

**Committee:** United Nations Counter Terrorism Committee

**Topic:** Strengthening the role of women in international security and disarmament

**Country:** The Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Women are often viewed as victims of conflict. But this view masks the important roles women play as leaders, especially in helping end conflict, developing post conflict reintegration efforts and economic life, and even in leading the organization of camps for internally displaced persons. Participants at the conference on The Role of Women in Global Security identified recommendations for ways to provide assistance, tools, and motivation to encourage women to become such leaders in their communities.

The women, peace, and security (WPS) agenda—an effort rather than a formal program—calls for women’s participation in decision making and incorporating a gender perspective in response to conflict and crisis. In 2000, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 1325, the first time the international community formally recognized either the impact of conflict on women or the need to involve them as active agents in peacebuilding.

Sixteen years later, acceptance of the difference in impact of conflict on men and women is widespread. Recognizing that women and girls are the most vulnerable segment of society when conflict strikes, the WPS agenda defines the essentials for greater protection of women and girls during and after conflict. Similarly recognizing the role that women can play in peacebuilding and post conflict reconstruction, the agenda also emphasizes the need to include women in peace processes and to integrate gender equality concerns in post conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Crises arising from conflicts and disasters have adverse effects on all of society, but the impact and experience is not necessarily the same for all. Gender hierarchies and power inequities exacerbate insecurity for women and girls in particular. From more extreme examples where rape is used as a weapon of war to common issues of mobility and other restrictions that result from deep-rooted patriarchal norms, the consequences of conflict and disasters for women and men differ in their severity.

An analysis of history of conflict in Pakistan shows how human insecurity has proliferated in the country. Statistics from the South Asia Terrorism Portal reveal that approximately sixty thousand people have been killed in various incidents of terrorism since the start of Pakistan’s fifteen-year “war on terror.” The economic cost of war until 2016, the Economic Survey of Pakistan estimates, is just over \$118 billion.<sup>3</sup> These statistics have severe implications for the most vulnerable segment of society. In Pakistan, women are often confined to the household and participate in public domain only minimally, if at all, which increases their vulnerability to violence, exploitation, and abuse in crisis situations. Sexual

violence and abuse in the aftermath of a crisis or conflict limits women and girls' access to economic opportunities as well as their access to basic health and education.

As the United Nations took steps to institutionalize WPS concerns, many member states developed National Action Plans (NAP) to implement UNSC Resolution 1325. As of November 2016, according to the International League for Peace and Women (Peace Women), sixty-three member nations had developed one. A civil-society effort in Pakistan attempted to do so after the tenth resolution's tenth anniversary in 2010 but the project stalled.

Although developing a 1325 NAP has been a popular approach, reviews of WPS implementation reveal that NAPs and frameworks for WPS implementation, however encouraging, are not necessarily effective. Gaps in implementation remain, particularly with financial allocations.