CONCEPT NOTE

Inclusive peacebuilding: Gender Perspectives from and on Libya

**Turning challenges into opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women in Libya – a case study in inclusive peacebuilding**

Side-event at the 62th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women

**Co-Hosts**
United Nations Support Mission in Libya/UNSMIL, UN Women and the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations

Supported by: The Governments of Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands and the European Union

**Date**
16th March 2018, 08:15 – 9:30 hrs

**Venue**
Conference Room 8, UN Headquarters, New York

**Background:**
Developing high quality mediation, peace and transition processes is central for effective conflict prevention and peacebuilding. For sustaining peace, an inclusive approach is a prerequisite. Women must have a stronger role at all levels and all stages of transition and stabilization processes – from the planning to the implementation and follow-up phases.

While statistics still show that progress is slow, there are also many promising actions now being taken to move forward. There are new women mediator network initiatives, peace processes are included in 1325 National Action Plans, and regional organizations are becoming increasingly active on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. In this side-event we will look at one case study, where the participation of women is key: Libya.

Libyan women played a key role in changing governance in 2011, and the new consequent realities of Libya yielded many women leaders. The division of the institutions, political instability, economic hardship and militarism following the outbreak of the political and security crisis in 2014 have negatively affected Libyans, and in particular Libyan women. Nevertheless, Libyan women and women’s groups continued to build up and stay engaged. Libyan women established inclusive networks demanding equal participation and representation of women in political life while jointly advocating peace and peaceful co-existence through campaigns and other activities. Meanwhile, women from academia have established a forum on the constitution and legislation, another forum on women’s political participation is underway. In those fora, women are discussing and preparing laws and strategies for reinforced political participation to be presented to the executive and legislative authorities once stability is improved and peace is attained. These are examples of ways in which Libyan women are actively turning challenges into opportunities.
Objective: The side-event seeks to highlight Libyan women’s challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality in political and public life as well as in terms of laws and their making. Moreover, the session will shed light on the importance of women’s networking and collaboration building across political, geographic and social divisions in order to jointly demand gender equality and contributing to peace, concretely by referring to the experience of national and local campaigning.

From a broader perspective the objective of the side-event is to show ways how to strengthen women's participation in stabilization processes in order to promote that all processes from now on are inclusive and that the voices of women peacemakers in conflict affected areas are heard. How can we create partnerships between networks and organizations to better support women peace makers and participants in transition processes? What needs to be done institutionally to advance the inclusion of women and the gender aspect in these processes?

Outcomes: The outcomes of the side event will enhance knowledge of Libyan women success and challenges, and promote networking and lobbying. In addition the side-event seeks to contribute to the discussion on inclusive peace and transition processes and the need for having more women at the table for high quality peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts.

Programme

Opening remarks
✔ Ana Maria Menéndez, Under-Secretary-General, Office of the Secretary-General
✔ Ann-Sofie Stude, Ambassador for Women, Peace and Security, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

Panel
✔ Abeir Imneina, Lecturer in political sciences, Benghazi University
✔ Khadeja Omar Al Wirfili, Lawyer at the Popular Law, Benghazi Court
✔ Fadia Ahmed Hamad, Member of External Relations at Sabha Women’s Union
✔ Hajer Al Sharif, Member at (Together we Build), Tripoli
✔ Khadija Abdullah, Lecturer, Faculty of Law, Tripoli University
✔ Suzan H.A Hemmi, Head, The Libyan Network for Women’s Empowerment
✔ Najlaa Hamady Faraj, Member of Women’s Network to combat small arms.

Closing remarks
Mohamed Naciri, Regional Director, Regional Bureau of Arab States, UN Women

Moderator
Magda El Sanousi, Chief Women’s Empowerment Section, UNSMIL