

Provisional programme

The Elders in conversation on women in mediation in the Arab world | WP1778V

Monday 5 – Wednesday 7 October 2020 (BST)

Held online

This high-level virtual gathering will bring together around 60 experienced mediators, experts, peacebuilders and national and multilateral officials to promote women's meaningful participation as mediators in peace processes in the Arab world.

It marks the 20th anniversary of the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security which reaffirmed the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations and peacebuilding.

Women are highly active in peace making in the Arab region but there is a missing link between women in grassroots peace making and senior policy circles, where women are under-represented, especially in roles that relate to conflict or security. The virtual gathering will make a contribution to bridging this gap, by bringing together women who are active in mediation from selected countries across the Arab world, with experts and practitioners from other regions and countries, and with members of The Elders.

Over sessions on three consecutive days, four Elders will share their collective experience and insight into the power and importance of women's engagement in mediation and hear from leaders in the Arab world about the challenges and the opportunities they face in promoting women's participation as mediators in the COVID world.

The Elders will publish a final short policy paper with key recommendations for mediators, governments and multilateral organisations, and will use their social media channels to highlight the experiences of women mediators.

The organisers aim to convene a physical meeting in 2021 which would bring participants together with senior officials from around the Arab world, at which

**In collaboration with The Elders, with support from UN Women and the UK Foreign
Commonwealth and Development Office**



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office



government participants will be encouraged to make commitments to support, strengthen and encourage networks of women mediators.

The working language for this event will be English. Arabic translation will be available during plenary sessions.

Monday 5 October

0845-0900

Orientation session – assistance for participants/speakers joining call

0900-0925

Welcome and Introduction

Alison Hilliard

Programme Director, Wilton Park

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka

Executive Director, UN Women, New York

0925-0930

Turn to your neighbour- small groups

0930-1015

1. The Elders' reflections on the power of women's inclusion

Graça Machel is an international advocate for women's and children's rights, former freedom fighter and the first Education Minister of Mozambique. She has been a mediator for the African Union in Kenya and elsewhere.

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is the former President of Liberia and Africa's first elected female head of State and a Nobel Peace Laureate. She led Liberia during the 2014-2016 Ebola outbreak.

The two Elders share with Wilton Park's Alison Hilliard their reflections on the power and value of women's inclusion in negotiation processes. Can the increasing complexity of global conflict offer opportunities to integrate women more fully into all levels of mediation? Does the current COVID world create new opportunities or challenges for engaging women in high level mediation?

To be followed by an interactive discussion.

Alison Hilliard

Programme Director, Wilton Park

Graça Machel

The Elders

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

The Elders

1015-1100

2. Inclusive peace processes in the Arab World: gender perspectives and the role of Women Mediators

How does the evidence of the value of women's inclusion in negotiation processes translate to the Arab world where women remain significantly underrepresented in formal peace and transitional processes? What lies behind their exclusion? How can it be overcome?

What new opportunities and new challenges has the COVID pandemic brought for the engagement of women in peace making in the Arab world? Can the digital world and the COVID crisis fast track the engagement of more women in mediation through social media and digital diplomacy? Has social media shifted power and the narrative from around the table and given young people – and young women in particular – a new role in peace processes in the region?

Graça Machel and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf are joined in conversation by Hajer Sharif, Co-founder, Together We Build It, Libya, Hafidha Benchehida, founding member of the Arab Women Parliamentarian Network and the Network of Mediterranean Women Mediators and Claire Hajaj, Policy Director at Inter Mediate.

The interactive discussion will then allow for inclusion of the experience of other participants.

Chair: Nussaibah Younis

Senior Adviser, Europe Institute of Peace, London

Graça Machel

The Elders

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

The Elders

Hajer Sharief

Co-founder, Together We Build it, Tripoli

Hafidha Benchehida

Founding Member, Algerian Women's Parliamentarian Network, Algiers

Claire Hajaj

Policy Director, Inter Mediate, London

1100-1110

Break and digital group photo

1110-1115

3. Discussion group orientation (in plenary)

1115-1150

4. Discussion groups: shifts in peacemaking in 2020 and beyond - Opportunities for enhancing gender perspectives

The conversation is taken further in small discussion groups.

