

Submission

from



to

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Public Consultation

on

Third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security

December 2018

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***“We know that without
peace, development is
impossible - and
without women,
neither peace nor
development is
possible”***

The above quotation is from Killeen, P. (2014). 'The Role of Women in Peacebuilding' in Ed. E. Rafter. (2014). *Deepening Reconciliation, Reflections on Glenree Peacebuilding*. Glenree.

1. Glenree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation and Women, Peace and Security

Glenree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation (called Glenree from hereon) is an independent non-governmental organisation, that is the only peace and reconciliation centre in the Republic of Ireland.

Glenree has a deep involvement in peace building since the 1970s.

1.1 Glenree's Approach to Peace and Reconciliation

Glenree considers that recognition of the uniquely gendered aspects of conflict is crucial to the success of efforts to deepen reconciliation and promote inclusive societies. The active inclusion of women decision-makers in the design, implementation and evaluation of peacebuilding initiatives is a key core value for Glenree.

Glenree's focus on reconciliation and inclusivity is local and international.

Glenree actively supports dialogue with and between communities and people on the island of Ireland.

This involves the creation and facilitation of safe spaces, to enable people who hold different viewpoints and/or identities, to engage with each other and to have their voices heard.

This dialogic approach is valued as a transformative strategy that deepens relationships and reconciliation across communities and that contributes to addressing the legacy of the historical political conflict on the island.

Glenree also works with communities and people seeking to live safely in Ireland as

they flee conflict and violence in other countries.

Internationally, Glenree works to share the lessons of the Irish peace process with war-torn countries all over the world including Palestine and Afghanistan.

Through this work, Glenree seeks to build positive relationships and public discourse towards realising increased safety, justice and dignity in communities for whom conflict and violence may be a threat, reality or a previous experience.

1.2 Glenree Activities

The range of current initiatives by Glenree includes:

- Women's Programme
- Young Peacebuilders Programme
- Peace Education Programme
- Addressing the Legacy of Violence through Facilitated Dialogue
- Dialogue with Muslim Communities of Ireland
- Political and Community Dialogue
- Refugee and Intercultural Programme including work to support refugee women living in direct provision centres in Ireland
- Working with international partners on the Global Alliance of Muslims for Equality

1.3 Glenree's Interest in the Third NAP

Glenree actively respects and promotes human rights and very much values the opportunity to engage on the development of Ireland's Third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

In 2020, the United Nations Security Council of Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 will reach its 20th anniversary.

The importance of robust National Action Plans to progress women's participation in all

phases of peace operations and of conflict prevention, resolution and recovery is reiterated by the finding that, between 1990 and 2017, women made up just two percent of mediators; five per cent of witnesses and signatories and eight per cent of negotiators¹.

This submission draws on the knowledge, understanding and perspectives gained from Glen Cree's work over the past 40 years.

Glen Cree is interested to engage and remain in dialogue on the implementation on the

Third NAP and is interested to act as a resource that supports the WPS implementation in Ireland and internationally.

¹ <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2018/10/why-women-peace-and-security-why-now/>

2. Twenty-Five Proposals to the Third National Action Plan

This section distils the discussion from Section 3 of the Submission into proposals in response to the questions asked in the Public Discussion Paper. The proposals are numbered for referencing purposes and are not indicative of any priority order to them.

Section 3 provides a more detailed discussion on the issues that gives rise to the proposals.

