



# Women, Peace and Security National Focal Points Network Foundational meeting

## Concept Paper

### 1. Why a WPS National Focal Points Network?

The High-Level Review of Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), conducted in October 2015, highlighted the need to step up the efforts in advancing the implementation of the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda. Several initiatives have been put forward at the UN since the adoption of the UNSC Resolution 2242 (2015) as one of the direct outcomes of that High-Level Review, such as the creation of a Security Council Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security, co-chaired in 2016 by Spain and the United Kingdom.

However, as underlined in the Global Study for the Implementation of Resolution 1325, Member States, as members of the United Nations and regional organizations, but also as parties to conflicts, as donors, troop and police contributors to peacekeeping or as political players in a specific conflict or region, remain the most influential actors in the implementation of the whole set of Security Council WPS resolutions. Member States have the primary responsibility to ensure that global commitments and obligations on WPS are integrated into domestic policies and laws. It is at that level that we should strive to strengthen our efforts.

The aim of establishing a WPS National Focal Points Network is to assist Member States (and regional organizations) to improve and strengthen the implementation of the WPS agenda at the origin of the national decision-making process, by exchanging best practices in areas such as the drafting and implementation of 1325 National Action Plans, post-conflict recovery, women's leadership and participation, as well as by improving coordination of funding and assistance programs.

The uniqueness of the WPS National Focal Points Network relies on various facts. It will have a purely operational nature, aimed at strengthening the implementation of the WPS agenda at the policy level. In this sense, it will complement other existing regional and UN initiatives, such as the Group of Friends of Women Peace and Security in New York and Geneva, different regional task forces and civil society initiatives.

### 2. What is the role of WPS National Focal Points?

The Focal Point appointed by each Member State or regional organization can lead and promote efforts carried out at the national or regional level in implementing WPS obligations. The Focal Point will also have direct contact with other Member States' Focal Points to streamline implementation at the national level, exchange best practices and harmonize international efforts, including assistance programs.

### 3. Objectives of the Focal Point Network

The following are some of the operational objectives of the WPS National Focal Points Network:

- Encourage drafting and implementation of National Action Plans for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 or national policies with specific goals and tools
- Provide a space to periodically share and exchange lessons learned and best practices on:
  - o Integrating a gender analysis in all security assessments and prevention approaches
  - o Strengthening women's participation in the security sector, peace processes and mediation efforts
  - o Increasing the number of women in senior leadership positions, particularly in institutions of national government
  - o Removing all barriers – political, economic, social, cultural – to women's empowerment
  - o Addressing existing and emerging threats such as violent extremism and terrorism or climate change, which impact women and girls in particular ways, and ensuring that the WPS perspective is adequately integrated in these efforts
  - o Addressing conflict-related sexual violence, including by improving service delivery and facilitating access to justice for survivors
- Promote predictable and sustained funding for WPS efforts
- Identify and strengthen partnerships with civil society and local organizations working on WPS issues
- Give continuity to discussions on WPS strategies such as early warning, preventive diplomacy and peacekeeping
- Identify and address the obstacles that impede the full application of WPS Member States' obligations and commitments.
- Promote capacity building at a local, national and regional level for a variety of actors working on women, peace and security

#### **4. Operational framework of the Network**

Spain, together with Canada, Chile, Japan, Namibia and the United Arab Emirates, are convening a foundational meeting to officially launch the WPS National Focal Points Network on September 23 2016 9am-12pm, at the margins of the UNGA's General Debate.

Ministerial participation is expected during the first hour of the meeting (from 9-10am) when the Network will be formally launched and when a joint communiqué is expected to be adopted. This will be followed by a discussion among the already-designated National Focal Points. The goal is to begin a dialogue to develop the concrete areas of work and to set a positive tone for its proceedings. National and Regional Focal Points are invited to address operational issues as well as key-questions like the ones suggested below.

The WPS FP Network will meet once a year in different capitals (foundational members are expected to announce if they are interested in hosting meetings in 2017 and 2018). There will be a second follow-up meeting in New York every year, in the margins of the Security Council WPS annual open debate.

The Network should have a Secretariat to assist Member States in the organization of the meetings taking place in capitals, to follow-up on the decisions adopted, to prepare the annual meeting in

New York and to carry out an advocacy role with Member States and regional organizations. More information about this issue will be provided at the event on September 23.

## 5. Suggestions for the foundational meeting

### 5.1 Ministerial segment

**Ministers and high-level speakers will be invited to deliver powerful political statements from the podium (around 3 minutes).** Interpretation service to the UN official languages will be provided. A joint communiqué will be adopted.

### 5.2 Focal Points Discussion

After the ministerial segment, Member States and regional organizations' focal points are expected to engage in an informal and interactive discussion around operational issues and around some of the following questions:

-When it comes to “women, peace, and security,” or “the 1325 agenda” – what efforts has your government, if at all, taken to ensure women’s participation in building and resolving conflict is prioritized?

-Does your government have a National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security? In your opinion, what are the most important components of a NAP (or similar inter-agency strategy) to advance this agenda in your country context?

-What strategies have you employed to ensure policymakers’ attention to these issues and are there certain skills you’d like to build through this network?

- How does this agenda intersect with efforts being undertaken in your context to address global security issues such as climate change and CVE, if at all, and what assistance could a network like this provide to assist you in this?

-What should be the role of international organizations, such as the UN, and civil society to hold governments accountable for implementing UNSCR 1325?

-How could regional organizations contribute to a better national and regional implementation of the WPS agenda?

-Are WPS efforts accompanied by specific financial allocations in your country? How are international assistance and cooperation instruments linked to the effective implementation of the WPS agenda?

*Please inscribe your Minister in the ministerial segment by writing to the following e-mail address: [raquel.villodres@maec.es](mailto:raquel.villodres@maec.es). Please, also confirm to the same address if your country/regional organization has already designated a National Focal Point and if he/she will participate in the discussion.*