Each group will be facilitated by a young community women mediator from the region, who will guide the conversation and return with their reflections.

- **Asmaa Abdullah**, Reconciliation and Peaceful Coexistence Affairs, Baghdad
- **Ghada Rifai**, Co-founder Mobaderoon Network, Damascus
- **Marwa Azelmat**, Policy Advocacy Lead, Association for Progressive Communications, Rabat
- **Yasmine Ouirhane**, AU-EU Youth Co-operation Hub, Grenoble
- **Asma Khalifa**, Tamazigh Women Movement, Tripoli
- **Hajer Sharief**, Co-Founder, Together We Build It, Tripoli

1150-1200

Break

1200-1245

5. Highlights from discussion groups and looking forward

Reflections from discussion groups and interactive discussion.

1245-1300

6. End of Day 1

Moez Doraid

Regional Director, Office for Arab States, UN Women Regional Office for the Arab States (ROAS), Cairo

1300-1330

Networking chats (optional)

Opportunity for participants to meet other participants informally.

Tuesday 6 October

0845-0900

Orientation session

0900-0920

Welcome to Day 2

The Rt Hon James Cleverly MP

Minister of State for Middle East and North Africa, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, London

HRH The Countess of Wessex

Digital group photograph

0920-0945

7. Doing things differently

So how can things be done differently? Can there be a radical rethink of mediation and the engagement of women in peace processes? Can the COVID period allow us the space to step back and explore alternatives to business as usual?

Reflections from Elder Lakhdar Brahimi, a former Algerian freedom fighter, Algerian Foreign Minister, conflict mediator and UN diplomat and an expert in peacekeeping and post conflict reconstruction, serving the UN in Afghanistan, Iraq and as Joint Special Representative of the UN and Arab League for Syria.

To be followed by an interactive discussion.

Alison Hilliard

Programme Director, Wilton Park

Lakhdar Brahimi

The Elders

0945-1030

8. Doing things differently

Lakhdar Brahimi is joined in conversation by the UN Secretary-General's Deputy Envoy to Syria, Khawla Matar, by Afghan women's rights advocate and former minister for women, Sima Samar, and by Ambassador Haifa Abu Ghazaleh founder of the newly formed Arab Women's Mediation Network. There will be a time for questions and reflections from the high-level group.

Chair: Jane Kinninmont

Head of Programmes, The Elders, London

Lakhdar Brahimi

The Elders

Khawla Matar

Deputy Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, United Nations, New York

Sima Samar

State Minister, Ministry of Human Rights, Kabul

Haifa Abu Ghazaleh

Assistant Secretary General, League of Arab States, Cairo

1030-1040

Break

1040-1115

9. Doing things differently: models for women in mediation

What does inclusive mediation look like?

UN Women has worked with two leading experts in peacebuilding processes to look at various models aiming to increase women's participation in mediation. Christine Bell, Executive Director of the Global Justice Academy and Head of the Political Settlements Research Programme, University of Edinburgh and Catherine Turner, Associate Professor at Durham University, will present these models. (The papers outlining these models will already have been shared with participants).

Christine Bell

Director PSPR, University of Edinburgh

Catherine Turner

Associate Professor, Durham University

Sanam Naraghi-Anderlini

Chief Executive Officer and Founder, International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN); Director, Centre for Women, Peace and Security, London School of Economics and Political Science, London

Rana Ghanem

Assistant Secretary, Yemeni Popular Nasserist Party, Yemen

1115-1150

10. Operationalising change: strategic thought groups

To discuss the ideas put forward in the papers:

- Could these proposed models be implemented in practice in peace processes that you are familiar with (such as co-mediation, gender sub-commissions, advisory boards)?
- What difference do you think they could make, according to your experience?
- What other models might make a difference to engage more women in peace processes?
- What opportunities and obstacles are there in adoption of these models?

