



PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION

Ambassadorial-level commemorative meeting on Women, Peace and Security

27 October 2025, 10am - 1pm

ECOSOC Chamber

Concept Note

Introduction

In 2025, the global community marks the 25th anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325 and the 23rd Special Session of the General Assembly, in addition to the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995). These milestones reaffirm long-standing commitments to gender equality and women's rights and provide a strong normative framework globally for the promotion of women's economic inclusion, political participation, and protection as essential dimensions of sustainable peacebuilding.

Over the past 25 years, the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda has led to increased global recognition of the indispensable contributions of women at all stages of the peace continuum—from conflict prevention and mediation to post-conflict reconstruction and governance. Women peacebuilders and women-led civil society organizations have consistently played key roles in responding to humanitarian crises, mediating conflicts, addressing gender-based violence (GBV), and strengthening social cohesion at local and national levels. Nevertheless, in the face of record levels of armed conflict and violence, decades of progress are rapidly eroding. Generational advances in women's rights worldwide are increasingly precarious, undermining the transformative potential of women's leadership and inclusive participation in peace efforts. Recognizing these challenges, and in the context of the 20th anniversary of the UN peacebuilding architecture, the Peacebuilding Commission's Gender Strategy (2016) and the Strategy's implementation plan (2021), has prioritized ensuring a gender perspective is integrated in all its work and underscore the importance of women's leadership and participation in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding. The strategy also encouraged the participation and engagements of both women peacebuilders and civil society organizations (CSOs) as key components in all its country and thematic discussions.

In this context, renewed investments and stronger political commitments are urgently needed to safeguard past gains and accelerate the implementation of the WPS agenda. As stated in the latest UN Secretary-General's report on WPS, power and decision-making on peace and security matters remain overwhelmingly dominated by men, and progress has been disturbingly slow in terms of ending impunity for those who perpetrate atrocities against women and girls. In 2023, the proportion of women killed in armed conflicts doubled compared with the previous year, the number of United Nations verified cases of conflict-related sexual violence was 50 per cent higher than the year before, and the number of girls affected by grave violations in situations of

armed conflict increased by 35 per cent.¹ At the same time, even basic public awareness about these injustices is lacking.

At its core, the WPS agenda is about ending conflict, not just about making conflict safer for women. While women continue to bear the brunt of crises, they are also key to solving them. Women's participation in conflict prevention and resolution can improve outcomes before, during, and after conflict. In conflict prevention, women play an active role in addressing root causes and risks of conflict, including inequality, marginalization, poverty, and climate change risks. During crises, women often act as first responders, organizing access to essentials like food, health care, shelter, and protection when formal institutions fail. They also play key roles in informal mediation—working to de-escalate violence, negotiate humanitarian access, and safeguard civilians—demonstrating their active role in conflict resolution and resilience.

Positioned at the intersection of community life and broader conflict dynamics, local women peacebuilders can uniquely bridge grassroots experiences into effective conflict prevention and resilience strategies across all levels. Their deep understanding of local realities provides essential insight into the root causes of conflict and opportunities for sustainable peace, making their leadership indispensable to effective peacebuilding efforts. In parallel, regional and cross-regional networks provide platforms for solidarity and advocacy, ensuring that women's priorities shape peacebuilding agendas at national, regional, and international levels. In recognition of their critical role, the PBC will convene an ambassadorial-level commemorative meeting to highlight the contributions of local women peacebuilders, as well as global, regional and local networks, and to engage them on the priorities and needs of women in peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

Purpose of the meeting

This meeting of the PBC provides an opportunity to hear directly from local women peacebuilders about the challenges and priorities they face in sustaining peace across the peace continuum. Their experiences and leadership at the community level offer essential insights for identifying practical, context-specific solutions for implementing the WPS agenda, particularly in the face of shrinking civic and fiscal space and growing insecurity. The discussion aims to inform Member States on how to more effectively support women's full, equal, meaningful and safe participation and leadership from the local to the international level, including through better targeted investments and more responsive peacebuilding policies.

Guiding Questions

- How can Member States and the PBC more effectively support the leadership and participation of local women peacebuilders in efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts?
- What are the main barriers to implementing the WPS agenda in practice, including the specific challenges faced by young peacebuilders, climate advocates, indigenous communities, and others, and what innovative approaches have been effective in overcoming these obstacles?

¹ Report of the United Nations Secretary-General on Women, Peace, and Security (2024).

- How can regional actors, including regional organizations, development banks, and other relevant institutions, support the work of women's networks and organizations, and what practical measures can ensure their meaningful participation?
- How can Member States and the PBC translate the priorities of local women peacebuilders into political strategies that are systematically embedded in peacebuilding processes and structures to achieve inclusive and scalable outcomes?
- What lessons and examples can the peacebuilding community learn from women peacebuilders on localization?

Agenda

- Opening remarks by the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, H.E. Mr. Ricklef Beutin, Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations.
- Keynote speech by Her Excellency Emma Kantema, Minister of Gender Equality and Child Welfare of Namibia
- Keynote speech by Her Excellency, Liberata Rutageruka Mulamula, African Union Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security
- Keynote speech by the Executive Director of UN Women, H.E. Ms. Sima Bahous
- Briefing by Ms. Mpule Kgetsi, African Union Youth Ambassador for Peace for the Southern African region
- Interventions from Member States.
- Briefings by civil society representatives:
 - Ms. Luz Piedad Caicedo, Co-Director of Corporación Humanas
 - Ms. Sophia Dianne C. Garcia, Program Coordinator for Asia and the Pacific, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP)
 - Ms. Nia Abadžić, Former Youth Ambassador and Student at the University of Sarajevo
- Interventions from Member States.
- Intervention by Ms. Awa Dabo, Director and Deputy Head of the Peacebuilding Support Office (Department of Political Affairs and Peacebuilding, United Nations)
- Closing remarks by the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, H.E. Mr. Ricklef Beutin, Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations.