

Oversight Group of Ireland's second
National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2015 – 2018)

Fifth Meeting

16 September 2016, Dun Library, Royal College of Physicians

Minutes: Formal Oversight Group Meeting

Attendees:

Oversight Group

Attendance

1. Nora Owen, Independent Chair
2. Nicole McHugh, Development Co-operation Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (alternate for Niall Morris)
3. Nicola Donnelly, Cosc (National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence), Department of Justice and Equality
4. Jaqueline Healy, National Women's Council of Ireland
5. Ruth Taillon, Centre for Cross-Border Studies
6. Kevin Kelly, Conflict Resolution Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
7. Colm Byrne, Oxfam Ireland
8. Comdt. Eoghan McDermott, Defence Forces
9. Réiseal Ni Chéilleachair, Trócaire
10. Diane Nurse, Social Inclusion Unit, Health Services Executive
11. Michael Rowan, independent expert
12. Anastasia Crickley, Department of Applied Social Studies, Maynooth University
13. Louise Synnott, An Garda Síochána
14. Fionnuala Callanan, Northern Ireland, the UK and the Americas Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (alternate for Sarah McGrath)
15. Katie Daughen, Northern Ireland, the UK and the Americas Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (alternate for Sarah McGrath)
16. Barry Lavin, Intl Security and Defence Policy Branch, Department of Defence
17. Jessica Doyle, Transitional Justice Institute, University of Ulster (alternate for Catherine O'Rourke)
18. Frank Smyth, incoming Director of Conflict Resolution Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Apologies

- Rob Kevlihan, Kimmage Development Studies Centre
- Émer Deane, Permanent Mission of Ireland to the EU

Secretariat

- Paula Molloy, Conflict Resolution Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- James Kelly, Conflict Resolution Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Minutes of Oversight Group meeting

1. Adoption of previous meeting's minutes

In opening the meeting, the Chair took the opportunity to thank Cosc/Department of Justice and the Health Service Executive for leading on the thematic session. The Chair noted that the objectives of the session would be to assess the progress made to date by the relevant statutory bodies in implementing their commitments under the NAP, and the experience of migrant and refugee women and girls affected by conflict living in Ireland.

When reviewing the minutes of the previous meeting of 9th June 2016 the Chair offered independent expert member Michael Rowan the opportunity to comment on answers provided to him by the Department of Defence on observations he raised at the meeting. (The observations related to the Martina Padwick case, and more generally on the procedures of the Department with regard to handling any similar historic or possible future cases).

Representatives from the Defence Forces and the Department of Defence noted that all allegations of SEA are investigated in line with internal procedures, with credible claims being referred for further investigation, and that Irish peacekeepers are subject to Irish law no matter where they are deployed. A representative from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade noted that SEA has become one of the biggest issues in the UN over the past year, with layered distinctions to approaching cases, with cases involving children taking precedence, then non-consensual relations between adults, and finally relationships between consenting adults. Following this discussion the Chair closed the issue, and with no other matters arising, deemed the minutes to be formally approved.

2. Update on developments on WPS since Q2 meeting

The Secretariat to the Oversight Group provided an update on developments on WPS since the last meeting.

i. Update on the work of the secretariat

- a. CRU Director Kevin Kelly participated in the annual directors-level meeting of the EU Informal Taskforce on 1325 in Brussels in July. Mr Kelly participated in discussions which have led to a revision of the EU's indicators and monitoring process for progress on 1325.
- b. Independent Chair Nora Owen took part in the launch of the Women's Peace Tables initiative organised by #WomenSeriously, and spoke to an audience of around 80 stakeholders about the NAP and about women's participation in politics.
- c. The tender process for the Mid Term Review of the NAP was finalised and consultants have been appointed to conduct the exercise.
- d. DFAT has continued to engage with the peace processes in Colombia and the Middle East, adopting a WPS approach to identify areas where we can offer support. This includes support for women's participation in the process in Colombia, and inclusion of Colombia as a priority country to receive funding from the Global Acceleration Instrument.
- e. The WPS mailing list for interested stakeholders is now up and running.

ii. Update on WPS developments in Ireland and abroad

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- a. Unfortunately, no Oversight Group members were available to participate in the various WPS-themed events mentioned at the last meeting. However the events proceeded, including: OSCE/ODIHR conference on women leaders in Minsk, and NATO/UN Women conference on implementation of Ukraine's NAP in Kiev, both in June.