These groups will be led by global mediation leaders.

- **Laura Mitchell**, Senior Gender Adviser, Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Amman
- **Nussaibah Younis**, Senior Adviser, Europe Institute of Peace, London
- **Sanam Naraghi-Anderlini**, Chief Executive Officer and Founder, International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN); Director, Centre for Women, Peace and Security, London School of Economics and Political Science, London
- **Teresa Whitfield**, Director, Policy and Mediation Division, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, United Nations, New York
- **Alice Walpole**, Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance, United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Baghdad

1150-1200

Break

1200-1245

11. Highlights from strategic thought groups and looking forward

Reflections from discussion groups and interactive discussion.

1245-1300

12. End of day 2

Rosemary Di Carlo

Under-Secretary General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, United Nations, New York

Claudia Warning

Director General for the Middle East, Asia, Latin America, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Berlin

1300-1330

Networking chats (optional)

Opportunity for participants to meet other participants informally.

Wednesday 7 October

0845-0900

Orientation session

0900-0915

Welcome to Day 3

Hanan Ashrawi

Member of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) Executive Committee, Palestinian Legislative Council, Ramallah

0915-0945

13. Building political will to support Arab Women Mediators

How can the potential for women to contribute to mediation and negotiations in the Arab world be realised? What action needs to be taken? What role do governments and multilaterals have in promoting lasting change? How to build political will and where will the pressure for change come from and who is listening? What are the next steps?

Reflections from Elder Ban Ki-moon, Deputy Chair of The Elders and 8th Secretary General of the United Nations.

To be followed by an interactive discussion

Alison Hilliard

Programme Director, Wilton Park

Ban Ki-moon

The Elders

0945-1030

14. Going forward

In this session we will invite Ban Ki-moon, Thoraya Ahmed Obaid, former UN Under-Secretary General and Lakhdar Brahimi to share their thoughts.

To be followed by an interactive discussion.

Chair: Maha Yahya

Director, Carnegie Middle East Center, Beirut

Ban Ki-moon

The Elders

Lakhdar Brahimi

The Elders

Ouided Bouchamaoui

Former President, Tunisian Union of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts (UTICA), Tunis

Thoraya Ahmed Obaid

Former Under-Secretary-General, United Nations; Chair, Women 20 (W20), Riyadh

Maya Morsy

President, National Council for Women, Cairo

1030-1040

Break and digital group photo

1040-1045

15. Discussion group orientation (in plenary)

1045-1125

16. Recommendations discussion groups

Groups will be asked to formulate three recommendations of what can be done to ensure women are more engaged in mediation and peace processes in the Arab world. Participants will have an opportunity to reflect on the recommendations in session 17.

Saji Prelis

Director, Children and Youth Programmes; and Co-Chair, Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security, Search for Common Ground (SFCG), Washington DC

Nahla Valji

Senior Gender Adviser, Office of the UN Secretary-General, New York

Rosy Cave

Deputy Head, North Africa Joint Unit, Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office, London

Rachel Dore-Weeks

Head, UN Women Lebanon, UN Women, Beirut

Jane Kinninmont

Head of Programmes, The Elders, London

Thania Paffenholz

Executive Director, Inclusive Peace, Geneva, New York, Nairobi

1125-1135

Break

1135-1230

17. Sharing recommendations from discussion groups and personal commitments

This is an opportunity to mark the anniversary of UN Resolution 1325 by reflecting on the recommendations proposed to ensure that women are more engaged in mediation and peace processes in the Arab world. Participants will be asked to share one personal commitment to take this forward. All proposals will be collated and shared with the group after the event.

1230-1300

18. Conclusion and going forward

Anita Bhatia

Deputy Executive Director, UN Women, New York