

WFWPI: Equalize women representations, increase funds for women and peace programs

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Amid the heightened armed conflicts in the world today, the WFWPI and allied non-governmental organizations have asked the UN member states to seriously work toward achieving global peace with women in full participation. They have also initiated the global campaign for peace called "No Peace Without Women."

In a statement given to the Secretary-General on June 18, 2026, the groups asked for "women parity in peace processes, and the allocation of a minimum of 15% to national budgets for peace and security financing to gender equality initiatives and support for women peacebuilders, women-led organizations, and community peace initiatives."

These measures are included in the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda, enshrined in the Security Council Resolution 1325.

"The Women, Peace, and Security Agenda is an unfulfilled promise," says the written statement signed by the WFWPI, International Alliance of Women, Soroptimist International, Universal Peace Federation, which are in general consultative status with ECOSOC.



Other signatories include the Graduate Women International (GWI), Mothers Legacy Project, and Silver Lining for the Needy Initiative which hold a special consultative status with ECOSOC.

"Women must participate fully, equally and meaningfully in decision-making across the entire peacebuilding cycle. Member states must guarantee parity by 2030 in all peace negotiations, mediation teams, and post-conflict governance structures," the women's groups said.

Data show that women make up only about 7% of negotiators and 14% of mediators in formal peace

processes worldwide. Many peace negotiations still exclude women due to political and cultural biases against women.



Empirical research in peace and conflict however reveals that the inclusion of women in negotiation processes results in more comprehensive policy outcomes, greater attention to the needs of affected populations, and a higher likelihood of achieving durable and sustainable peace agreements.

"Increasing women's representation in diplomacy is not solely a matter of equality, it is also a matter of effectiveness. With such inclusivity, the international community can move closer to securing peace settlements that are not only reached, but enduring."

WFWPI has initiated the campaign called "No Peace Without Women" in 2026 to illustrate how international forums and global events can promote dialogue, encourage women's leadership in peace negotiations and peace building processes, and strengthen international cooperation on gender-inclusive diplomacy.



A high-level side event at the 70th Commission on the Status of Women in March this year became the platform for the Call to Action which was hosted by a coalition of five government missions: Costa Rica (CSW70 Chair), Finland, Montenegro, Qatar and Gabon.

The global network of seven NGO Committees on the Status of Women prepared statements of support and the Call to Action was read in the presence of UN Women Executive Director Sima Bahous.

WFWPI, Global 100 Women, IAFLP and the NGO Committee on the Status of Women Geneva were the key initiators of the campaign that has held fourteen international conferences and advocates for a women-led campaign to put an end to war.

[See full document here](#)



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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

**Joint written statement submitted by Women's Federation
for World Peace International, International Alliance of
Women, Soroptimist International, Universal Peace
Federation, non-governmental organizations in general
consultative status, Graduate Women International (GWI),
Mothers Legacy Project, Silver Lining for the Needy
Initiative, non-governmental organizations in special
consultative status***

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement, which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[25 May 2026]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Women's Critical Role in Diplomacy: No Peace without Women and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

Although women's representation in diplomacy and international decision-making has steadily increased since the end of the Second World War, significant inequalities persist. Since 1947, only approximately 7% of all ambassadors and permanent representatives to the United Nations have been women.

Gender Inequality in Diplomacy

Historically, diplomatic roles were almost exclusively reserved for men, while women could exercise influence only indirectly and in exceptional circumstances, such as through royal marriages or informal political networks. Although barriers to women's participation have gradually diminished, contemporary statistics demonstrate that gender imbalance remains deeply rooted within diplomatic institutions. Recent studies indicate that women currently represent only around 22.5% of ambassadors and permanent representatives worldwide, while 73 countries have never appointed a woman as permanent representative to the United Nations.

Furthermore, a 2025 study highlighted that women remain significantly underrepresented in senior diplomatic positions, demonstrating that, despite notable progress in recent decades, diplomacy continues to be a predominantly male-dominated field. These disparities reveal the persistence of structural and institutional barriers that continue to limit women's equal participation in global governance and international diplomacy.

Women's Role in Peace and Security

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security demonstrated that, while women are disproportionately affected by armed conflict, they are also indispensable actors in conflict prevention, resolution, and peacebuilding. In doing so, the resolution marked a decisive turning point in the recognition of women's meaningful participation in peace processes at the international level.

