



Oral Intervention at the 2018 Annual Session of the Peacebuilding Commission

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) has worked for over one hundred years to mobilise feminist movement to advance peace based on disarmament, equal access of rights, and women's meaningful participation.

Echoing earlier statements, we want to reiterate that putting women at the negotiation table and supporting their engagement in politics is not enough. It is important to provide women, especially at the grassroots level, with the opportunity to grow and lead from their own experiences. We should not assume that they have to do what we think they should; we need to let them decide that.

In Africa, the strength of the feminist movement comes from their willingness to work together and learn from each other. For example, Women's Situation Room, which was first initiated in Liberia, has then been integrated in Cameroon and Nigeria as a preventative tool to address electoral violence and ensure that women can freely and safely exercise their right to vote.

The international community has a lot to learn from this method of collaboration, if it is to listen.

Supporting this action requires financial support and the recognition that women need to be provided with safe spaces to build their capacity and engage.

However, supporting of the feminist movement is impossible without addressing root causes of violence, including arms proliferation, structural inequalities, discriminatory gender norms, etc.

Inspired by the role of the the Peacebuilding Commission, as outlined in Resolution 2282, we believe that supporting the feminist movement in a way that allows them to grow and engage from their own experience is of crucial importance.

In this regard, we recommend:

- a) Ensure strong partnerships and meaningful participation of independent and diverse women civil society by fostering environments and safe spaces and continuing to support, strengthen, and deepen platforms for engagement such as with the Civil Society-UN Prevention Platform;
- b) Strengthen gender analysis of peacebuilding work in the Sahel in a way that addresses masculinity, militarism, and power;

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c) Substantially increase financial resources for grassroots women human rights defenders and peace activists including by continuing and strengthening the Gender Promotion and Youth Promotion Initiatives of the Peacebuilding Fund and ensuring that these funds better reach grassroots organisations;

d) Strengthen response to attacks, intimidation, targeted violence and disappearances on civil society and call for appropriate mechanisms to be in place to prevent and address this violence, including around decisions, reporting, and visiting missions.