

# WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY UPDATE – OCTOBER 2018

Conflict Resolution Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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Please do not hesitate to get in touch at any time if you have [news](#), [research](#), an [event](#) or [project](#) relevant to Ireland's WPS agenda that you would like circulated to this mailing list.

For more general information on Ireland's WPS agenda, please visit our [webpage](#).

## 73<sup>rd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly

*Here are some of the WPS related events that Ireland Participated at UNGA week this year*

### Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund

The Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, **Simon Coveney, T.D.**, spoke alongside the actress and WPHF Global advocate, **Kristen Bell**, at the launch of the new **40 by 20** campaign. This campaign aims to mobilise \$40 million by the end of 2020 for women peacebuilders and responders. The Tánaiste noted that Ireland's "own experience of conflict"

pertains to "a deep understanding of women, peace and security issues". He underlined that the added value of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund is that it supports "civil-society led and locally owned" initiatives. He also announced "a further financial contribution from Ireland to the Fund for 2018". This event was preceded by a **lunchtime civil society consultation for WPHF advocates Kristen Bell and Louane** (French Actress and singer), hosted by UN Population Fund (UNFPA). Minister of State for the Diaspora and International Development, Ciarán Cannon, T.D., also spoke at the event which was co-hosted by Ireland. The meeting gave a platform to civil society on issues and challenges relating to women, peace and security and humanitarian issues, to become better spokespersons for women peacebuilders and responders throughout the world.



### African Women Leadership Network

In September 2018 Ireland joined the Group of Friends of the African Women Leaders Network (AWLN). This network, which was launched in 2017 is composed of more than 300 African women leaders from various sectors. The Group of Friends of the AWLN is active in New York, and is co-chaired by Ghana and Germany.

Ireland, cosponsored an AWLN side event with the African Union, The Gambia and UN Women at the 73<sup>rd</sup> session of the UN General Assembly on **'Nurturing Young Women Leadership for Transformation'**. This followed a meeting between the Mission and the AU Mission's WPS expert Ms Benito Diep, at which she identified a gap that exists between older and younger African women; Ireland had raised its commitment to the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda and the need to link its work with the WPS Agenda. The recently appointed Deputy Director of the Conflict Resolution Unit, Aoife Lyons spoke at the event on **'Institutionalising Youth in Policymaking'**, alongside Ms. Vivian Onano, Global Youth Ambassador at Water Aid, and a Youth Adviser to the UN Women Civil Society Advisory Group.



### WPS Focal Points Network

Launched in 2016 by the Government of Spain and currently chaired by Germany, the WPS Focal Points Network is a cross-regional forum for Member States and regional organizations, which collaborates with UN agencies and civil society to share experiences and best practices in advancing the implementation of Security Council resolutions on women, peace, and security. During the 73<sup>rd</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), on September 26, more than 160 participants attended a ministerial-level event, hosted by the Permanent Missions of Germany, Spain and Namibia (the Chair of the Network in 2019) to the UN, to discuss the theme, "The Security Council and Women, Peace and Security: Fostering Practical Action". Accountability and monitoring, prevention, protection and participation were all discussed.

## WPS Week at the United Nations



It is now almost a cliché to say that women's participation significantly increases the probability of more lasting and sustainable peace. What is shocking however is that this reality is seldom respected, globally. Ireland believes that we have a duty to change that - to work to support women's leadership and empowerment across the development and peacebuilding nexus. We take this duty seriously.

~ Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason  
Permanent Representative of Ireland

On the 25th October 2018, the annual WPS Open Debate took place in the Security Council. This year's debate was focussed on "Promoting the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and Sustaining Peace through Women's

Political and Economic Empowerment". Ireland's Ambassador to the Permanent Mission to the United Nations, Geraldine Byrne Nason's intervention can be found [here](#) (at 2:31:20 and the EU's Ambassador on Gender/UNSCR1325 Mara Marinaki's intervention can be found at 1:37:35). Ireland made reference to the importance of drawing on our own experience of peace-building,

our role as Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women and the steps that Ireland believes should be taken as we approach the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the WPS Agenda in 2020. Woman's Coalition Member Bronagh Hinds also attended the debate alongside Ambassador Byrne Nason.

### The Oxford Handbook on Gender and Conflict

As part of WPS Week Ireland's Permanent Mission to the United Nations also hosted two side events. The first was the launch of 'The Oxford Handbook for Gender and Conflict' on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Ambassador Byrne Nason introduced the panel discussion on the handbook. This panel was made up of the co-authors, Nahla Valji and Fionnuala Ni Aolain, UN Special Representative of Violence in Conflict and book contributor, Pramila Patten, and were joined by the Executive Director of UN Women Phumzile Mlambo-NGCuka.



