

NORDIC WOMEN MEDIATORS

Nordic Women Mediators call for inclusion of women in peace and mediation processes

With the overall aim to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular Goal 16 for the benefit of women and men in conflict areas, over 30 members of the Nordic Women Mediators network convened in Helsinki for a two-day meeting on 21-22 November. At the meeting, the Nordic mediators and peacebuilders exchanged their knowledge and experiences from working with designing peace processes, mediating negotiations, and supporting national women's networks and initiatives in conflict-affected countries, such as Colombia, Afghanistan, Syria and Somalia.

Based on these discussions at the Helsinki meeting, the Nordic Women Mediators network calls for a strengthened inclusion of women in peace and mediation processes in all international, national and local peacebuilding efforts. The network emphasizes that in order to contribute to achieving and sustaining peace, women's participation needs to be intensified at all levels in peace processes. This should be done by appointing women mediators, ensuring the participation of women in all relevant decision-making processes and taking into account the opinions and assessments of women from communities affected by conflict.

In addition to promoting inclusive and meaningful participation of women in all phases of peace processes, the network also enables Nordic women mediators and peacebuilders to foster partnerships with other regional and national mediation and peacebuilding networks. A considerable number of women experts work in international and non-governmental organisations, providing a pool of resources currently underutilised. The Nordic Women Mediators network aims to make visible the many qualified women around the world available to fill mediation roles. There will be a meeting in Oslo in March 2018 to initiate the establishment of a global women mediators network together with networks from other regions.

Launched in Oslo in 2015, the Nordic Women Mediators network currently boasts around 100 members from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Members bring to the table an extensive range of professional expertise relevant to conflict mediation, peacebuilding and negotiations. They work in a range of sectors, from Ministries of Foreign Affairs in the five Nordic countries, to specialists working in academia, think tanks, non-governmental organisations and international organisations. The next annual meeting of the Nordic Women Mediators will be held in autumn 2018 in Denmark.

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