

## **Chair's Statement on G8 Experts Consultation on the Role of Women in International Peace and Security December 2012**

G8 experts on Women, Peace, and Security met with the United Nations (UN) and representatives of interested civil society organizations in Washington, D.C., on December 3-4, 2012, to draw together work already undertaken by G8 member states, collectively and individually, and explore options for how the G8 can work together and with others to enhance the role of women in international peace and security. The G8 recognizes that the role of women in preventing and resolving conflict is essential to achieving sustainable peace and security. As the G8 Foreign Ministers noted in April 2012, strong evidence shows that women's participation in conflict prevention efforts and peace processes tends to lead to better outcomes with respect to human rights, justice, national reconciliation, and economic revitalization. Yet women continue regularly to be excluded, whether in peace negotiations or political transitions, or in program planning. G8 Foreign Ministers requested in April 2012 that G8 experts develop options for how the G8 might work together and with others to enhance the role of women in international peace and security.

Assessing opportunities drawn from the experience and lessons learned of G8 member states, the UN, and civil society, the experts recommended, in December 2012, areas for greater collaboration across the Women, Peace, and Security pillars and in specific country contexts. In reviewing on-going efforts, they identified initiatives that form the basis for further collaboration, including bilateral efforts by member states, and efforts in G8 forums.

### **Policy Framework**

G8 experts noted the leading role of the UN Security Council on women, peace and security matters and emphasized the importance of ensuring the full and effective implementation of international humanitarian law and all relevant Security Council resolutions including resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010), all relevant Security Council presidential statements, and all relevant General Assembly resolutions. They further recognized opportunities to continue engagement through the G8 and other multilateral forums, including across the UN and regional institutions like the African Union to human rights bodies like the Human Rights Council. They emphasized the importance of working in close cooperation with all UN member states on these important issues. Experts noted that the G8 Peacekeeping/Peacebuilding Experts Group addressed Women Peace and Security at its meeting in Paris in November 2011, where it was agreed to maintain the agenda item for future meetings. The Group is well-positioned, therefore, to play a role in sustaining G8 expert level engagement on Women, Peace, and Security under successive G8 Presidencies.

### **Engagement with Civil Society**

G8 experts recommended systematic consultation with civil society to inform and strengthen the efforts of G8 experts groups to advance the role of women in international peace and security. Civil society groups can gather information through their grassroots networks, identifying needs and opportunities aligned with the focus of specific experts groups. Approaches to strengthening

this consultation will be determined by the country holding the G8 Presidency, and may vary, from models such as the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative's (BMENA) in 2012, with a series of roundtable discussions with government and civil society, to the UN Civil Society Advisory Group on Women, Peace, and Security, which facilitated regular consultations and dialogue with a group of international experts. Experts also noted the value which enhanced consultation between individual G8 partner governments and domestic civil society organizations can have.

### **Coordination**

G8 experts noted that arrangements by which G8 partners implement UNSC Resolutions for Women, Peace, and Security into their peace-building, humanitarian, and development interventions are a national matter for each partner. Experts experienced with National Action Plans noted that these plans can offer a tool for governments to articulate priorities and coordinate implementation across a diverse set of government bodies and stakeholders, while offering an important engagement with civil society in informing and monitoring action. Given these opportunities, many G8 member states provide support to partner governments to develop and implement National Action Plans.

### **Internal Capacity Building**

Identifying and pursuing opportunities to implement Women, Peace, and Security policies requires staff capacity to applying a gender-sensitive approach to diplomacy, development, and defense in conflict-affected environments. Operation and mission experience shows that pre-deployment and pre-mission training is essential in order to give all staff a similar basic knowledge on the role of women in international peace and security and on potential concrete actions they can pursue to advance this role. Training further increases staff awareness of the value of and opportunities to engage human rights and gender advisors in missions and operations. Recognizing the proliferation of training opportunities, G8 experts recommended that partners join efforts and exchange training materials for pre-deployment training on Women, Peace, and Security, in military operations and civilian missions, as part of broader harmonization efforts.

### **Geographic Commonalities**

Reviewing G8 efforts to advance the Women, Peace, and Security objectives, experts identified geographic commonalities that offer opportunities for further collaboration in specific country contexts. They encouraged greater bilateral dialogue to ensure coordinated efforts and complementary interventions in countries of common interest, including Afghanistan, Nepal, the Philippines, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Middle East/North Africa region. To facilitate this, experts recommended the establishment of formal or informal cooperation mechanisms, to fit the local need and situation, in order to enhance the impact of the G8 and other like-minded countries and their coordination with multilateral, non-governmental, and civil society partners. Such efforts allow for financial and technical resources to be pooled, and help to elevate government and civil society action.

For the Middle East and North Africa, experts further recommended exploring channels to build on related efforts in the G8 this year to promote women's empowerment through BMENA.

### **Promoting Women's Participation in Decision-making**

G8 experts acknowledged the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and stressed the importance of their full, active, effective and equal participation in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security. G8 experts encouraged measures more systematically to support women's participation and the provision of gender expertise in ceasefire negotiations, peace processes, post-conflict planning, programming, and peace-building, transitional justice and security sector reform processes, and in post-conflict public institutions. This includes greater support to empower local women's groups to advance their priorities, and to build their organizational capacity to strengthen implementation and sustainability. This also includes greater support to promote women's active participation and representation in elected and appointed governance structures; in public sector institutions, including the security sector; and in international dialogues and donor conferences. Further it includes ensuring women's equal involvement in economic recovery efforts. They emphasized the need to ensure a gender-sensitive approach to any reparations processes, and to ensure full implementation of the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) gender guidelines.

