



PeaceWomen Across the Globe
 FRIEDENSFRAUEN WELTWEIT
 نساء من أجل السلام عبر العالم
 Femmes de Paix Autour 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 2/2018

FOCUS PEACE ACTIVISTS IN KENYA

Sustainable peace promoted through civil society engagement

After the presidential elections in December 2007, Kenya was hit by a wave of violence. The clashes erupted between ethnic groups, causing great unrest. An estimated 1'500 people were killed and more than 600'000 were forced to flee. The unrest ended in February 2008 with an agreement and the establishment of a Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission.

A PeaceWoman as President of the Commission

The Commission's mandate included the processing of historical injustices from 1963 to 2008. Its President, who was one of the first women to act in this capacity, was Tecla Wanjala, one of the women nominated for the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize. The Commission carried out numerous investigations into human rights violations, identified those responsible and finalised a report in 2013. Tecla Wanjala is convinced, from a woman's perspective, that the Commission has done its best. Among other things, the Commission has set up a special unit on gender and integrated a gender focus into her work. The interview guidelines focused in particular on women's experiences and the respondents had been specially trained for this. In addition, the Commission worked closely with women's organisations to increase women's access.

But now the process is stagnating! The Commission's report has been held up in Parliament and Kenya lacks the political will to implement its

recommendations. Tecla Wanjala emphasises the importance of civil society organisations: "While we demand accountability from the government to implement the report, we are already in a position to take up some of its recommendations and act accordingly". The international community can also apply pressure on the Kenyan government.

Unremitting commitment to peace

Tecla Wanjala, a peace advocate and trauma counsellor, has been working for peace for more than 25 years. The nomination for the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize has had great significance for her: "It was an honour and was also a recognition of my work promoting peace at the community level. Today, I can represent the concerns of women on both the national and international levels".

Tecla Wanjala has worked for various local and international organisations, always with the aim of promoting peaceful coexistence. She co-founded *Coalition for Peace in Africa – COPA*, PeaceWomen Across the Globe's partner organisation. For Tecla Wanjala, contact with PeaceWomen Across the

Top: Kenyan women demonstrate for peace, Nairobi, October 2017.



PeaceWoman Tecla Wanjala during her visit to the International Office in Bern, October 2018.



Participants of a workshop run by COPA, PWAG's partner organisation, Nairobi, 2018.

FOCUS PEACE ACTIVISTS IN KENYA

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Globe is very important. “When I was at the International Office in September 2018, I learned a lot about other women’s initiatives around the world. That was very encouraging.”

Women’s Peace Table to combat violent extremism

Space for civil society is currently shrinking in many parts of the world. Civil society organisations face major challenges such as violence and detention. Changes to the law undermine their independence. Only by counteracting this development can civil society organisations continue to be in a position to protect human rights.

That is why PeaceWomen Across the Globe supports Women’s Peace Tables in Kenya and around the world. They give women a voice in peace processes. In Colombia, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Congo, Senegal, the Philippines and many other countries, women use these platforms to discuss their (often unheard) concerns about peace and reconstruction. They develop common strategies, share experiences, and put pressure on governments to fulfill their right to participate in peace processes; women are affected differently by armed conflict, and peace is more sustainable if women participate.

The Women’s Peace Table in northern Kenya at the beginning of November 2018 was run by PWAG’s partner organisation COPA. In this region, half the population are Somali refugees, and regular attacks by armed Somali groups pose a high security risk. Because of the conflict, civil society in the region is committed to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. But women’s voices in matters of peacebuilding are barely audible! This is exactly what the Women’s Peace Table wanted to change. The plat-

form brought together Kenyan and Somali women to promote trust and community building. In addition, women discussed their active role in dealing with violent extremism.

For the future, PeaceWoman Tecla Wanjala hopes for an environment in which women can develop their full potential and where the burdens on their heads, backs and shoulders are lifted. PeaceWomen Across the Globe will accompany her and will continue to work for a gender-equitable and sustainable peace.

A coalition for peace

Coalition for Peace in Africa, COPA, PeaceWomen Across the Globe’s partner organisation, was founded in 1995 and is a diverse and far-reaching network of peacemakers. The goal of COPA is the exchange of peace practices for the prevention of violent conflicts on the African continent. COPA maintains close relationships with local non-profit organisations. In this way, the partners’ capacities can be strengthened and their response to conflict sharpened.



Participants of the 2017 Women's Peace Table in Colombia.

FOCUS THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN COLOMBIA

Since the 2016 peace agreement between the FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*) and the government, Colombia has been in a post-conflict phase during which the peace process is being implemented. PeaceWomen Across the Globe, together with its partner organisation COMUNITAR – *Corporación de Mujeres Ecofeministas* and the *Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres* network, is committed to women's active participation in the implementation of the peace agreement.

With the establishment of the peace agreement between the FARC and the Colombian government, one of the longest and most violent armed conflicts in the world, affecting 8 million people, has come to an end. Implementation of the peace agreement is, however, sluggish; conflicts still smoulder and Colombian society remains highly polarised. The results of this year's parliamentary and presidential elections have strengthened this and have jeopardised the peace agreement's progress, as well as the continuity of the negotiating process with the ELN (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional*) guerrillas.

