

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY UPDATE

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, December 2017

This newsletter provides an update on recent events related to Women, Peace and Security. It highlights key events at the domestic and international level that Ireland has engaged with, and also includes links to useful resources in this context.

For more general information on Ireland's WPS agenda, please visit our [webpage](#). The webpage provides links to Ireland's **2nd National Action Plan**, the **Midterm Review** and information on the **Oversight Group** (including membership and minutes from quarterly meetings).

Women Peace and Security Open Debate

Ireland's Permanent Ambassador to the United Nations, H.E. Geraldine Byrne Nason, was well received in the delivery of Ireland's position on WPS at the Women, Peace and Security Open debate on the 27th October 2017. Her speech can be viewed via UN Web TV [here](#), with Ireland's input starting at 2.48.



UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres presented a comprehensive report on the current situation of the WPS agenda, which is accessible [here](#).

Ireland's Side Event on the WPS agenda and Civil Society

Ireland's Permanent Mission to the United Nations hosted a side event on the theme of the WPS agenda and civil society empowerment. This was organized in conjunction with the Permanent Missions to the United Nations of Jordan and Colombia. The event also highlighted Ireland's role in supporting the Colombian peace process, which has included provisions on the inclusion of women in the peace talks and the implementation of the peace agreement.



Ireland's support to the Colombian Peace Process has focused on two key strands: firstly, funding to finance the implementation of the agreement, and secondly in sharing the experiences of the Northern Ireland Peace Process. Funding has been channelled largely through the United Nations Trust Fund where it is directed towards a policing and gender project aimed at strengthening the capacity of the police to respond to the needs of women in a post-conflict context, particularly around issues of gender based violence.

Ireland is greatly encouraged by the recent news that a majority of judges on the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, the tribunal which will investigate human rights abuses committed during the conflict, are women. Also encouraging is that 10% of these are Afro-Colombian and a further 10% come from indigenous groups. For more information see [here](#).



Funding the Way Forward

Ambassador Geraldine Nason Byrne met with the leader of women mediators in Burundi, Goretti Ndayisaba at a WPS side event. Ireland provides funds for this initiative through the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF), established to pool resources for WPS. The most recent report on WPHF and what it is funding can be accessed [here](#).

The **Funding the Way Forward** campaign was launched at this year's WPS Open Debate. It was highlighted that although there are now 68 states that have National Action Plans there are only 16 that have dedicated financing for their NAPs. The Global Network Of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) launched a

new resource for the costing and budgeting for NAPs, titled **No Money, No NAP: Manual for Costing and Budgeting National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325**. A copy of the report can be accessed [here](#).

Children in Armed Conflict

The UN Open Debate on Children in Armed Conflict was held on the 31st October. Ireland, represented by Minister Katherine Zappone, highlighted the importance of the WPS agenda within the context of children in armed conflict, particularly where girls are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and SGBV. Minister Zappone stated that the **'protection of women and girls from gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse in crisis and conflict situations is a priority for Ireland'**. As chair of the Commission on the Status of Women this year, the Minister committed to Ireland's efforts to **'embed the Women, Peace and Security agenda across all its work'**.



This tone was reiterated in the minister's meeting with recently appointed Executive Director of UNFPA, Dr Natalia Kanem. The discussion with Dr Kanem was particularly focused on UNFPA's work to end Gender Based Violence. Ireland's support, through its work on the Executive Boards throughout this year, and its role as Chair of CSW, was warmly welcomed. See [here](#) for information on the work of UNFPA on GBV.

The Secretary General's Annual Report on Children in Armed Conflict can be accessed [here](#).

Brexit, The Good Friday Agreement (GFA) and Women, Peace and Security

On the 13th of October, The Political Science Association of Ireland (PSAI) held a seminar focused on concerns over the impact of Brexit on the Women Peace and Security agenda in Northern Ireland. It also examined concerns that Brexit may be an obstacle in retaining provisions for women's inclusions enshrined in the Good Friday Agreement. The seminar was chaired by **Professor Yvonne Galligan (Queens University)** and **Dr. Fiona Buckley (UCC)**. Input was also provided from Dr. Fiona McKay (Edinburgh University) and Bronagh Hinds (DemocraShe) among others. The agenda can be accessed [here](#).

A research paper on Brexit and what it means for gender equality in Northern Ireland can be found [here](#). This research was conducted by members of the Consortium for the Regional Support for Women in Disadvantaged and Rural Areas.

Second Annual Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty Lecture — Professor Monica McWilliams



The second Annual Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty Lecture, titled: ***From the margins to the mainstream: Women's Participation in Peace Making in Northern Ireland and Elsewhere***, was delivered by Professor Monica McWilliams at the embassy to Ireland at the Holy See, on the 9th November. Professor McWilliams spoke of the importance of women's political participation in processes of conflict resolution and peace building, and reflected on the importance of the Women's Coalition in the Northern Ireland context. She also highlighted the importance of maintaining women's participation in post-conflict, where women frequently get pushed to the margins after a settlement has been negotiated. The lecture is based on her forthcoming publication. Following the event Professor

McWilliams also carried out an interview with Vatican Radio on the same topic. This can be accessed [here](#).

Ireland's Working Paper on GBV and Article 7(4) of the Arms Trade Treaty

In September 2017, Ireland presented a working paper at the Conference of State Parties on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) that makes recommendations around the formulation of Article 7(4) on Gender Based Violence. With the entry into force of the ATT in 2014, Ireland and other state parties acknowledged that GBV should be acknowledged as a consequence of the arms trade, leading to the inclusion of Article 7(4) and marking the first time GBV has been explicitly recognised in an arms control treaty. The working paper presented was a critique of the Article with recommendations. This was drafted with reference to the analysis of the Arms Trade Treaty carried out by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and with assistance from the Irish Consortium on Gender Based Violence (ICGBV). The Working paper can be accessed [here](#).

UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year

Ireland participated in the United Nations Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial in Vancouver on the 14th and 15th November. The session on Women, Peace and Security was successful in generating increased commitments to better integrate gender perspectives and promote greater participation of women in peacekeeping. Twenty-six countries made commitments to this regard, ranging from the deployment of female engagement teams and female staff officers, to training initiatives and the funding for women in national militaries. This year's Ministerial also saw South African peacekeeper, **Major Seitebatso Pearl Block**, receive the award of UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year for her efforts in promoting the principles of UNSCR 1325 in the field. Major Block received her award from Prime Minister Trudeau. For details of the award and Major Block's work see [here](#).



"The Women that Rocked the Cradle Rocked the World."

*Ambassador Nason Byrne quoted Mary Robinson at the WPS side event **Funding the Way Forward**.*

16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence

16 Days of activism against Gender Based Violence 2017 began on the 25th November, marking the **International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women** and lasts until the 10th December, **Human Rights Day**. Various events are taking place across Ireland and internationally. See links for events organized by [Women's Aid](#) and [Akidwa](#) within Ireland, or internationally through [UN Women](#).

Please continue to help to promote the WPS agenda from an Irish perspective by encouraging interested parties to sign up to the mailing list by contacting wpsconsultation@dfa.ie. Should you wish to unsubscribe from the mailing list at any time, please also email wpsconsultation@dfa.ie.