

Women, Peace & Security: Why Gender Matters in Conflict

The global order is shaped not only by states, but also by social perspectives and participation. The UN's Women, Peace and Security agenda highlights how inclusive decision-making can create more sustainable peace. In times of shifting power relations, the role of women and gender perspectives becomes even more important for legitimacy and effectiveness of peace processes. This working group discusses how gender perspectives contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of security in a multipolar world.

Summary of the Discussion in the Working Group

The Women, Peace and Security working group focused on the four pillars of UN Security Council Resolution 1325: participation, prevention, protection, and recovery. Discussions emphasised the importance of women's meaningful involvement in peace processes as a key factor for achieving more sustainable and legitimate agreements. The group explored issues of inclusion and gender-sensitive conflict analysis, addressing power hierarchies and intersectionality, and highlighting the need to integrate gender perspectives into ceasefires and peace negotiations. These themes were examined through interactive exercises, including role-play scenarios. In addition, feminist approaches to security were discussed, with a focus on how security is experienced differently depending on gender. Participants also reflected on common misconceptions about feminism and considered strategies to strengthen women's participation in peace and security processes.

Key Questions Emerging from the Discussion

- How can we advocate for the universal inclusion of women while catering to different context and avoiding neo-colonial practices?
- “No migration, no gender, no war” the words of Viktor Orbán. Given the rise of the far right and shifting political ideologies, increased polarisation, declining interest in feminism, how can we convince these far-right leaders to include women in these conversations?

Summary of the Discussion at the Closing Panel

During the Closing Event, participants raised questions on how to promote women's inclusion globally while respecting different local contexts and avoiding neo-colonial approaches, as well as how to advocate for gender inclusion amid the rise of far-right political movements. Panelists responded by highlighting the importance of context-sensitive engagement that prioritises dialogue and inclusion rather than imposing ideological frameworks. They emphasised that advancing women's participation often requires adapting language and approaches so that communities feel included in the process. Regarding far-right leadership, panelists noted that direct influence may be difficult and suggested framing women's inclusion in broader terms such as stability, security and effective governance rather than presenting it solely as a gender issue. The panel also acknowledged the participant's thoughtful and well-formulated questions.