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The United Nations Regional Centre
for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia



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CONCEPT NOTE **of the Conference on Women, Peace, and Security** **in the framework of the Central Asian Women Leaders Dialogue**

Date and Venue: October 16, 2023, Almaty, Kazakhstan

Time: 10:00 - Astana, Bishkek; 09:00 - Dushanbe, Ashgabat, Tashkent

Venue: UN Plaza, 303 Baizakov Street, Almaty

Format: Hybrid

Organizers: Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan, National Commission on Women's Affairs, Family and Demographic Policy under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, with the support of the UN Women and the UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA).

Participants: Parliamentarians from the participating countries of the Central Asian Women Leaders Dialogue, representatives of government bodies, non-governmental organizations, international partners and expert community of Central Asian countries.

General Information: The Women Leaders Dialogue of Central Asian Countries (hereinafter referred to as the Dialogue) is an informal platform for discussing current development issues and strengthening cooperation among women leaders in the region. It operates with the support of the United Nations Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), UN Development Programme (UNDP), and UN Women.

Recognizing the complexity and instability of the contemporary geopolitical situation in the world, the presence of security challenges in the region, as well as the significant role of women in ensuring peace, stability, and security, the chairing country within the Dialogue in 2023 proposed to hold a conference on the implementation of the international agenda "Women, Peace and Security" in Central Asia in October this year.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted in 2000, became the first linking the status of women in conflicts with the agenda of international peace and security. In total, the United Nations has adopted 10 resolutions on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) issues, comprehensively covering the four main components of the WPS agenda, namely: 1) the role of women in conflict prevention, 2) women's participation in peacebuilding, 3) protection of the rights of women and girls during and after a conflict, and 4) the specific needs of women during repatriation and resettlement, as well as the needs for rehabilitation, reintegration, and post-conflict recovery.

UN Security Council resolutions affirm the vital role of women in conflict prevention and resolution, peace negotiations, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian response, and postconflict recovery. The importance of their equal participation and comprehensive involvement in all efforts to maintain and promote peace, stability, and security is emphasized. These resolutions also contain recommendations to take specific measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence.



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However, as noted in the 2022 Secretary-General's report on WPS, the world is currently experiencing a "backlash against the rights of women gained over generations, even as violent conflicts, military spending, military coups, population displacement, and famine continue to increase."

Gender aspects remain on the periphery of conflict prevention, with women often excluded from peace processes, and their organisations report growing restrictions on their activities. There are no legislative and practical instruments to strengthen the capacity of women, so that they can be active participants in preventive diplomacy and recovery processes.

Only by ensuring the full, equal, and effective participation of women and women's leadership at all levels of decision-making in public life, including during conflicts and humanitarian crises, can transformative changes be achieved that will lead to the construction of a safer, more inclusive, and stable society.

Despite the increased role that women have played in Central Asian countries in the context of humanitarian crises, conflicts, and post-conflict situations in recent years, the 2021/22 WPS Index reveals that in the Central Asian sub-region, the representation of women in leadership positions and their involvement in economic and social life are significantly lower compared to other regions.

The WPS Index encompasses three main aspects of women's well-being: inclusivity (economic, social, political), justice (formal laws and informal discrimination), and security (at the family, community, and societal levels). These aspects are captured and quantitatively assessed through 11 indicators to create a global ranking of 170 countries. According to the latest calculated WPS Index, the Central Asian countries are positioned as follows: Kazakhstan – 59, Turkmenistan - 60, Uzbekistan - 74, Tajikistan – 85, Kyrgyzstan – 97.

It is obvious that in order to achieve the desired success in light of contemporary challenges, instability, and threats to regional security, it is necessary to promote the increased participation and leadership of women in all matters related to the political and economic life of States, as well as addressing and solving specific security issues.

Involving women in peacebuilding and conflict prevention yields more sustainable outcomes, including the creation and reinforcement of an atmosphere of trust. In this context, national action plans can serve as vital instruments.

The success of national action plans should be measured by their impact on the well-being of all women and girls, which is a powerful indicator of the overall health of societies and the peacefulness of states and communities.

Currently, Kyrgyzstan is implementing its fourth National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Kazakhstan adopted its first action plan for the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 in 2021. Uzbekistan did so in 2022, and Tajikistan is finalizing the development of its third NAP for Resolution 1325.



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Conference Objectives: The conference aims to facilitate the exchange of experiences, best practices, and ideas among Central Asian countries to implement effective policies, programs, and measures in the following directions:

- Strengthening women's participation in politics and decision-making at all levels; integrating gender approaches into security and conflict prevention policies, as well as countering radicalization in the Central Asian region;
- Preventive measures and solutions for conflict prevention, ways to enhance the role of women in building trust and reconciliation, peacekeeping, and diplomacy;
- Legislative initiatives to promote the implementation of the UN agenda "Women, Peace, and Security."

The work of the conference will be divided into two parts: in the first part of the event, civil activists, non-governmental organizations, and independent experts from Central Asian countries will share their perspectives on how the WPS agenda is being implemented in their countries today. Recommendations and proposals will be presented, which will form the basis of discussions and debates with representatives of parliaments, national women's mechanisms, gender experts and government bodies from the region in the second part of the event. The conference will conclude with an open session titled "Open Day for Peace" during which discussions on current peace and security issues will involve the heads of the United Nations Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), OSCE, and the EU.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Formulation of proposals for a Roadmap of Cooperation among Central Asian countries to implement the "Women, Peace, and Security" agenda.
2. Agreement on mechanisms for the participation of women activists and representatives of civil society in regional platforms for conflict prevention and the promotion of peace and security.

Following the discussions, a brief overview of the main outcomes and agreed recommendations will be published.