Question in Public Discussion Paper	Proposals from Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation
<p>What strategic objectives should be priorities for the Third NAP?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Retain the domestic and international dimensions of the NAP 2. Continue to be leading advocates at home, regionally and internationally for the realisation of the WPS resolutions 3. Intensify efforts to support women as leaders in conflict prevention and peace building 4. Intensify efforts to address sexual exploitation and violence
<p>How should the NAP apply to the Ireland-Northern Ireland context as well as migrants, asylum seekers and others living in Ireland who come from conflict and post conflict affected areas?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Sync the Third NAP with the Ireland’s implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal 5 (women and girls’ empowerment); Goal 16 (peaceful societies) and Goal 13 (climate change) 6. Create opportunities at an inter-governmental level with the British Government, and with any future reconvened Northern Assembly, to develop an iterative approach to implementing WPS related priorities and Sustainable Development Agenda and Goals 5 and 16 7. Explore the development of a shared WPS action plan on an all-island basis and 8. Engage with women and civil society in the design, implementation and monitoring of such an action plan. 9. In the Third NAP, expand policy links to the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Sport section of the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, given their focus on social inclusion and enhancing community cohesion. This is in addition to links with health and education bodies as mentioned in the Public Consultation Paper on the Third NAP 10. Engage women and others directly affected by conflict to develop education and awareness initiatives in Ireland to increase knowledge and understanding of the experiences and cultural diversity of groups in Ireland who seek safety here from conflict.

Question in Public Discussion Paper	Proposals from Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation
How can the existing monitoring and evaluation mechanism of the NAP be improved?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Require Strategy Statements of government departments, their agencies and relevant statutory/public bodies to explicitly commit to the implementation of WPS NAP related actions 12. Put in place regular inter-Departmental planning and review of progress in achieving the priorities of the WPS/NAP, at Ministerial and/or Senior Official levels 13. Require Departmental Annual Reports and reports of their agencies and relevant statutory/public bodies to report on implementation of the Third NAP 14. Establish and annually report on the budget and expenditure that is attached to the implementation of the WPS across government and its agencies 15. Based on above, track resources towards gender equality and women’s empowerment under the Third and future NAPs. Current inter-Departmental work on Equality Budgeting is relevant here.
How can the Plan better engage those who have a role to play in Women, Peace and Security but may not feel directly impacted?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. Acknowledge the heterogeneity of people from conflict affected areas, through tailored outreach actions at local, national and international levels 17. As well as better engaging with women and girls, men and boy and LGBTI+ from conflict affected areas, reach out to faith groups and women with disabilities 18. Administer an expanded and targeted funding to support women’s groups, locally, nationally, regionally and internationally to work towards addressing human security issues. This spotlight on a human security approach is a supporting action to facilitate women’s transitions into decision-making and leadership roles in conflict and post conflict settings 19. Put in place an action plan and human and financial resources towards the expansion of opportunities for women and men to acquire or enhance their Dialogue and Mediation skills locally, nationally, regionally and internationally 20. Ireland could seek to become a recognised international resource in the promotion and development of Dialogue and Mediation skills as a strategy of engagement, negotiation and resolution in conflict affected areas 21. The Defence Forces engage across relevant groups from civil society in its development of their next Defence Forces Action Plan on UN Security Resolution 1325

Question in Public Discussion Paper	Proposals from Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation
	<p>22. Set a national target on the number of women in Irish military and police keeping by the end of 2023 – the projected completion date of the Third NAP.</p>
<p>How should Ireland better promote knowledge of Women, Peace, and Security locally, nationally, regionally and internationally?</p>	<p>23. Develop and resource a WPS Capacity Building and Communications Strategy that includes a focus on human resource development/education and training for politicians, government representatives, policymakers, military, policy and civil society</p> <p>24. Develop an education module on WPS for integration within education and awareness initiatives on the implementation of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act Section 42 aka as the Public Sector Duty</p> <p>25. Initiate a Biennial WPS Forum to engage and build the capacity of an Irish WPS related network across a range of sectors</p>

3. Glenree priority proposals for Third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

3.1 Scope of the Third NAP

The Mid Term Review of the Second National Action Plan² on WPS noted that, from the outset the Irish National Action Plan was unique by its inclusion of a dual focus, a focus on the domestic and international dimensions of the UN resolutions on Women, Peace and Security.

3.1.1 Retain the dual focus

Glenree strongly endorses the continuation and strengthening of this dual focus in the Third National Action Plan.