iii. Looking forward to WPS in Q4 2016

- a. During UNGA Ministerial week next week, Minister Flanagan will attend the launch of a new Focal Points Network on WPS, initiated by Spain. The Network will provide opportunities to share best practice on design and implementation of NAPs. WPS priorities feature in a number of Minister Flanagan's interventions at other events during UNGA week, including Ireland's national statement to the General Assembly.
- b. The UN Security Council is expected to hold an Open Debate on WPS in late October or November. This will coincide with "WPS Week" at the UN, when a number of WPS themed events will take place. Ireland hopes to organise at least one such event.
- c. Follow-up to the DPKO/EU/NATO seminar of gender advisors held in Dublin in May continues. A resulting Action Plan is due to be launched in Q4.
- d. Ireland is supporting Finland in holding a WPS event on the margins of the EU/CELAC (Latin American and Caribbean states) Ministerial meeting in October. Monica McWilliams will attend to speak about the role of women in peace processes.
- e. The EU has revised its 1325 indicators and will shortly issue a survey to MS to track progress.
- f. DFAT has launched the second round of the Stability Fund. We will soon be providing funding to more partners working at various stages of the conflict cycle. Full consideration of WPS is a required criteria for all applications.

The Department of Defence representative updated the Group on recent development in its own Department. Minister of State for Defence Paul Kehoe attended a two day Peacekeeping Summit in London, of which WPS was a major component. Separately the Department of Defence briefed their British counterparts on Irish peacekeeping, and Ireland's WPS agenda implementation was of particular interest. Furthermore the Department of Defence is providing input with regard to WPS to the EU Global Strategy.

3. Midterm Review

The secretariat discussed progress made on the Midterm Review. The consultants, Bronagh Hinds and Debbie Donnelly, have been hired through a competitive tendering process, and between now and early February 2017 the Review will be carried out and the report drafted, reviewed and finalised. The Oversight Group was alerted to the fact that the consultants may seek out members for one-on-one or group consultations, and members were asked to make themselves available if possible. The emphasis on a concise, accessible report was echoed by various Group members.

4. Upcoming Meetings

Suggestions were sought for themes for the Q4 and subsequent meetings. One suggestion was for a meeting on the issue of policy coherence on WPS across government. It was agreed that this could be a viable future topic. Following discussion however it was agreed that the fourth pillar of the 2nd National Action Plan, Promotion, has yet to be discussed in depth in a meeting. It was decided that the Q4 meeting would look at the Promotion pillar, both from an international perspective in terms of WPS promotion by Ireland at the UN, the EU and in other fora, led by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and promotion on WPS domestically, led by the National Women's Council of Ireland. The importance of domestic promotion / awareness raising was suggested by the NWCI representative who cited evidence of a lack of awareness of the policy area. In addition, as outlined above, it was decided that a portion of the meeting would be allocated to the consultants for the Midterm Review in order to present initial findings from the inception report, and gather feedback before the drafting of the actual report. The provisional date for the next meeting was set for 7th December, pending the availability of the consultants to attend.

5. AOB

A few points were raised under Any Other Business:

- i. The lack of recognition of Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. It was asked from the floor if there was any way for Ireland to influence the UK to include Northern Ireland in its upcoming 3rd Plan. It was agreed that this is a sensitive issue which merits fuller discussion.
- ii. A question about Ireland's on-going engagement with regard to the Middle East Peace Process and the peace process in Colombia was raised from the floor. A representative from the Conflict Resolution Unit noted the synergies between both scoping missions in terms of what Ireland can offer to the processes. WPS was highlighted as a particularly relevant issue in that it can be a non-controversial space in both conflicts to foster cross-community co-operation.
- iii. Finally it was noted that members of the Oversight Group should meet with Joint Oireachtas Committees to raise awareness of the WPS agenda. The Foreign Affairs Committee was highlighted as a good Committee to start with and it was tentatively agreed that the Secretariat would seek a meeting with the JFAC before the end of 2016.
- iv. Finally, the Chair thanked Mr Kelly for his contributions to the Oversight Group and on his leadership of the Conflict Resolution Unit, which leads on the Women, Peace and Security agenda, as this was his last meeting before he takes up his Ambassadorial post in The Hague.

Secretariat to the Oversight Group to the 2nd National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security

20th September 2016