to involve more women in decision-making in on-going peace processes and to ensure influence at the structural level.

II. Supraregional Women's Peace Table

For PeaceWomen Across the Globe, it is important to strengthen the PeaceWomen network. Partner organisations around the globe have also expressed a wish to deepen the exchange of experience at the supraregional level and to develop joint approaches to conflict transformation and advocacy strategies. Therefore, in November 2018, the first Regional South Asian WPT will be held in Nepal with the participation of long-standing partner organisations from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, India and Nepal. The aim is to initiate a common learning process and an exchange of experience and to strengthen strategic alliances between peace activists in the region. In addition to this regional exchange, all participating countries will also be running 2018 Women's PeaceTables in parallel.

III. Civil society open space through Women's PeaceTables

Any scope for action and space for civil society organisations is shrinking in many contexts, especially in women's peace work. To counteract this trend, PeaceWomen Across the Globe continues to support the implementation of annual Women's PeaceTables in selected contexts, including in the DRC, in South Korea, Burundi, Kenya, Palestine and Senegal.

The Women's PeaceTable programme makes possible a response to the needs of partner organisations, and also to changing conflict contexts. Through the exchange of experience among partner organisations, approaches can be further developed together and new ideas generated – for example through further topics for consolidation, new ideas for supraregional women's peace tables and the integration of new countries.



Top left: Women's PeaceTable in Mali
Top right: Women's PeaceTable in Bangladesh
Bottom: Women's PeaceTable in Colombia



News

2017 Annual Report

Why do women play such a crucial role in peace negotiations? What was discussed at the 30 Women's PeaceTables that took place around the world? Which direction will PWAG take over the next few years? Read all this and more in our 2017 Annual Report which you can find on our website under publications, or order from the office.

Advocacy – Worldwide Commitment

Board member Kin Chi Lau delivered a speech at the Women's Peace Symposium and Peace Walk, Seoul, Korea, in May, on behalf of PWAG. Likewise, Board member Marina Pikulina, representing PWAG, was a panellist at the 5th South-South Forum on Sustainability in June 2018 in Hong Kong.

In an open letter on 16 April 2018, together with twelve NGOs and two political parties, PWAG called on the Swiss Federal Council to suspend negotiations on the free trade agreement between Turkey and the EFTA States in view of the human rights situation.

Congratulations!

PeaceWoman Rita Thapa from Nepal has been awarded the 2018 Fairness Award. Each year, the prize honours the extraordinary work of individuals working for economically disadvantaged and marginalised communities. Rita Thapa has dedicated her life to empowering women and building peace in Nepal. She is the founder of Nagarik Aawaz, PWAG's partner organisation in Nepal.

Obituary

We have learned with great sadness of the deaths of Pakistani PeaceWomen Asma Jahangir (66) and Madeeha Gauhar (61). Both committed their lives to peace and to women in Pakistan.



Close Up

The PWAG International Board*

"I love and respect the work of PeaceWomen Across the Globe that brings together grassroots women, activists and activist researchers to honour the 'unsung' leaders of women's movements and organizations working toward justice, culture of peace, genuine security for all people and the planet. We are principled and a visionary organization, made up of women who have doing peace work for many years."

Margo Okazawa-Rey has been active since 2003 as a board member and as regional coordinator of PWAG. She is the former Director of the Women's Leadership Institute and Professor of Women's Studies at Mills College in Oakland, California, and has been campaigning against military violence against women. She is a co-founder of the International Network of Women against Militarism and works as a counsellor in Ramallah, Palestine. Her research focuses on the interaction between militarism, war and the globalisation of the economy. Although officially retired since 2013, she continues to serve as a professor at the School of Human and Organisational Development at Fielding Graduate University. She has published various books, including, together with Julia Sudbury: *Activist Scholarship: Antiracism, Feminism and Social Change*.

* We will present the members of the International Board here, one at a time.

Solidarity

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We need you.
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Many thanks!**

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www.1000peacewomen.org

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PeaceWomen Across the Globe

PeaceWomen Across the Globe is the growing global network of the 1000 women who were nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005. The international organisation is based in Berne and works towards promoting the participation of women in peace building. PWAG promotes the sharing of knowledge and experience among peace women worldwide and advocates for women's sustainable and visible peace work.

Impressum

PeaceWomen Across the Globe
Maulbeerstrasse 14
3011 Bern, Switzerland
T +41 31 312 02 40
info@1000peacewomen.org
www.1000peacewomen.org

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