

This week in focus: Fostering inclusion to build resilient societies: How women peacebuilders prevent conflicts and atrocities on the ground

On 25 October 2018, the UN Security Council (UNSC) will mark the 18th anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325 on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda. UNSCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions and reviews have taken note that violent conflict and atrocities not only disproportionately affect women and girls, but that women also play a vital role in the implementation and advancement of sustainable peace processes and the strengthening of societal resilience. Despite such significance, more work remains to be done in order to fully realise and effectively make use of the diverse ways in which women's important contributions can be leveraged at all levels, as women are uniquely positioned to identify otherwise overlooked conflict drivers. Additionally, their inclusion leads to the formulation of more effective prevention mechanisms and their meaningful participation in peace processes has been proven to increase the likelihood of establishing sustainable peace and building more resilient societies.

In this vein, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung New York, the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP) and the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), working in partnership within the Prevention Up Front (PuF) Alliance, will host a side event to this year's UNSC open debate on WPS entitled, “*Fostering inclusion to build resilient societies: How women peacebuilders prevent conflicts and atrocities on the ground*” on 24 October.

The event will feature a panel of gender experts working in the fields of conflict and atrocity prevention from around the globe. We look forward to an exciting discussion aimed at addressing the gaps in existing policies and implementation of these agendas, as well as actionable recommendations for ensuring such policies translate into meaningful participation of women in conflict and atrocity prevention.

For more information, please see the event concept note [here](#) .

What to Watch:

Cameroon: [Election Body Reviewing Petitions to Cancel Presidential Poll](#) (Voice of America)
Cameroon's Constitutional Council received 25 petitions calling for the Presidential Election results to be annulled. Opposition candidates, their parties, as well as voters alleged fraud and voter suppression. [Conducting](#) their review on 17 October, the Constitutional Council [ruled](#) and rejected 16 petitions to void the outcome of the election, stating a failure on behalf of the applicants to lodge their complaints within the 72-hour time frame.

Gaza/Israel: [ICC issues harsh warning to Israel of possible war crimes in Gaza](#) (The Jerusalem Post; The Times of Israel)
The International Criminal Court (ICC) issued a severe warning to Israel over a possible investigation of alleged war crimes in Gaza by Israel and Hamas. Chief Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, has released a statement which expressing concern over the continuation of violence, perpetrated by both sides, stressing that if necessary she will take appropriate action within her mandate under the Rome Statute. Bensouda also commented on the planned eviction of the Bedouin community of Khan al-Ahmar in the West Bank, noting that considerable destruction of property without military necessity constitutes a war crime. In response, Israel [criticized](#) and raised doubt over the Prosecutor's impartiality, after she failed to acknowledge a rocket from Gaza that critically damaged a house and nearly killed civilians in Beersheba. In response, Israeli officials [instructed](#) the army to intensify its response to violence from Gaza.

Philippines: [Philippines Wins New Term on UN Rights Council, Drawing Outrage](#) (The New York Times)
Last Friday, the Philippines was elected for another three year term in the UN Human Rights Council. The outcome was strongly condemned by civil society groups given the human rights violations in the country, calling this move is "unconscionable." Human Rights Watch said "the Philippines has be undergoing a human rights crisis that could amount to crimes against humanity," and re-electing the country to the Council undermines "the body's credibility and effectiveness." The Philippines was not the only controversial country elected to the Council: Bahrain, Eritrea, and Somalia were also voted in as members of the council, sparking outrage in

the international community.

UN Human Rights Council: [2019-2021 UN Human Rights Council Elections and the Responsibility to Protect](#) (Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect)

After last Friday's election, 20 out of the 47 Human Rights Council members are also part of the Group of Friends of RtoP. This creates an opportunity for the norm to be further enhanced and upheld by the body over the course of the next two years. ICRtoP Coalition member, the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (GCR2P), created profiles of the newly elected countries to the Council in order to determine their level of commitment to RtoP.

Yemen: [Imminent famine in Yemen](#) (Norwegian Refugee Council; The Guardian)

The Secretary General of the Norwegian Refugee Council, Jan Egeland, called for a solution to the conflict in Yemen, noting civilians are suffering from the actions of warring parties including alleged state orchestrated starvation due to the restriction of aid access during the country's famine. Furthermore, sources [state](#) that the intensity of the famine is higher than initially estimated, with up to 14 million civilians estimated to be at risk. The UN is calling the situation the most lethal famine in 100 years.

But Also Don't Miss:

CAR: [Central African Republic: Rebels Executing Civilians](#)

Rebels continue to execute civilians with impunity, constituting war crimes. UN Peacekeeping forces have been urged to protect and prevent attacks against civilians.

Gambia: ["Dark Days" Over: Gambia Launches Truth, Reconciliation Body](#)

Gambia created a Truth, Reconciliation and Repatriations Commission to investigate the crimes committed by Yahya Jammeh and facilitates a potential prosecution. The ICC welcomed this decision saying it will help move the country forward.

Liberia: [Government Hints At Eluding TRC Recommendations - An Attempt To Thwart War Crimes Court?](#)

Local and international groups continue to call for the creation of a war crimes court, but Liberia's Foreign Minister, Gbehzohngar Findley, said that the decision should be held to

referendum, sparking doubt on whether the government will implement the United Nations TRC recommendations by 2020.

Nigeria: [Boko Haram Killing of Aid Worker Hauwa Liman is a War Crime](#)

Boko Haram's murder of aid worker Hauwa Liman constitutes a war crime under international law, according to Amnesty International. The group urged all perpetrators of these and other crimes in the country to be brought to justice.

Syria: [Deadline passes for Syria's Idlib buffer without fighters leaving](#)

Militants failed to meet deadline and withdraw from the buffer zone as agreed between Russia and Turkey, increasing the risk for continued violence and further civilian casualties.

Syria: [Syria: Residents Blocked From Returning](#)

Human Rights Watch found that the Syrian government is demolishing homes, preventing displaced persons from returning, possibly amounting to forced displacement and war crimes.

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