The domestic dimension of the NAP allows for two majority policy priority areas. These are discussed next.

3.1.1a Address the legacy of conflict in Ireland-Northern Ireland

The first is to strengthen efforts to further identify issues for girls, women and their communities, that have arisen or continue to emerge, from conflict in Ireland-Northern Ireland and its legacy; and to intensify efforts to address them.

The low participation of women in peace and reconciliation initiatives and the engagement of women with each other across various divides remains strongly prevalent, well-illustrated by the words of women who participated in a recent conflict intervention initiative:

“For some Loyalist and Republican women participants, it was their first time engaging ‘with women from the other community’.

² Hinds B. and D. Donnelly. (2017) *Mid Term Review of Ireland’s Second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2015-2018*. Dublin: Government of Ireland.

All those interviewed said that the course took them outside their own comfort zone’ and gave them insight into ‘the other’.

Republican women expressed themselves as ‘tired of attending meetings’ where they were ‘the only female voice in the room’ and expressed the hope that the engagement with women from the Loyalist community could develop and continue.

The hope was expressed by a participant giving the graduation speech that, ‘I would be interested and keen in reforming the group to continue the work that’s already been made but especially with the vision of promoting women within Loyalism’³.

3.1.1b Support a dignified life experience for women in Ireland escaping conflict and violence in other countries

The second is to intensify supports to populations of girls and women and their families/communities, now living in Ireland who may have arrived here independently or in families or other groups such as asylum seekers, refugees, trafficked women and migrants to seek safety and a dignified life experience.

In particular the NAP should give attention to:

- i. The specific needs of girls who arrive as separated children
- ii. The issue of women’s vulnerability to domestic and sexual violence within the ‘direct provision system’ (documented with Akidwa. 2013. *Am Only Saying It Now*)

³ Walshe B. (2017). *Evaluation Report on behalf of the Edward Kennedy Institute and the Community Engagement Network of The Theory and Practice of Mediation and Conflict Intervention Module*. Maynooth: Edward Kennedy Institute, Maynooth University.

- iii. Family reunification – families coming from conflict zones into Ireland with no housing or integration plans in place. This results in the practice of placing them directly into temporary homeless accommodation
- iv. Women and girls in Ireland affected by female genital mutilation (FGM)
- v. Development of hate crime legislation to combat all forms of racism in Ireland
- vi. An official response to Islamophobia/anti-Muslim hatred which affects Muslim women and girls disproportionately. Research undertaken by James Carr of University of Limerick, involving 300 Muslims living in Ireland, shows that 47% experience hostility including threats, verbal abuse and physical assault. Muslim women experienced hostility 1.6 times more than men due to the visibility of their Islamic dress.

3.1.2 Continue as a leading international advocate of WPS

The international dimension of the WPS remains central to the broader policy development and implementation roles that Ireland engages in globally.

Ireland is a long-standing UN troop-contributing country to peace effort. We are also a country that has emerged from a history of hunger and conflict.

We have an historical and ongoing strong tradition of statutory and civil society support and solidarity in international co-operation and development.

We are well placed to continue to be leading advocates for the realisation of the commitments of the WPS resolutions and to collaborate with regional and international bodies in that effort.

Glencree is steadfastly supportive of this approach by Ireland.

3.2 Women, Peace and Security as a Cross-cutting Policy Issue

There are a range of international and national policy initiatives that are relevant to Women, Peace and Security.

3.2.1 WPS and Northern Ireland

Glencree suggests that the Third NAP supports the creation of opportunities, at an inter-governmental level with the British Government, and with any future reconvened Northern Assembly to discuss and examine how an iterative approach to applying WPS and SDG (particularly Goals 5 and 16) could be developed, implemented and supported.

There are a range of bodies where this could be considered including the Council of the Isles, British Irish Council, British Irish Assembly and relevant North-South bodies.

A shared WPS action plan on an all-island, or tri-partite basis, would be an opportunity to develop a strategic resourced approach across a range of actors.

