

**Security Council**

Distr.: General
4 October 2023

Original: English

Letter dated 3 October 2023 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the pleasure to inform you that Brazil, in its capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of October 2023, will convene a ministerial-level open debate on the theme “Women’s participation in international peace and security: from theory to practice”, in connection with the item entitled “Women and peace and security”, on 25 October, at 10 a.m.

In order to guide the discussions on this topic, Brazil has prepared a concept note, which is contained in the annex to the present letter. I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Norberto **Moretti**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Ambassador



Annex to the letter dated 3 October 2023 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept note for the Security Council open debate on the theme “Women’s participation in international peace and security: from theory to practice”, 25 October 2023

Overview

In October 2023, during its presidency of the Security Council, Brazil will convene a ministerial-level open debate on the theme “Women’s participation in international peace and security: from theory to practice”, in connection with the item entitled “Women and peace and security”. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil, Mauro Vieira, will preside over the debate.

The event, which marks the anniversary of landmark resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#), will allow the larger membership of the United Nations to take stock of the progress made on this item, drawing from the report of the Secretary-General.

Despite several Security Council resolutions adopted to address the contribution of women to peace through active participation, women continue to be excluded and sidelined from decision-making processes. We suggest a look back at the origins of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) and encourage the Council to evaluate the steps needed to promote an effective translation of theory into practice.

Background

The path that took the international community to the adoption of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) is well documented. It was undoubtedly led by women activists, many of whom were from countries that had recently experienced armed conflicts, mainly from developing countries.

Rather than merely including women in pre-established arrangements, resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) was aimed at promoting women’s access to decision-making positions at the United Nations, other key international forums and at the national level so that they could play their role as agents of change in security and defence structures. More than that, it was aimed at promoting gender equality as a means to foster lasting international peace and security.

The women and peace and security agenda has become one of the most visible thematic files in the Security Council. This has been amplified by the shared commitments on women and peace and security, which is an initiative to mainstream this agenda during the rotating presidency of the Security Council that has been signed by 16 members since October 2021. This initiative has helped to bring record numbers of women from civil society to different Security Council meetings and highlight the agenda’s cross-cutting nature.

Other initiatives are worth mentioning. In 2018 the Secretariat, inspired by resolution [2242 \(2015\)](#), established what is now the well-known uniformed gender parity strategy 2018–2028 for women in peacekeeping. Another important initiative, the senior women talent pipeline, has also contributed to the selection of women for high-ranking positions in the United Nations peace and security architecture. The creation of a Global Alliance of Regional Women Mediator Networks in 2018 is also a positive step, as it brings together Member States and civil society with a focus on the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Almost every region has set up women mediator networks, and many countries have done so at the national level. However, women's under-representation in or exclusion from peace and security has not fundamentally changed. With specific regard to women's inclusion in formal peace talks, it continues to be marginal or entirely lacking. Over the last two years, the percentage of women in United Nations-led peace talks has actually dropped. The percentage of peace agreements that include provisions on gender equality or women's rights has also not significantly changed over the last two decades.

In this context, in recent years, the Security Council has used stronger language, including to demand the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peace and security (see resolution [2624 \(2022\)](#)), urge parties to hold a high-level workshop to identify concrete recommendations to ensure the full participation of women in mechanisms established by peace agreements (resolution [2480 \(2019\)](#)), or to regret the lack of meaningful participation of women and request the parties involved to agree on a time-bound action plan to address it (resolution [2587 \(2021\)](#)).

Women at the frontlines of these crises, those advocating for peace or a place at the table, need these calls and commitments to be translated into actual change on the ground, including by means of regular financing. The Security Council must be a strong ally in this endeavour and meet its responsibility to ensure effective implementation.

Apart from being a flagship objective of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) and subsequent resolutions, and one of the issues most often mentioned in Security Council decisions and the statements of its members, the right of women to participate in public life and decision-making has been recognized as a human right in international law for several decades (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, 1979). There is a growing body of evidence that women's meaningful participation makes peace agreements likelier to be reached and likelier to last. This is essential to world peace, in particular at a time when the world faces the highest number of violent conflicts since the Second World War, and 2 billion people – a quarter of humanity – are living in areas affected by such conflicts.

Objective

The annual open debate will provide an opportunity to reflect on the possible bias of implementation efforts, reaffirm the importance of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) and set goals in preparation for its twenty-fifth year, in 2025, particularly with regard to some of its core commitments, namely:

- The full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peace processes and decision-making in conflict situations and the systematic use of a gender perspective in the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements at the United Nations, and at the international and national levels
- Respect for international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls by parties to armed conflict, including special measures to support survivors and end impunity, as well as accountability for sexual exploitation, harassment and abuse
- Efforts to ensure that Security Council deliberations and decisions take account of gender issues and women's rights, including consultation with local and international women's groups

Guiding questions

- Within its competencies, how can the Security Council help Member States comply with different resolutions on women and peace and security, especially regarding participation?
- What measures have been taken to grant women access to leadership positions in political institutions as well as in justice, security and defence institutions at the national and regional levels?
- How can Member States ensure that women and peace and security initiatives translate into concrete change for local female populations, as well as guarantee the safety of women journalists, parliamentarians, mediators, peacekeepers and peacebuilders?
- What plans are there in national Governments devoted to advancing the Secretary-General's goal for a radical shift in women's participation in peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding over the next year?
- What role could the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security play in the Council's assessment of the situation of women and girls, as well as gender issues on the ground?

Briefers

- Secretary-General of the United Nations
- Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)
- President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mirjana Spoljaric Egger
- Civil society representative
- Director General of Rio Branco Institute and Representative of Brazil as Guarantor at the Peace Dialogue Table between the Government of the Republic of Colombia and the National Liberation Army (ELN), Glivânia Maria de Oliveira

Participation

Member States wishing to participate in person should inscribe their names on the list of speakers through the eSpeakers module of e-deleGATE. A letter addressed to the President of the Security Council, duly signed by the Permanent Representative or the Chargé d'affaires a.i., requesting to participate in accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure must be uploaded to the eSpeakers module of e-deleGATE. In order to guarantee the participation of as many delegations as possible, statements should not exceed three minutes.