### "Where We Stand on Women's Meaningful Participation in Peace Processes"



The second side event at the Irish Permanent Mission to the United Nations was a panel discussion of women peacebuilders and mediators, comprised of Bronagh Hinds from the Women's Coalition in Northern Ireland, Ms Rajaa Al-Talli, Head of the "Women for the Future of Syria" project, and Rosa Emilia Salamanca

González, the Strategic Director of the CIASE Corporation in Colombia. It was entitled "Where We Stand on Women's Meaningful Participation in Peace Processes". At this event the report from the UN Women's Expert Group Meeting on WPS was also launched. [The Expert Group Meeting Report](#) explored the issues regarding moving beyond the quantitative elements and also considering the more qualitative concept of "meaningful participation", which was given stronger emphasis in the two most recent WPS Resolutions 2212 (2013) and 2242(2015).

## Other WPS Related News/ Events



### Film Screenings in Brussels

Our Embassy of Ireland in Brussels hosted two film screenings during September /October in conjunction with the United Nations Regional Information Centre (UNRIC). On the 19<sup>th</sup> September there was a screening of "**Wave Goodbye to the Dinosaurs**" at which Jane Morris, a former member of Northern Ireland's Women Coalition, and the film's director Eimear O'Neill spoke on a panel following the

screening.

To commemorate the *international day of the girl child on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018*, there was a screening of "**The Breadwinner**" (2017). This film directed by Nora Twomey and produced by Mimi Polk Gitlin and Angelina Jolie, tells the story of a young Afghan girl, Parvana, who dresses up as a young boy in order to save her family from the Taliban. The film was co-produced by Canada, Ireland, and Luxembourg and received a nomination for Best Animated Feature at the 90th Academy Awards. Following the screening there was a panel discussion with Nora Twomey,

Áine Hearn, Director of the Conflict Resolution Unit at the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Sietske Steneker, Director of UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) Brussels, and Carlos Jimenez of UNRIC.

“The contribution and presence of women in our peacekeeping forces has broadened the skills sets available within our peacekeeping missions... integrating gender perspectives and empowering women are integral to improving the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping operations”  
-President Michael D. Higgins at the State ceremony in Dublin Castle (24th June 2018) to mark the 60th anniversary of participation by Ireland in UN peacekeeping. ([Speech in full](#))

### **UNSG’s Circle of Leadership on Preventing Exploitation and Abuse**

Following a number of incidents involving UN peacekeepers, (see also: Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) perpetrated by NGO staff in Haiti), the UNSG has adopted a zero tolerance policy on the perpetration of SEA by UN peacekeepers. At the 2017 and 2018 UN Security Council Open Debate on WPS, many Member States highlighted the steps they are taking to prevent the perpetration of SEA through providing gender sensitivity training to the blue helmets it deploys as well as its own national military. The Secretary General has introduced a voluntary **Global Compact on Preventing SEA** and has invited Member States to take a leadership role in this area and sign on to the compact. Ireland signed up to the Compact in April 2018, taking a whole of government approach in its commitment. The Taoiseach has joined the UN Secretary General’s ‘**Circle of Leadership**’ on the issue.

### **Special Representative on Women, Peace and Security in NATO Headquarters in Brussels**

A representative of Ireland’s Liaison Office to the Partnership for Peace attended an EAPC/NATO High Level Conference on Women, Peace and Security in Baku, Azerbaijan on 19-20 September. The conference brought together representatives of NATO allies and partners to discuss implementation of the NATO/EAPC Action Plan and Policy on Women, Peace and Security, which was approved at the NATO summit in July 2018. The Action Plan is built around three principles: Integration, Inclusiveness and Integrity. Conference participants considered challenges to implementation, including low levels of participation by women in military operations, sustaining meaningful engagement with Civil Society (which can be particularly difficult for a military alliance) and putting in place a sufficiently robust monitoring and evaluation framework to measure progress. It was also noted that, to date, only 19 of the alliance’s 29 members has a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

Ireland seconded Lieutenant Colonel Mary Carroll as a Voluntary National Contribution Gender Adviser to the office of the NATO Secretary General’s Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, on October 9th 2018, as part of our commitment to support the global implementation of UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions.

### **Women and Mediation in Cyprus**

From 22 to 26 September, co-founders of the Northern Ireland Women’s Coalition, Monica McWilliams and Avila Kilmurray, participated in a series of events in Cyprus to share experiences and discuss the role of women’s engagement in the Good Friday Agreement and within peace processes more broadly, and to share lessons that could strengthen the inclusion of women’s perspectives in the peace process in Cyprus. The programme was hosted and facilitated by the PRIO Cyprus Centre and the Embassy of Ireland in Cyprus, in partnership with UNFICYP, and involved public events in different locations across the



island, as well as more focused meetings with women activists, politicians, academics, university students and gender practitioners. As part of the event the film “Wave Goodbye to Dinosaurs” was screened at several locations with both Greek and Turkish subtitles. Following several months of inactivity, several members of the Technical Committee on Gender Equality met on 23 September during a meeting held in the context of the visit. Among other issues, methods to draw a gender perspective most effectively into any future resumption of talks were discussed.