G8 member states, many of which are already working together in countries emerging from conflict or undergoing political transitions, can increase the impact by coordinating efforts to advocate for women's inclusion and ensuring that support to women and women's groups is complementary and collaborative. For example, the programming to train and empower women to be meaningful participants in relevant decision-making processes and institutions should be coupled with effective diplomatic efforts to create and maintain opportunities for the participation of women in these processes. Mechanisms should be created to connect and reinforce women's participation across community, national, regional, and international levels, and between formal and informal processes. By cultivating relationships with a diverse, inclusive cadre of women who can participate in high level processes and by sharing these contacts, the G8 and partner nations can help counter the perception that there "are no women" to include in critical dialogues and negotiations.

### **Protection from Violence**

There has been progress in recent years in the international community's response to sexual violence in conflict. Sexual violence in situations of armed conflict can constitute a war crime and a crime against humanity, and three UN Security Council resolutions highlight the significance of sexual violence as a protection of civilians issue. There are growing global movements, and a dedicated UN Special Representative to the Secretary General (SRSG) on Sexual Violence who helps to amplify the issue publicly. There are training tools and a broadening knowledge base on perpetrators, trends, patterns, and risk factors. Nevertheless, conflict-related sexual violence remains widespread. It continues to contribute to increased ethnic, sectarian and other divisions, often entrenching conflict and instability.

Assessing opportunities drawn from the experience and lessons learned of G8 member states, the United Nations, and civil society, the experts recommended greater attention to gender-responsive justice and security sector reform. Recognizing the engagement of many G8 member states in providing training to security actors, experts recommended increased attention to the provision of gender expertise in support of security sector reform processes, and the incorporation of gender perspectives in security sector reform programs. Experts noted the need to look at best practices in this area from the survivors' point of view. Experts welcomed efforts to develop and pilot preventive mechanisms on conflict-related sexual violence, including through integrating sexual violence in existing early warning frameworks and identifying indicative response options. They further encouraged engagement and consultation with existing national institutions, bodies, service providers, and communities to promote national ownership of policies and programs to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.

Experts recognize the positive role that peacekeeping operations can play in promoting gender-responsive security sector reform and the development of security services that better respond to women's needs. To promote the prevention of, protection from, and response to sexual violence in conflict, experts noted the analytical inventory of peacekeeping practice and encouraged more systematic use of the scenario-based training modules on conflict-related sexual violence, including by troop- and police-contributing countries. Experts further encouraged continued collaboration to implement Women, Peace, and Security-related commitments in the "G8 Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Experts Work Plan for Furthering the Protection of Civilians (POC) in UN-Authorized Peacekeeping Operations," developed under the U.S. chairmanship in 2012.

Experts recommend strengthening gender-based violence prevention and response in humanitarian assistance, and recommended increasing support for the protection of women human rights defenders. They also stressed the importance of addressing, in a comprehensive manner and through public awareness efforts, the needs of all survivors, recognizing that women, men, and children can be affected, and that the experiences of all need to be considered before planning responses. Experts recommended better integration of activities to prevent gender-based violence with efforts to empower women and increase their civic, political, and economic participation.

### **Accountability and Rule of Law**

Despite extensive efforts by the international community, there has been limited success in tackling impunity for sexual violence in conflict. In the aftermath of conflicts, governments often require technical support to investigate, analyze and report on serious atrocities / violations of international and domestic law, including sexual violence. Deployments of teams of experts, at the request of a host government or of international or regional organizations with appropriate jurisdiction, can increase the number of perpetrators brought to justice both internationally and nationally by strengthening international efforts and co-ordination to prevent and respond to sexual violence; and by supporting states to address legislative or institutional capacity constraints to effective action. Relevant teams of experts include the SRSG's Rule of Law Team of Experts, Justice Rapid Response (JRR) experts, and the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative

UK Team of Experts. Such efforts help to end a culture of impunity and to restore a fragile population's confidence in the rule of law and democratic institutions. To avoid duplication, experts called for close international collaboration in such areas as standards, training, and deployment.

Experts stressed the importance of survivor-centered legal approaches and of integrating a gender perspective in transitional justice efforts, given the different experiences and impacts of conflict. Depending on the needs of the group, different forms and forums of transitional justice can be pursued, and measures can be included to address broader inequalities that caused violations. For example, experts further noted the need to pursue reparations programs that have development and empowerment dimensions that transform rather than reinforce pre-existing gender inequalities.

### **Next Steps**

Identified by the UK as a priority for the UK's 2013 G8 Presidency, the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI) seeks to rally sustained international attention to prevent sexual violence and address the impunity that undermines the resolution of conflict and the building of peaceful societies.

The options for action and continued coordination identified by G8 experts through this dialogue can be pursued both individually and collectively, including within the agenda of the G8 Peacekeeping/Peacebuilding Expert Group under the leadership of successive G8 Presidencies. Those recommendations that align with the PSVI will be pursued through the UK Presidency, while other opportunities can be advanced at national level or through other multilateral forums.