The engagement of women and civil society across the communities would be essential to the authenticity of this process under WPS. Such engagement will be most effective by involving women, especially those affected by conflict, in the design, implementation and monitoring of such an action plan.

Glencree notes that the UK WPS National Action Plan does not incorporate a focus on Northern Ireland.

3.2.2 WPS NAP and other national policy frameworks

Glencree supports the commitment in the Public Consultation on the Third NAP to produce a stand-alone WPS National Plan that will interlink with the National Strategy for Women and Girls, the Migrant Integration Strategy, the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking in Ireland, the National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence, the LGBTI+ National Youth

Strategy and the National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision Making.

It also supports the commitment in the Public Consultation document to engage on education and health issues.

Glencree proposes that there is also scope to extend these WPS links to priorities and programmes of the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Sport priority of the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport. These Departments play significant roles in addressing marginalisation, and building and support social inclusion and strong connected communities. This focus could explicitly outreach to women and groups in Ireland who come under the WPS - related resolutions.

3.2.2a Sustainable Development Agenda and Goals

The Third NAP presents an opportunity to sync with the longer-term 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

All countries are required to implement the SDG Agenda domestically and internationally including SDGs goals on gender equality, women and girls' empowerment (SDG Goal 5) and peaceful societies (SDG 16).

The UN Security Council, the European Union and the African Union has identified climate change as a defining threat to peace in the 21st century.

Impacts of climate change, such as drought, floods, extreme weather events and reduced food and water security, affect women and men differently with the poorest being the most vulnerable.

Goal 13 of the SDG is relevant here and Glencree proposes that this Goal could be incorporated into work that syncs the Third Irish NAP with SDG processes and priorities.

3.2.3 Embedding WPS in Governmental and statutory strategies, reporting and budgets

Glencree proposes that an explicit commitment to the WPS/Third NAP be required in Strategy Statements of Government Departments and their agencies and relevant statutory entities, including Irish public sector bodies who may be new to explicit-related WPS work such as health, education and those working to address climate change.

Glencree also considers that regular inter-departmental planning and review of the progress in achieving the priorities of the Third NAP is valuable. The higher the level of reporting the greater the priority. Reporting to an Inter-Ministerial group and/or an Inter-Departmental Senior Officials Group is proposed. This demonstrates a visible and active cross-cutting institutional commitment to the agenda of women, security and peace.

Publishing progress in the implementation of the WPS NAP in Departmental Annual Reports is also valuable. This demonstrates a level of public accountability on WPS.

3.2.3a Budget commitment

This reporting could also usefully identify and report on the budget and expenditure that is attached to the implementation of the WPS across government and its agencies.

The implementation of the Irish NAP contributes to the realisation of Ireland's obligations to women under several international commitments including the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

The identification of budgets across human and financial resource allocations is an indicator of the capacity to deliver on the WPS/NAP agenda.

Implementation may be seriously constrained without such designation and can be

indicative that the work is an 'add on' to given commitments already in place.

The Third NAP could put in place actions that would identify the extent of the budget commitment to the WPS across specified Departments and bodies.

This could usefully act as a future baseline against which to track resources towards gender equality and women's empowerment, in context of the WPS and future National Actions Plans.

The current inter-Departmental work by government on Equality Budgeting is relevant here.

Glencree notes that the UN has set a minimum target of 15 per cent of all United Nations-managed funding in support of peacebuilding projects to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women. This was one of the benchmarks in the seven-point action plan for gender responsive peacebuilding.^{4 5}

Glencree notes the finding of the Mid Term Review of the Second NAP⁶ that a small budget was designated to the Conflict and Resolution Unit of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade which has been used to good effect. The Review also noted that the HSE does not have a designated WPS linked fund.

3.2.3b International Funding and WPS

Glencree supports the Irish Government's approach where the International Co-operation Budget cuts across a range of programmes that are WPS relevant, including humanitarian and emergency assistance, human development, bilateral initiatives and civil society and co-financing initiatives with NGOs.

