 The National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations

Pursuant to resolution 45/28 of the Human Rights Council, the High Commissioner is to present an analytical report on the mainstreaming of the human rights of women and girls in conflict and post- conflict situations in the work of the Council, namely in relevant resolutions and in its mechanisms. The objective is to make recommendations to States, Council mechanisms and other stakeholders at its forty- eighth session.

In this connection, we would like to kindly request your cooperation to provide information in response to the following questions, which will help prepare the report:

1. How does the work of the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms mainstream gender equality and the human rights of women and girls in displacement, conflict, and post conflict situations? Please provide information concerning:
   1. Legal and normative frameworks, policies and programmes to ensure the respect of the human rights of women in conflict prevention, conflict and post conflict, including participation in decision-making, the right to education, health, and to live free from violence and discrimination. Please provide information on the implementation of the UN Security Council agenda on women, peace and security (1325 and others)?

National action plans are a normative framework for many states which is a good first step, however, national action plans do not automatically lead to implementing the resolution. A concrete example is Albania. Nonetheless, national action plans are still relevant in highlighting the need for implementing the resolution, but the goal should not only be to draft a national action plan and be done with it, but it must also be incorporated into all aspects of state affairs, local, national and international.

Implementation of other resolutions and conventions such as the Istanbul Convention and CEDAW are clear examples of prevention and penalty measures regarding women’s rights to live free from violence and discrimination, those must also be upheld.

Legal frameworks both national and international must be gender mainstreamed. Establish institutions for human rights violations against women and young women that not only have a binary view of women either as victim or perpetrator. Awareness of double discrimination must also be included.

* 1. Role of women’s groups, women human rights defenders, women humanitarian, women peacebuilders and girls; and their meaningful participation in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace building, confidence building, and economic recovery?

While there has been positive development regarding women’s meaningful participation, there is still an extremely low meaningful participation on all levels. The role of women is still not accepted or highlighted enough. Representative participation is more common, and meaningful inclusion and participation less common.

While not always visible, women bear the brunt of majority of social issues because as a group they are more affected but are also those who work to prevent these issues. They are truly at the forefront of all issues, e.g., peacebuilders in the current pandemic continue their efforts despite more risks.

The role of women in all aspects are crucial and are extremely meaningful in pre-conflict, during conflict and post-conflict. Women are those who in general are very vulnerable in all these stages because their rights are not given by duty bearers in the same degree as given to CIS-men. Despite the vulnerability, women have many roles which build society for the better, by working preventively, assisting remedies, giving holistic view of resolutions and solutions etc.

* 1. Prevention measures in place, guided by lessons learned to alert on crises, which might have a negative impact on the rights of women and girls?

Importance of understanding cultural and traditional differences when providing support, there may be limitations to certain aspects, therefore having an understanding and showing support despite the limitations is important. Because, then more support can be given during the circumstances. And less risk there is for the vulnerable.

* 1. Measures of accountability implemented or planned to protect and provide remedies to women and girls victims and survivors of human rights violations, including gender- based violence, during and after conflicts by State and non-state actors?

Accountability of perpetrators must be strengthened and robust in countering all types of violence but especially sexual violence. The international criminal court of justice should be central in this aspect.

* 1. Remedies and lifesaving services available to victims of conflict-related violence, measures taken to ensure accessibility to those remedies and services by all women and girls?

Clinical centres with outmost privacy and confidentiality for rape, sexual assault victims as well as psychiatric and therapeutic centres. But also preventive centres that are available as remedy for the inequalities women face.

1. What are the promising practices, achievements, and challenges in ensuring the promotion and protection of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings that have been highlighted in the work of the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms (resolutions, UPR, Special procedures, and investigative bodies)?

Showing practical examples of success when women are included in all aspects of decision-making. Promising practices is when many factors are considered before making a decision and those factors must be of wide range.

Other resolutions of importance are the Youth Peace, and Security 2250 that includes youth as actors for change and peace. Young women should be given agency and power to affect decision-making processes. The following resolutions after UNSCR 1325 are as important as they include thematic and crucial areas for the full implementation of the 1325 agenda.

One challenge is when including women in decision-making processes the inclusion usually ends there but for a society to prevent conflict from blossoming up again, they must be in the society and post conflict building as well. In all aspects, such as economy, politics, school, science etc. if they are, the risk of conflict breaking out is decreased.

Toxic masculinity norms and patriarchal structures are the biggest challenges and problems that must be tackled for women, young women and non-binaries to be able to enjoy their rights fully.

Women are in the forefront of all issues, in all aspects of development.

1. What measures would you recommend to help ensure sustainable, comprehensive, and consistent attention to gender equality and the human rights of women in conflict and post conflict settings in the work of the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms, such as resolutions, UPR recommendations, Special procedures country visit reports, and the work of investigative bodies?

* Youth perspective

One of the most usual things people and politicians say in general is that youth are the future, however, in order for the youth to be able to have and lead a future, they must be included in the present moment. Youth as well as women are the major groups of people in the forefront of change in the world, and it is only natural and logical that their voices and agency is given and raised. Important aspect is not to homogenize women and young people, since each person has different experiences which could help the implementation process.

* More resources to nuanced and relevant research.

Relevant and updated research to improve and strengthen the work and argumentation for gender equality and the human rights of women before, during and after conflict.

* Grassroots level and intersectional perspective

One of the most important aspects for the 1325 agenda is not applying the same concept to every member state since that will be a top -down approach and will not be effective in the long run. Grassroot levels should be the focus when implementing the resolution. Context specific implementation with inclusion of differences and capabilities is important.

* Intersectional perspective in all decision- making processes locally, nationally, regionally and globally.

But it is equally important to not make the mistake of tokenism, it should not be a symbolic effort to include women and young women of different backgrounds and experiences for that purpose alone. Rather, it must be a holistic view on the 1325 agenda, to ensure that all women and young women get representation, agency and share power over the development of society on all levels. For the enhancement of inclusiveness and sustainable peace, intersectional awareness must be included and permeate all the 1325 agenda processes and implementations.

* Postcolonial analysis

We live in a postcolonial society, therefore, the need for an analysis which evaluates and inspects power relations and power balance in all matters and aspects is crucial.

-Work of investigative bodies should focus on various issues such as:

* Honour related violence and oppression
* Minority, ethnic and religious experienced conflict issues
* Young women and their possibilities and hindrances to be included from grassroot levels and upwards.
* the vulnerability of women and young women due to climate change
* Inclusion of men and young men in gender mainstreaming

Consistency and comprehensiveness require that all are included in the work of the agenda to improve and develop. Men and young men must be included in gender equality mainstreaming on all levels. To work preventively, one must tackle one of the most challenging problems, toxic masculinity and patriarchal structures. More resources directed to education, training and workshops to enhance men and young men’s knowledge and actions for gender equality. Violence against women and young women is a worldwide problem, 1 in 3 women experience violence in their lifetime.

* Broaden the perspectives of conflict and security.

It is crucial to broaden the perspective of security and conflict. Besides the traditional view of security which mostly includes military aspects, the implementation of the agenda must include nuanced and relevant aspects of human security of our digitalised and modernised time. New threats have been persistent and those must also be included in the implementation. We must move from the traditional view of conflict and its remedies. We must work with peacebuilding in countries and societies which are not in armed conflict as well in order to have more peaceful societies, democratic values and prevent conflict from breaking out.

* Broaden the perspective of the roles of women in general.

Women are usually seen as either victims of conflict and war crimes or perpetrators. There is no need to write that women are in all aspects development and uphold society in all ways, however the conservative and traditional views of women must change.