



TOOLS FOR ACTION

Leveraging the synergies between the CEDAW and the Women, Peace and Security Framework

Tuesday, 12 March 2024, 3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Conference Room 1, UN Headquarters

United Nations Security Council Arria Formula Meeting

BACKGROUND

The Security Council's work on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) recognizes that peace can only be sustainable, if women are fully included. Implementing this pioneer agenda requires political will, as well as the tools to encourage, support and measure action undertaken by member states in this regard, to enhance accountability.

The adoption of UNSCR 1325 and ensuing WPS resolutions established a normative framework recognizing that peace is inextricably linked with gender equality and women's rights. The WPS agenda puts a focus on **women's full, equal, meaningful, and safe participation in all stages of peace processes** and the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence in conflict-affected situations.

Meanwhile, the UN Committee on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls (CEDAW Committee) is the leading normative voice on women's rights at the global level. As such, its work and jurisprudence are critical to **uphold the rights of all women and girls**, including in the contexts discussed in the Security Council.

Consequently, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the WPS Agenda, together with other human rights treaties and international humanitarian law, provide a comprehensive framework **for the protection and promotion of the full spectrum of women's rights**, including in contexts of armed conflict.

In 2013, the CEDAW Committee published its **General recommendation No. 30** on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations (GR 30). GR 30 reaffirms the need for women's participation in processes relating to the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. It also situates the WPS agenda in the broader framework of the implementation of the CEDAW Convention and its Optional Protocol.

GR 30 recommends all 189 States parties to CEDAW to **report on the implementation of the WPS resolutions**. After holding interactive dialogues with State Parties, the CEDAW Committee provides targeted recommendations on how to address outstanding implementation challenges. Through this reporting requirement and the recommendations to States Parties, the CEDAW Committee helps closing an important accountability gap in the WPS framework, which does not have an institutionalized reporting mechanism. For example, CEDAW monitors the implementation of WPS National Action Plans (NAP) in countries worldwide. In addition, shadow reports submitted to CEDAW by civil society organisations also contribute to highlighting and understanding implementation challenges in many given contexts.

Another key measure in bringing the two instruments together was the signing of a Framework of Cooperation in 2018 between the **UN SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict** and the CEDAW Committee. This framework reaffirms common commitments to promote and protect the rights of women and girls affected by conflict-related sexual violence. It seeks to reinforce synergies between the three pillars of the UN – peace and security, human rights and development.

Understanding the **linkages between the CEDAW and the WPS framework** can be challenging for governments and civil society stakeholders. Gaining a better understanding of the synergies between the two mechanisms will enable States Parties not only to use CEDAW more effectively as a tool to strengthen the implementation of the WPS Agenda. It will also help improving accountability through reporting on progress made and remaining challenges.

OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

This Arria Formula Meeting will provide an opportunity to:

- Identify best practice in leveraging the synergies between CEDAW and the WPS framework.
- Strengthen accountability for implementation of the WPS framework and CEDAW.
- Highlight the potential of CEDAW as a tool to support women’s participation in peace processes.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How can synergies with other tools, such as CEDAW be leveraged to support the effective implementation of the Women, Peace and Security framework in the UN Security Council?
- What are successful strategies and examples of leveraging these synergies to increase women’s participation in peace processes?
- What are the barriers to using the tools CEDAW offers more efficiently and what could be done to overcome these?

MODALITIES

All UN Member States and Permanent Observers are invited to participate. Attendance at ministerial level will be prioritized in the speaking order.

H.E. Ms. Viola Amherd, President of the Swiss Confederation and Head of the Swiss CSW Delegation, will deliver opening remarks.

Briefers:

- **Ms. Sima Bahous**, Executive Director of UN Women
- **Ms. Ana Pelaez Narvaez**, Chair of the CEDAW Committee
- **Civil society representative** (tbc)

The meeting will be broadcast on UN Web TV. Interpretation into the official UN languages will be provided.

To facilitate participation by as many delegations as possible, interventions should not exceed three minutes. To inscribe in the speakers’ list, please indicate the delegation as well as the name and title of the speaker to newyork.un.teampolitik@eda.admin.ch by **8 March 2024, 5 p.m.** with the subject line “CEDAW WPS Arria meeting”.

Delegations are also invited to send written versions of their statements by 18 March 2024 for inclusion in a compilation. UN Agencies, civil society and academic institutions are also invited to make submissions in writing.