⁴ Coomaraswamy, R. (2015). *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace. A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Resolution 1325*. Geneva: UN Women.

Within this the WPS related expenditure from the Stability Funds is noted as €450,000 in 2016.

Ireland's ongoing role as a donor to international initiatives, such as the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) is also commended, including our engagement with various WPHF activities at UNGA and regional levels.

3.2.3b Five-year Alignment of NAP with Irish Aid Country Strategy Programmes

The proposal in the Public Consultation Paper to develop the next NAP as a five-year strategy is welcome.

Glencree notes that this better facilitates alignment between the WPS NAP and the five-year cycle of Irish Aid Country Strategy programmes.

3.2.4 Promoting Knowledge of WPS

Improving knowledge of the provisions of the WPS is key to the capacity of people and institutions to invoke it to achieve greater gender equality and women's empowerment; to end sexual violence in conflict and to deal with its consequences.

The development of a WPS Capacity Building and Communications Strategy would be an important element of the forthcoming Ireland's Third NAP.

Given the diversity of audiences to whom the WPS is relevant, such a strategy would focus on human resource development at institutional and community levels. It would incorporate education and training for politicians, government representatives, policymakers, military, police and civil society on strategic advocacy and implementation steps.

⁵ UN Secretary General. (2018). *Report of the Secretary General on Women, Peace and Security* October 2018. Geneva: UN

⁶ Hinds B. and Donnelly D. *op.cit*

Glencree proposes that the Third NAP contains a commitment to the development of an education module on WPS for integration within education and awareness initiatives on the implementation of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act Section 42, also known as the Public Sector Duty.

Direct involvement of people with experience of the reality of conflict needs to be harnessed in the development of educational resources across sectors.

A key element of Capacity Building and Communications Strategy could be the inclusion in the Third NAP of a Biennial Forum or Platform on WPS. This would be aimed at a range of civil society, statutory and other bodies and serve several purposes such as:

- Build the capacity of a WPS-related network in Ireland from civil society, government, parliament, executive, statutory sector and the media
- Greater awareness of WPS related activity that is being resourced in Ireland and internationally
- Inter-sectoral, domestic and international exchanges on best practice on WPS related initiatives
- Informed discussion on how to improve policies and advance effective solutions for greater participation by women in peace and security
- Active links and synergy between the domestic and international strands of the Irish NAP.

3.3 Leadership, Voice and Engagement

3.3.1 Promoting strategies in response to heterogeneity of experiences

In implementing the dual focus of Ireland's Third NAP, it is important that the heterogeneity of girls and women, boys and

men, and their experiences is acknowledged and taken into account.

Glencree's experience is that people of diverse backgrounds and ages really value being facilitated in a safe environment to reflect on their experiences of conflict. In Glencree's recent *Dialogues with Muslim Communities of Ireland*⁷ participants appreciated having time and space to identify the issues which concern them and to have further time to engage in dialogue with others on findings ways to take action and engage with a wider group of stakeholders.

One of the strong messages from that process is that consultation and dialogue on their own is not enough. People want to be part of policy and decision making on important issues.

The Dialogues project with Muslim Communities offers lessons relevant to planning work with women living in Ireland who have come from conflict zones and have experienced human rights violations and traumas. It is vital to find opportunities to facilitate these women to find their voices and to engage in structured dialogue with officials from government departments to inform Departmental led or funded work on WPS.

Glencree notes that the Third NAP Public Consultation document flags that the scope of the forthcoming NAP will outreach to better engage women and girls, men and boys and LGBTI+ people from conflict affected areas.

Glencree proposes that faith groups and women with disability could be included in this outreach approach, which we strongly welcome.

Glencree's Dialogue with Muslims highlighted that they feel excluded from policy making

⁷ Catibusic-Finnegan. B. (2018). *Dialogues with Muslim Communities of Ireland*. Glencree: Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation.

and women highlighted the specificity of their negative portrayal in the Irish media.

