

WORDS THAT COUNT

Why do we glorify violence and war, and make peace seem the folly of fools?



Many people assume that "peace" is a matter of the absence of armed conflict but some of us view building sustainable peace as a much longer and more complex process. Achieving that end requires a framework different from the centuries-old male-centric view of national security. There must be a significant shift toward stressing human security – a focus on what makes human beings feel secure in their daily lives. The national security point of view holds that if the nation state is "secure," ipso facto the people in it are as well. Women must be a driving force in shifting the focus to human security. A huge part of getting there is our meaningful inclusion in all aspects of peace processes and building sustainable peace.

Women are increasingly understood to be critical to building sustainable peace. Although we have made some strides in terms of the inclusion of women in peace making and peace building, these are minimal at best and uneven around the world. Today women and issues of human security are still seen as addenda to peace processes, which focus on the "weightier" problems of ending war: ceasefires, cantonments and disarming of combatants, etc. The root causes of conflict are given short shrift in negotiations and without dealing with them – the human security side of the equation – up front, some 50% of peace treaties fail within five years. With meaningful involvement of women (and civil society groups) in negotiations, resulting peace treaties are 35% more likely to last more than 15 years. How much clearer can it be that women's involvement is necessary for building sustainable peace?"

- Jody Williams, 1997 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Member of the WPL Global Advisory Board

IN THIS ISSUE

The role of women in the peace-making process



How women in particular are treated is one of the yardsticks by which any civilisation is judged. To despise women is to despise life itself. To fight gender-based violence is to fight for the survival of the human race. Women are not merely our mothers, our sisters, our wives and our daughters: we are all equal human beings, and everyone should be able to make choices freely and without discrimination, especially in the home, and with regard to education and work. We firmly believe that women's human rights are not the exclusivity of feminist movements, and we call on all men to free themselves from patriarchy and to rally alongside women for a fairer and more diverse society that helps everyone grow.

This is a global challenge: our shared humanity and the future of our society is at stake here. Let's eliminate discrimination against women, backward customs and macho, sexist and misogynist practices that shame our humanity, and undermine the prospects for development and progress. Let's break the silence, change our children's mindsets and put an end to impunity and sexual and gender-based violence. Together, boys and men, girls and women, politicians and civil society actors, in a spirit of mutual respect complementarity and solidarity, let's commit to making this century the century of women and progress for all, a time when everyone has the right to make their own choices freely, realise their full potential and live in a manner compatible with human dignity.

- Denis Mukwege, 2018 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Member of the WPL Global Advisory Board

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Meet recently-appointed WPL Ambassadors for Mexico, Slovenia & Kingdom of Bahrain

Nurturing an effective network requires communication, collaboration and a constant strive to ensure experiences and best practices are heard and shared. WPL Ambassadors are pivotal elements in ensuring such exchange takes place. We are honoured to welcome Veronica Delgadillo, Lidija Divjak Mirnik and Ebtesam Mohamed Al-Dalal to our WPL Country Ambassadors community.



WPL Ambassador for Mexico

Throughout her career, Senator Delgadillo García has held different positions in public service, presenting several law initiatives to fight violence against women and corruption. As an advocate for transparency and accountability, Senator Delgadillo García pleads for a wider legislative agenda including the prohibition of child marriage, the fight against femicide and other types of violence that women face, as well as the creation of a sustainable environment for future generations.
@Verodelgadillog



WPL Ambassador for Slovenia

Since 2018, Lidija Divjak Mirnik has been a Deputy of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia. Previous positions of Mrs Mirnik include: President of the Association of Student Residences of Slovenia, and Member of multiple school councils. Lidija Divjak Mirnik also acted as a volunteer with the Maribor Friends of Youth Association and as a Professor of History and Sociology.
@LidijaDM



WPL Ambassador for the Kingdom of Bahrain

H.E. Dr. Ebtesam Mohamed Saleh Al Dalal is a member of the Shura Council. In the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Shura Council is consisting of 40 members appointed by a Royal Order.

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WPL SUMMIT 2019: Taking actions to advance society through SDGs

From peace and justice, to quality education, health and clean energy, these are only some of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) all United Nations Member States unilaterally adopted in 2015. The Goals provide a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future, and have been selected by WPL and the House of Representatives of Japan to prompt discussions at the WPL Summit 2019.