Over the years, empirical research in peace and conflict studies has consistently reinforced this normative foundation. Findings indicate that the inclusion of women in negotiation processes is associated with more comprehensive policy outcomes, greater attention to the needs of affected populations, and a higher likelihood of achieving durable and sustainable peace agreements.

These insights underscore a broader principle: Increasing women's representation in diplomacy is not solely a matter of equality; it is also a matter of effectiveness. It is through such inclusivity that the international community can move closer to securing peace settlements that are not only reached, but enduring.

Progress and Innovations Toward Gender Parity

While a small number of States, including Liechtenstein, Belize, and New Zealand, have achieved parity in the representation of women among their top diplomatic posts, such cases remain exceptional rather than the norm. They nevertheless demonstrate that gender-balanced diplomacy is both attainable and impactful, offering a model for broader international progress.

Other international institutions have already begun to implement innovative measures to address the persistent underrepresentation of women in diplomacy and leadership. For instance, several multilateral organizations have introduced gender parity roadmaps with clear timelines and accountability mechanisms, requiring regular reporting on progress toward balanced representation across senior positions.

Within the United Nations system, agencies have adopted targets aimed at achieving gender parity in senior management, alongside recruitment reforms designed to ensure greater transparency and inclusivity in selection processes. This approach has contributed to increased visibility of women in senior leadership positions across UN offices, including in Geneva-based institutions such as the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), led by Doreen Bogdan-Martin, and within UN information and communication services, led by Alessandra Vellucci.

However, to date, no woman has ever been elected Secretary-General of the United Nations, even though multiple candidates have been considered throughout the organization's history. As discussions increasingly emerge in the context of the forthcoming end of António Guterres' mandate, this reality underscores both the symbolic and substantive importance of continuing efforts to advance gender equality at the highest levels of the United Nations. It also demonstrates that although much effort has been made at midlevel, meaningful progress remains to be achieved at the senior and most significant levels within the institution itself.

On the other hand, some international and regional organizations, such as the Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI), with multiple partners have strengthened mentorship and leadership development programs specifically designed to support women's advancement into high-level diplomatic and mediation roles.

No Peace without Women Global Campaign

Initiatives such as "No Peace Without Women" illustrate how international forums and global events can promote dialogue, encourage women's leadership in peace negotiations and peace building processes, and strengthen international cooperation on gender-inclusive diplomacy. A high-level side event at the 70th Commission on the Status of Women became the platform for the Call to Action. The event was hosted by a coalition of five government missions: Costa Rica (CSW70 Chair), Finland, Montenegro, Qatar and Gabon. The global network of seven NGO Committees on the Status of Women prepared statements of support and the Call to Action was read in the presence of The UN Women Executive Director. WFWPI, Global 100 Women, IAFLP and the NGO Committee on the Status of Women Geneva were the key initiators of the campaign that has held fourteen international conferences and advocates for a women-led campaign to put an end to war!

The No Peace without Women Call to Action: The Unfulfilled Promise of the "Women, Peace and Security" Agenda

We call upon Member States, UN bodies, and civil society to accelerate its full implementation by:

1. Recognize the WPS Agenda as a Legal Obligation

Reaffirm the Women, Peace and Security framework as a binding legal commitment, not a voluntary policy aspiration, and accelerate its implementation as a precondition for sustainable peacebuilding and peace-making.

2. End Impunity for Gender-Based Crimes

Strengthen accountability mechanisms for sexual and gender-based crimes in conflict and post-conflict contexts, recognizing such crimes as crimes against humanity, ensuring prosecution of perpetrators, and adopting survivor-centered justice approaches.

3. Achieve Parity in Peace Processes

Guarantee parity by 2030 in all peace negotiations, mediation teams, and post-conflict governance structures.

Women must participate fully, equally and meaningfully in decision-making across the entire peacebuilding cycle.

4. Invest in Women, Peace and Security

Allocate a minimum of 15% of peace and security financing to gender equality initiatives and support for women peacebuilders, women-led organizations, and community peace initiatives.