### EU Taskforce Update

Ireland is a member of the EU Informal Taskforce on Women, Peace and Security which enables us to sit with other Member states and EU representatives to share experiences on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. Most notably, since 2016 Ireland has been involved in working with other Member States in a process to update the 2008 Comprehensive Approach on WPS in order to take into account the changing nature of the Agenda. Several meetings since that time period have resulted in the drafting of the EU Strategic Approach to Women, Peace and Security. On September 19<sup>th</sup> and October 24<sup>th</sup> there was a meeting between MS, EEAS and Commission Representatives to present final comments on the draft of the Strategic Approach. The draft document is now on the agenda of the PSC meeting to be held on the 30<sup>th</sup> of October.

### Network building with Arab States

During the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March 2018, the Political Team at the Permanent Mission of Ireland linked the WPS Agenda with the work of the CSW by organising two events with Karama. Karama is a network for women in Arab states dedicated to the elimination of violence against women. The umbrella network mobilises women’s influence and participation through activism, working through partners in 13 countries in the MENA region and through regional women’s networks. The Mission of Ireland co-sponsored a side event focused on women’s participation, which honoured the legacy of Egyptian diplomat and politician, Ms Mervat Tallawy. The Mission of Ireland additionally hosted a group of about twenty activists from Karama where they had the opportunity to discuss their key issues of advocacy with Ambassador Byrne Nason in her capacity as CSW Chair. The Youth Delegate for Palestine was present at the meeting, and Ambassador Byrne Nason urged her to reach out to her counterparts from other states, including Ireland’s UN Youth Delegates, in order to advocate and influence.

#### Ireland and WPS initiatives in Jordan

In 2015 Ireland contributed €100,000 toward the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Jordan via the Jordan III NATO / Partnership for Peace Trust Fund. This funding was used in the development of Jordan’s National Action Plan on WPS. Ireland has also contributed €90,000 to the Jordan IV Trust Fund, which aims to build ammunition demilitarisation capacity in Jordan, which contributes to Ireland’s support of gender and disarmament.

### Concern Conference

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of September 2018, Concern celebrated it’s 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at a conference in Dublin. Speakers at the event included former President of the United States of America, Bill Clinton, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, Fatima Kyari Mohammed, and Deputy Secretary General to the UN, Amina Mohammed. At the event the document [Breaking the Cycle of Conflict, Hunger and Human Suffering](#) was launched. The report synthesises material from Concern’s recent [Conflict and Displacement](#) and [Conflict and Hunger](#) reports, as well as introducing new material on Concern’s peacebuilding programming around the world.

Breaking  
the Cycle

BREAKING THE CYCLE  
of Conflict, Hunger and  
Human Suffering

CONCERN  
worldwide

## Ireland's Third National Action Plan Public Consultation Process

Ireland is currently beginning its consultation process for its Third National Action Plan. In order to achieve this the following steps will take place:

1. A final review of Ireland's Second National Plan on UNSCR1325 is currently being undertaken by independent consultants.
2. A NAP 3 Working Group has been established to oversee a public consultation and contribute to the drafting of the NAP. This will be made up of 50% Civil Society/Academia and 50% Government/Statutory Body representatives. The Civil Society members of the group will have WPS representatives and stakeholders in the NAP.
3. There will be a national call for Public Submissions regarding what should be considered as issues and priorities in the development of the Third NAP.
4. A workshop will be organised to further consider the priorities for the Third NAP and to explore the areas raised following input received from the Public Submissions.

Following the above the Third NAP will therefore be developed based on this consultation process and the Final Review of the Second NAP.

Please keep an eye on your emails for more information about the public consultation process.

"It is our own experience of conflict which gives us a deep understanding, and appreciation, of the importance and added value of including women in peacebuilding."

- An Tánaiste Simon Coveney speaking on the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund in September 2018

The [Report of the Midterm Review of Ireland's Second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security](#) is [available](#) on the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade's Women, Peace and Security webpage.

More information on the Oversight Group (including the membership and minutes of the meeting) can be found [here](#). To see a copy of [Ireland's 2nd National Action Plan](#) itself, please click [here](#).

Please let any interested parties know that they can sign up to the mailing list by contacting [wpsconsultation@dfa.ie](mailto:wpsconsultation@dfa.ie). Should you wish to unsubscribe from the mailing list at any time, please also email [wpsconsultation@dfa.ie](mailto:wpsconsultation@dfa.ie).