Glenree suggests there is a need to support Muslims to be aware of their rights here and to raise their awareness about political participation including in local level community groups and Public Participation Networks (PPNs).

Glenree also considers that active development and promotion of education and awareness initiatives with the media in Ireland could help increase understanding of cultural diversity of groups in Ireland who are fleeing conflict.

Engagement with these groups, in the development of such initiatives, is crucial to the authenticity of the narrative in these resources and to their capacity to increase knowledge and understanding of WPS related issues by target audiences.

Some women who came to Ireland as refugees and migrants have already established projects back in their countries of origin, working against the use of sexual violence in conflict. They have also campaigned here to bring in legislation to ban FGM. Others have studied mediation and peacebuilding. This work has been undertaken without specific support or engagement with the Government's UN 1325 Strategy.

If there are specific channels of outreach to women in Ireland, fleeing conflict, individuals can discover that their voices, talents and motivation to bring about change can be harnessed and supported in a systematic way.

Glenree's work with women seeking asylum from conflict and human rights violations has led it to being attentive to the trauma they have experienced and to incorporating self-care practices into its work with them. It is slow painstaking work to support psychological safety for women coming from war, conflict and human rights abuses.

There is a need to recognise post conflict trauma and recovery after conflict. Creating an informed perspective on the nature and extent of these experiences by women, listening fully to their voices and valuing their ideas and actions here in Ireland is vitally important.

This, in turn, equips Ireland and gives us the responsibility to express these ideas at international level and to use them to inform its own peacebuilding efforts worldwide.

3.3.2 Female Leaders and Human Security

Local and political norms, age, socio-economic class, sexuality and disability are amongst the contextual factors that impact on girls' and women's experience of conflict and violence. Women's experience of these is mediated by underlying economic, social, cultural and political structures within their communities and countries.

In the Third NAP, an intensification of effort to promote and support *women as leaders* is a strong message about women's agency in conflict prevention and in building sustainable peace efforts. This approach can also contribute to systemic change towards more fair and equal social structures.

Human security, is one of the key tenets of the WPS. It is about feeling safe, secure and being able to live life to one's full potential.

Greater security of women is an essential underpinning to support their participation in conflict prevention and peace building and it is, of course, critical to ending sexual violence in conflict and to trafficking of women.

Being able to articulate needs and wants, rights and responsibilities; giving voice to experiences and opinions are all critical to women's empowerment and to women's capacity to act as leaders.

Voice, empowerment and human security are all interlinked.

Evidence from Northern Ireland reports how the lack of human security causes fear and disempowerment:

“Women from some areas have reported:

- *high levels of control (through fear and intimidation)*
- *local women unable to speak up due to threat to property and personal security*
- *women (and men) and their families living in fear and silence due to the threat of reprisals*
- *women not having ‘safe spaces’ to discuss issues’*⁸.

Glencree’s own Women’s Programme reiterates how challenging it is for people to be voices of change:

“Participants on the programme say they want change but are still held back by the fear of public opinion in their own neighbourhoods, disapproval of people they love, or the threat of violence to their families.

This fear isolates people and makes it hard to work with those who are longing for the same changes. People talk about helplessness and the difficulty of individuals standing up and speaking out”

The central role of the home is also identified:

“Evidence from the programme suggests that the home has a crucial role to play in ending the cycle of

transmission of a sectarian culture (with loathing, fear and hatred at its core) which is still going on daily in many homes across Northern Ireland. It is clear to us that sectarianism still lies just below the surface. There is enduring hurt caused by what has happened in the past and the effects are being transferred to succeeding generations who bear the brunt of this legacy”⁹.

An intergenerational focus to peacebuilding initiatives within the NAP could be considered in the above context.

Threat to life and loss of life are significant fears for many women in conflict affected communities.

The scale of this issue is shocking when it is noted that more than half of the women honoured in the annual tribute of the Association for Women in Development for 2017 were murdered because of their work in conflict-affected countries, including Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen¹⁰.