Peace in the regions

One challenge is the peace process in the regions. Social and political violence in the areas left by the FARC has intensified as a result of increased drug trafficking, the formation of criminal groups, legal and illegal mining and the continued presence of the ELN. The state security forces barely manage to protect the population from attacks. According to the Indepaz organisation, there were 120 politically motivated murders in the first half of 2018, compared with 93 in 2017 over the same period. The attacks and murders target peace activists and human rights defenders.

Civil society engagement is central to the agreement, both to protect progress and to promote gender-equitable peace processes. "By signing the peace agreement, Colombian society has experienced a historic moment that provides the basis for creating a stable and

lasting peace and building a democratic society. The women's movement within society has managed to embed its proposals into the agreement. As a result, the Colombian peace process has become the first, globally, to have a subcommittee on gender issues. In the current situation, it is essential that women are also actively and decisively involved in the implementation of the agreements. This requires space for women to develop and implement joint strategies for influencing the peace process, with platforms such as the Women's Peace Tables."

Zully Meneses Hernandez, COMUNITAR Project Manager

Women's Peace Tables in Colombia

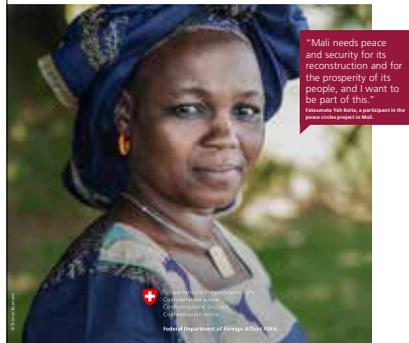
One key region, heavily affected by the conflict, is Cauca. Experience shows how important decentralised women's peace tables are: they involve the rural population because there is often a lack of knowledge about the legal opportunities that the peace agreement offers.

There will be three local Women's Peace Tables in Corinto, Argelia and El Tambo in 2018, as well as a regional one in Popayán. The theme will be planned reforms for fair land distribution. Land access was the central issue of the conflict. In Colombia, just 0.4 percent of the population owns 67 percent of the fertile land, while 84 percent of the population have to make do with only 4 percent of the land. According to the peace agreement, illegally acquired and fallow land should be reallocated and the survivors of the conflict should benefit. The legislative initiative that has been submitted deviated significantly from the points in the agreement. The allocation of land, it suggested, should be based on assets, which would further aggravate the unequal distribution and would penalise women in particular.

From 2019, the Women's Peace Tables in Colombia will be extended to three further regions. The thematic focus will be on the truth commission and on sexual and gender-based violence.

Women, Peace and Security

Switzerland's Fourth National Action Plan to Implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2018–2022)



"Mali needs peace and security for its reconstruction and for the prosperity of its people, and I want to be part of this."
Hassane Toure, a participant in the peacebuilding project in Mali.

News

Advocacy in Switzerland

In addition to programme work, advocacy forms an important area of activity for PeaceWomen Across the Globe. Working in cooperation with other civil society organisations, PWAG advocates for the implementation of core human rights standards.

For example, PeaceWomen Across the Globe, together with KOFF (the Swiss Platform for Peacebuilding) and the feminist peace organisation cfd, is coordinating the civil society follow up of the 4th Swiss National Action Plan (NAP) on "Women, Peace, Security". Launched in late October 2018, the NAP 1325 defines measures to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which since 2000 has required more women to participate in peace processes worldwide and to be protected from conflict violence.

The goal of the civil society follow up is to make the NAP better known and more relevant in the practice of peacebuilding. The focus is on political dialogue with various stakeholders, on media work and the collection and analysis of practical experience. This analysis examines the topics of gender and violent extremism as well as the conditions that enable and hinder conditions of women's participation in peace processes. One of these scientific studies is being conducted around the Women's Peace Table in Kenya. The results will be consolidated in international conferences and translated into concrete political activities in the form of policy recommendations. Cooperation with Parliament plays an important role. The coordination group is in close exchange with the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and harnesses synergies with shadow reporting on the UN Women's Rights Convention CEDAW, in order to increase accountability.



Close Up

PeaceWomen Across the Globe's International Board*

"Ruta Pacifica de las Mujeres and the women's movement in Colombia has had considerable impact on the peace negotiations with the FARC. The signed agreements incorporate the gender approach and central elements, which ensure that Colombian women will benefit from the implementation of the agreements. They will help to overcome inequalities between men and women in our country. I think Colombian women have learned important lessons from these experiences and we can share them with many other women around the world."

Alejandra Miller Restrepo, who is an economist and political scientist, lives and works in Bogotá, Colombia. She was elected to the official National Truth Commission of Colombia in November 2017 and is one of five women on the eleven-member panel. The Truth Commission is interviewing survivors of the armed conflict between the FARC and the Colombian government for three years.

Alejandra Miller Restrepo is a researcher and teacher of gender issues at the University of Cauca. She focuses on the impact on women of the armed conflict in Colombia. From 2003 to 2015, she was the coordinator in Cauca Department of the PeaceWomen Across the Globe partner organisation, Ruta Pacifica de las Mujeres. She has had a seat on the PeaceWomen Across the Globe International Board since 2013.

*The Members of the International Board are presented here, one at the time.



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IMAGES PeaceWomen Across the
Globe; Cover photo: picture alliance/
AP Photo

LAYOUT zala-grafik.ch

PRINTER Länggass Druck AG

PRINT RUN 200

This newsletter is published twice annually.