

United Nations Security Council Debate
Maintenance of international peace and security: the role of
women and young people

28 May 2024

Benelux intervention

Monsieur/Madame le Président,

Je voudrais remercier le Mozambique d'avoir organisé ce débat.

J'ai l'honneur de prononcer cette déclaration au nom des pays du Benelux, le Royaume des Pays-Bas, le Luxembourg et mon propre pays, la Belgique. Nous nous associons à la déclaration de l'Union européenne.

Nous remercions les intervenants pour leurs présentations et leurs points de vue précieux, ainsi que pour le travail remarquable qu'ils accomplissent.

Nous nous félicitons que le débat d'aujourd'hui soit axé sur le lien entre l'agenda de la jeunesse, de la paix et de la sécurité et celui des femmes, de la paix et de la sécurité. Si des progrès ont été accomplis depuis l'adoption des résolutions historiques 1325 sur les femmes, la paix et la sécurité et 2250 sur les jeunes, la paix et la sécurité, l'impératif d'intégration des femmes et des jeunes dans les processus décisionnels et les opérations de paix exige des efforts cohérents et intensifiés.

The Benelux countries remain firmly devoted to the promotion of the WPS and the YPS agendas. Our countries have adopted National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security. Relevant international tools include the Napoli Plan of Action which takes

into account the gendered dimension of atrocity crimes and highlights the central role of women in preventing genocide and related atrocity crimes and in restoring social cohesion and communities after the crimes have been committed.

Mister President,

Following the recent publication of the Secretary-General's third report on YPS, we must ensure continued momentum in the area of youth, peace and security, especially regarding the distinct group of young women in peace and security.

Instead of discussing the respective agendas in silos, we must integrate the WPS and YPS agendas where possible and build on the synergies between the two agendas. By joining forces, we can strengthen efforts and enhance the full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership of all young women in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. In the run-up to the World Social Summit it is our duty to equip young women with the right tools and to allow them to develop to their fullest potential, notably by reinforcing relevant and effective social policies for conflict prevention and post-conflict situations. Concretely, this implies ensuring their access to equal opportunities to technical and vocational education and training and decent jobs, and to universal healthcare, including sexual and reproductive health as well as establishing social protection floors, particularly for single mothers.

It is important to emphasize that "women" and "youth" are not homogenous groups. Gender and age intersect with many other forms of identity and background. Young women and girls are

disproportionately impacted by security challenges posed by climate change, armed conflict, digital threats and shrinking civic space. That's why it is important to explore how gendered and age dynamics play out in peace and security, especially for young women. Increasing youth and young women's meaningful participation in policy, programming and decision-making processes has catalytic potential for efforts to prevent, mitigate and recover from conflict.

Mister President,

The Security Council and its members have the responsibility to make sure that the distinct needs and perspectives of women and young persons, including young women, are coherently addressed in its actions.

We reiterate the recommendation by the Secretary-General to the Security Council and its members to integrate and strengthen Youth, Peace and Security elements as part of mandate creations and renewals of peacekeeping operations and special political missions. While the percentage of women invited to speak at the Council has increased from 19 percent between 2013 and 2017 to 46 percent in 2022, the number of young briefers to the Council has actually decreased. As young people represent the most populous demographic in the world, their seat at the table must be guaranteed, including in the Security Council, by ensuring opportunities for young peacebuilders to brief the Council.

We believe in intergenerational dialogues as an essential means to build trust between young persons and governments, and the

United Nations should lead by example. The upcoming Summit of the Future presents a crucial opportunity to engage with young persons, including young women in all their diversity, as equal partners and to give them a meaningful say in the Pact for the Future process and its follow-up.

I thank you.