

SHALL THE WORLD TOLERATE AN ENDLESS WAR ?!

A Voice from South Caucasus

“Committing to Women’s Leadership in Peacebuilding - Bringing Women, Peace and Security and the UN Peacebuilding Architecture Closer Together”¹

The Side event to the 20th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325

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Ladies, Gentlemen,

When H.E. Guterres called upon the world leaders for a global ceasefire this spring, nobody drew attention in a respective way.

In July clashes started between Armenia and Azerbaijan that were followed with the September 27, and today we live in the face of increased resumption of armed conflict in South Caucasus.

Constant escalations and clashes, armed conflicts and wars have been challenging the Region for the past 30 years.

Both formal and informal Infrastructures 4 Peace established and built in South Caucasus are being unable to resist or combat military actions in the absence of meaningful civil society inclusion in the peace processes.

The Minsk Group, as the main established negotiation format for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, worked at the Track 1 level, with no compliance with local peacebuilding process. Official negotiations are isolated and distanced from entire civil societies, peacebuilders and national mediators.

However, with the absence of local peacebuilders from the discussions and without local peacebuilding expertise, the Minsk Group format misses key components that a more inclusive expert-level dialogue would offer. The development of jointly agreed decisions would encourage joint ownership and human security principles.

¹ [For the Concept Note of the event please visit the official webpage of the GPPAC](https://www.gppac.net/news/unscr-1325-women-peace-and-security-turns-twenty)

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Frustrations caused by nonparticipation and exclusion forced us to establish the Network of Women Mediators of South Caucasus in 2017 in response to the 2016 clashes between Armenia and Azerbaijan. However, we are really struggling with operationalizing it in the absence of adequate funding and political support.

15 years of experience of the GPPAC Network in the South Caucasus empowered us to support local capacities and promote human security principles, to reach engagement in formal peace dialogue regarding the situations in and around Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia.

What is the meaning of a ceasefire or any peace agreement without societal engagement and how long does it last?

Women peacebuilders are forced to **transform their activities** to just humanitarian assistance before, during and after each ceasefire instead of supporting and developing infrastructures for peace. We are forced to transform our roles from peacebuilders to just ceasefire/truce violation monitors, instead of being engaged and recognized in inclusive peace negotiations.

Who should be responsible for reparation of abolished infrastructures 4 peace in my Region? Who is under the obligation to pay for reparation measures?

KEY MESSAGE:

The war proves that **we cannot sustain** the impact of all measures taken by CSOs towards confidence building and peace processes.

We cannot prevent any sudden and forced abolishment of infrastructures 4 peace which was being built for decades.

Today, we may assume that:

the call on a global ceasefire made by H.E. Guterres is to be interpreted in a way that we all are responsible for reparation of ruined infrastructures 4 peace;
national peace mediators, governments and third party mediators, as 3 integral pillars of peace process, have to act complementary to each other;
established peace process shall guarantee inclusive and meaningful negotiations and dialogues, where Civil Societies are engaged and participate before, during and after a conflict.

OUR RECOMMENDATION GOES TO THE UNO:

UN should pay due attention to the South Caucasus. Now, it needs to set-up **ad hoc working group**, engage civil society and government representatives, and identify urgent actions for:

- recognition of national peacebuilders and
- reparation measures for ruined infrastructures 4 peace,

so that the established peace process **guarantees** inclusive and meaningful negotiations with participation of national mediators such as those gathered in the Network of Women Mediators of South Caucasus.