5. Protect Women Peacebuilders and Human Rights Defenders

Adopt stronger protection mechanisms to safeguard women peacebuilders, mediators, journalists, and human rights defenders from intimidation, surveillance, violence, and reprisals.

6. Promote Peace Education and Civic Engagement

Strengthen programs in peace education, civic participation, negotiation skills, cultural diplomacy, and reconciliation, engaging youth, communities, and institutions in conflict prevention.

7. Build a Global Network of Women Peacebuilders

Support the creation of a global network of women peacebuilders and mediators, mobilizing communities, institutions, and youth to promote dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution.

8. Calling for an International Observance recognizing the essential role of women in peacebuilding and mediation and appointment of a Special Envoy for Peacebuilding under the guiding principles of No Peace without Women**Unorthodox and Multifaceted Partnerships**

Among other collaborative efforts, the Universal Peace Federation with the support of the WFWPI launched the International Association of First Ladies for Peace (IAFLP) in 2020. This joint project creates a platform for First Ladies, a unique leadership role in many countries, to promote innovative high-level approaches to conflict resolution and sustainable development through conferences, advocacy campaigns, and partnership networks.

These initiatives further demonstrate that targeted institutional reform, combined with sustained international engagement, is both feasible and effective in accelerating progress toward gender-balanced diplomacy.

Across various forums, women's participation has also been increasingly institutionalized in peacebuilding and mediation processes through the integration of gender expertise within negotiation teams. Collectively, these initiatives demonstrate that targeted institutional reform is both feasible and effective in accelerating progress toward gender-balanced diplomacy.

Eliminating Structural Barriers

Other steps can be taken at the international level to address the structural barriers that continue to limit women's participation in diplomacy. First, States could guarantee spousal employment support and normalize parental leave policies in foreign postings, thereby making diplomatic careers more compatible with family life.

Indeed, one of the most persistent challenges faced by women in diplomacy relates to mobility requirements and the difficulty of reconciling frequent international relocation with family responsibilities. By facilitating greater continuity of family life abroad and reducing structural penalties associated with caregiving responsibilities, States can meaningfully address one of the key barriers to gender equality in diplomatic careers.

Collaborative Mentorship and Training

The creation of a funded platform for dialogue within and beyond the United Nations system would also be highly beneficial to advancing this objective. Such a platform could bring together young graduates, including participants in programmes such as the UN Graduate Study Programme, with a specific focus on women's empowerment and leadership in diplomacy. It would provide young women with opportunities to deepen their understanding of international affairs, engage with practitioners, and receive guidance on how to pursue and develop a career in diplomacy.

By strengthening access to mentorship, training, and professional networks, such an initiative would contribute to building a more inclusive and representative diplomatic pipeline for future generations.

Finally, providing funding incentives for inclusive mediation teams could serve as an additional mechanism within international organizations, including the United Nations, to encourage greater gender balance in peace and negotiation processes. By linking financial support to inclusivity criteria, such measures could strengthen institutional commitment to women's meaningful participation in diplomacy and conflict resolution.

We therefore call upon the international community, States, United Nations bodies, civil society, communities, families and individual citizens, to:

1. Reinforce commitments to gender equality in diplomacy by adopting clear, measurable, and time-bound targets for women's representation in diplomatic and senior leadership positions;
2. Ensure transparent, merit-based, and inclusive recruitment and promotion processes within foreign services, with regular public reporting on gender representation at all levels;
3. Establish comprehensive mentorship, training, and capacity-building programs aimed at supporting young women pursuing careers in international affairs and diplomacy, including structured partnerships between universities and United Nations institutions;
4. Acknowledge the importance of integrating a gender perspective into all peacebuilding, mediation, and conflict-resolution processes, in line with existing international frameworks on women, peace, and security;
5. Guarantee equal access to diplomatic careers by addressing structural barriers, including mobility constraints, through policies such as spousal employment support, parental leave in foreign postings, and family-friendly diplomatic service arrangements;
6. Encourage the development of incentives for inclusive mediation teams, including preferential funding and institutional support for negotiation processes that ensure balanced gender representation;
7. Urge United Nations bodies and Member States to strengthen accountability mechanisms to ensure progress toward gender parity at all levels of international decision-making, including senior leadership positions within the United Nations system.

United Voices for Global Impact, NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.