The crucial contribution of women’s organisations to conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts has been explicitly recognised in UNSCR 2122 (2013). This calls on Member States to develop dedicated funding mechanisms and increase their contributions to women’s organisations.

Glencree strongly endorses this approach, and its intensification, in the forthcoming NAP.

Glencree suggests expanded and targeted funding to support women’s groups, locally,

⁸ *Women and Peacebuilding, Sharing the Learning*. (2014). The Women’s Resource and Development Agency, the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland and the National Women’s Council of Ireland.

⁸Killeen, P. (2014). ‘The Role of Women in Peacebuilding’ in Ed. E. Rafter. (2014). *Deepening Reconciliation, Reflections on Glencree Peacebuilding*. Glencree.

¹⁰ UN Secretary General. (2018). *Report of the Secretary General on Women, Peace and Security* October 2018. Geneva: UN

nationally, regionally and internationally to work towards addressing human security issues.

This spotlight on a human security approach is a supporting action to facilitate women's transitions into decision-making and leadership roles in conflict and post conflict settings.

3.3.3 Dialogue and Mediation

Dialogue and mediation are two concepts that are central to Glenree's own capacity and expertise in peace and reconciliation work, widely used in our Young Peacebuilders Programme, Women's Programme amongst others.

Dialogue and mediation are skill-based tools that have the capacity to engage people/groups who may be isolated or disempowered or who may be in conflict with each other. It helps to improve understanding, relationships and trust as prerequisites towards conflict resolution, reconciliation and peace.

Glenree strongly advocates the establishment of an action plan, with designated human and financial resources to expand opportunities for women and men, across sectors, to acquire or enhance these conflict resolution and peace building skills locally, nationally, regionally and internationally.

The DFAT consideration of the development of a Network or Consortium of Women Mediators is important in this context.

Under the next NAP, Ireland could set a target for it to become a recognised international resource that promotes and develops dialogue and mediation opportunities for groups affected by conflict and for people working in peace keeping roles and capacities.

3.3.4 Engaging with others who have a role to play

In this section, Glenree confines its comments to Ireland's support for UN peace operations, in particular by the military.

As a troop contributing country Ireland continues to be involved in many peacekeeping missions around the world.

Women as peacekeepers are a critical leadership and support resource in conflict zones.

6.4% of the Irish Defence Forces are female.

The UN Security Council Resolution 2242, in 2015, called on the UN and member states to double the number of women in military and police peacekeeping by 2020.

Expanding the base of female participation in the Defence Forces increases the likelihood of being able to strongly move towards the UN target over the next number of years.

Glenree acknowledge efforts to increase rates of female participation in the Defence Forces and urges that these continue and are intensified.

It also welcomes the presence of Gender Focal Points and Military Gender Advisors within the Forces.

Glenree would like to see a national target in on the number of women in Irish military and police keeping by the end of 2023 – the projected completion date of the Third NAP.

The Irish Defence Forces have developed a targeted Defence Forces Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

Glenree encourages engagement across relevant groups from civil society in the development by the Defence Forces of the next iteration of this Action Plan.

4. Conclusion

Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation is pleased to have the opportunity to make a submission to the development of the Third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

We value the UN resolutions in support of this as important international instruments that can make a difference to gender equality and women's empowerment and to creating and maintaining sustainable peace around the world.

The WPS agenda is centrally connected to many other instruments and policy frameworks locally, nationally, regionally and internationally. Achieving complementarity between these and building strong alliances

across sectors such as government, civil society, military, police and media is important to realising a more equal world.

Active and transparent structures, adequate resources and capacity and visible and regular accountability and reporting are all key to translating words into action and to supporting the WPS to make a difference to people's right to having a dignified life, a right that for many women is seriously compromised by conflict.

Glencree is interested to engage and remain in dialogue on the implementation on the Third NAP and is interested to contribute as a resource that supports the WPS implementation in Ireland and internationally.

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