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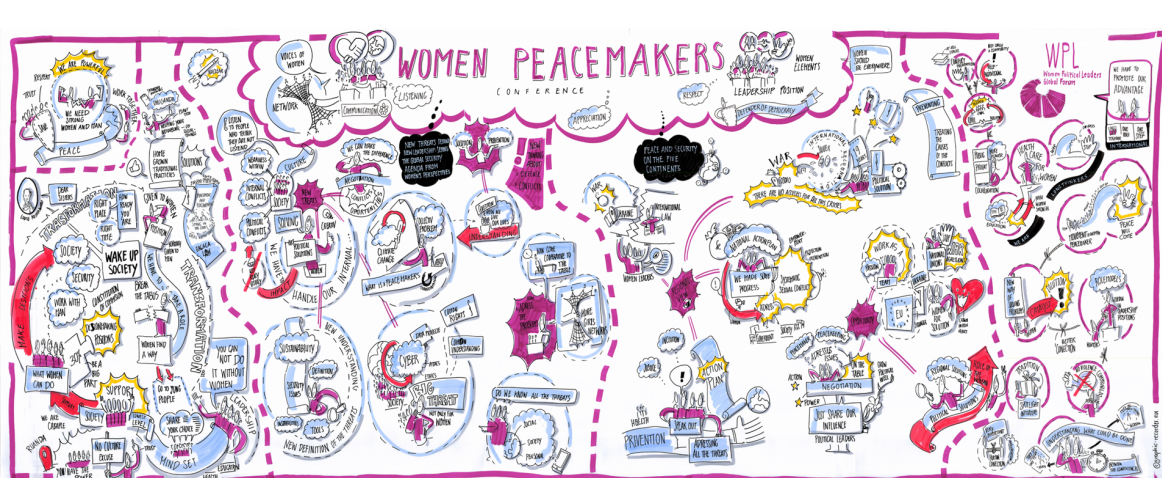


FEATURED

Creating knowledge platforms in the area of peace and security

The "European Defence Roundtable" organised in Malta in 2017, the "Women Peacemakers 2018" and the 2019's session "A Man's World? Leadership and Participation in International Affairs" – organised in the framework of the Munich Security Conference – testify how for WPL the quest for more women in leadership positions, specifically in the area of peace and security, has been gaining a sense of urgency.

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Japan's outlook on the Reykjavík Index

Over the last five years, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has consistently promoted the dynamic engagement of women, in order to create "a Japan in which all women shine."

Among the G7 heads of state, Abe was the first to participate in the United Nations' HeForShe solidarity movement for gender equality. In May 2018, Japan's Parliament approved a law encouraging political parties to field an equal number of female and male candidates: marking an important step in order to bridge the gender gap.

On International Women's Day, Japanese leading newspaper The Japan Times featured WPL and Kantar's Reykjavik Index for Leadership when debating the role of women in the Japanese society: "In a study released in November by Women Political Leaders and Kantar Public, which surveyed some 1,000 adults from each of the Group of Seven countries, only 28 percent of Japanese women said they would feel comfortable with having a woman as the CEO of a major company. The highest rating in the G7 – 70 percent – was recorded among women in the United States."



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A world with balance between women and men? A peaceful world

International Women's Day 2019 also offered an opportunity to reflect on the role of balanced society on peace. Over 100 politicians from 51 countries shared with WPL their vision for a better world, answering the question What does a world with balance between women and men look like to you? When expressing their views of a balanced world, many women politicians stated how balanced opportunity and equal representativeness in society between women and man can pave the way towards a more peaceful world.

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IN CONCLUSION



On the 24th of April, the world celebrates the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for peace. This day prompts a reflection on how the approach of multilateralism and diplomacy could reinforce the advancement of the three pillars of the United Nations, namely, sustainable development, peace and security and human rights. For WPL, this day is an opportunity to highlight the role of women political leaders in the process towards sustainable peace. The experiences of remarkable people deeply engaged in building a better and more peaceful world, – some of which available in this edition of the newsletter – exhort WPL to continue in its endeavour to find ways for best practices to achieve durable resolution of conflicts to be shared so that they can find their ways into policies and politics. WPL pursue this objective through the creation of knowledge platforms made of experts such as political

women leaders to ensure their voices and their solutions are heard. This is WPL's recipe to change the centuries-old view of national security based on the concept of "strong leadership". The emerging security risks of the 21st century are so multi-faceted and complex that it is irresponsible respond to them with approaches which have long shown to be inadequate. It is an honour to have these extraordinary personalities on WPL's Global Advisory Board. I hope you found their words as inspiring as I did. The road towards structural change is a long one; hence it becomes relevant to showcase some of the great contributions about peace and equality received during the #BalanceforBetter initiative, as well as to capitalise on the impact of conferences and occasions WPL has created in the past years to reflect on the crucial role of women as peacemakers.

I hope you enjoyed reading this month's newsletter!
Silvana Koch-Mehrin, President and Founder of WPL

SAVE THE DATE

May 13, 14 - Bogotá (Colombia)

[WPL Regional Meeting at Concordia Americas Summit 2019](#)

May 20, 21 - Paris (France)

[WPL at the OECD Forum](#)

June 25, 27 - Tokyo (Japan)

[WPL Summit 2019](#)

For more information regarding our events please contact: mail@wpleaders.org



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