

# INTERNATIONAL Women's Day

## FACT SHEET

### WPS

WPS stands for Women, Peace and Security. It is a global agenda that recognizes that armed conflict affects women and men differently, and that women must be included in peace and security efforts at all levels.

### Resolution 1325

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 was adopted in 2000. It was the first time the UN Security Council formally recognized:

- The disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women and girls
  - The essential role of women in preventing and resolving conflicts
  - The importance of women's equal participation in peacebuilding
- It applies to all UN Member States.

### Panel Speakers

**Suruchi Thapar-Björkert:** Professor and researcher at the Department of Government at Uppsala University.

**Karin Johansson:** Researcher at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University.

**Eva Zillén:** Co-founder of the organization Kvinna till Kvinna, where she still works today as a senior advisor.

### Guest Speaker

**Syeda Zunaira:** Local president of Lajna Imaillah Stockholm, the women's auxiliary of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

**About the organization:** Founded in 1922, Lajna Imaillah is the women's auxiliary of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. It is a global, women-led organization focused on education, community service, leadership, and spiritual development, working locally in Sweden and internationally to promote peace, justice, and humanitarian service.

# CONCEPTS

## The four pillars of WPS:

1. **Participation:** Women's inclusion in decision-making and peace processes.
2. **Protection:** Protection of women and girls from violence in conflict.
3. **Prevention:** Preventing conflict and gender-based violence.
4. **Relief and Recovery:** Integrating women's needs and leadership into humanitarian response and post-conflict reconstruction.

**Civil society:** Organizations, grassroots groups, and community networks that work independently of the government to advocate for social change, including women's rights and WPS implementation.

**Postcolonial perspectives:** refers to an analytical perspective that examines how colonial histories and global power structures continue to shape politics, conflict, and development today.

**Intersectionality:** refers to how different forms of inequality and discrimination overlap and reinforce each other, for example ethnicity, class, disability, sexual orientation, age, migration status.

**National Action Plans:** Government strategies that outline how countries will implement the WPS agenda, including goals, responsibilities, and accountability mechanisms.

**Gender mainstreaming:** The process of integrating gender perspectives into all policies, programs, and decision-making to ensure that the needs and experiences of all genders are considered.

**Decolonizing peacebuilding:** refers to an approach that challenges the dominance of Western actors in peacebuilding and emphasises the importance of local knowledge, leadership, and priorities in conflict-affected societies.

## Practical examples of how conflicts affect men and women differently

**Gender-based Violence:** refers to harmful acts directed at individuals based on their gender. In conflict contexts this often includes: sexual violence used as a tactic of war, domestic violence that increases during conflict, forced marriage or trafficking.

### Protection vs. Participation Debate:

A way to understand WPS discussion: whether the focus is on protecting women as victims or empowering women as active participants in peacebuilding.

### Conflict-related Sexual Violence (CRSV):

Sexual violence specifically linked to armed conflict, sometimes used deliberately as a tactic of war or intimidation.

**Reproductive Rights in Conflict:** Women's rights to make decisions about their sexual and reproductive health, including access to healthcare, family planning, and protection from forced pregnancy or sexual violence. In conflict settings, these rights are often threatened, and supporting them is essential for women's safety, well-being, and ability to participate fully in peacebuilding.

### Sexual violence used as a weapon of war:

during conflict, rape and sexual abuse are frequently used strategically to humiliate, punish, control, and intimidate women, as well as to terrorise and displace entire communities.

**Increased caregiving burdens:** as men are killed, conscripted, or displaced, women and girls take on additional caregiving roles for children, elderly relatives and injured family members.



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## LEARN MORE AND TAKE ACTION

Name	Format	Topic
Pray the Devil Back to Hell (2008)	Movie	Women's peace movement in Liberia
He Named Me Malala (2015)	Movie	Documentary about Malala Yousafzai
Muganga, the One Who Treats (2025)	Movie	SEAH
The Whistleblower (2010)	Movie	Based on UN peacekeeping scandal in Bosnia and Herzegovina
“Protection Norms in the WPS Agenda: Backlash from Within?” Karin Johansson	Chapter in a book	WPS
“Sexual violence as a weapon of war: Perceptions, prescriptions, problems in the Congo and beyond.” Maria Eriksson Baaz and Maria Stern	Book	WPS
“Gender, Violence and Security” Laura J. Shepherd	Book	How gender is constructed within the UN security discourse
“Explaining Rape during Civil War: Cross-National Evidence (1980–2009)” Dara Kay Cohen	Article	CRSV
“Rape as a Practice of War: Toward a Typology of Political Violence” Elisabeth Jean Wood	Article	CRSV
“Can the Subaltern Speak?” Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak	Article	Post-colonial critique

# **WHAT CAN INDIVIDUALS DO?**

## **Start conversations and raise awareness**

- Start conversations with friends, family, and colleagues about women, peace, and security issues
- Donate, fundraise, or volunteer for organizations working on WPS and gender equality

## **Use social media and communication**

- Share stories, articles, and campaigns that amplify the voices of women peacebuilders
- Challenge stereotypes and misinformation when you see them online

## **Support advocacy and petitions**

- Sign petitions and support campaigns that promote gender equality and the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda
- Contact elected representatives or decision-makers to express support for policies that strengthen women's participation in peace and security
- Stay informed about how governments and institutions work with gender equality and peace initiatives

## **Participate in demonstrations and public actions**

- Join peaceful demonstrations, marches, or public events that advocate for gender equality and women's rights
- Encourage others to participate and help spread awareness about these events

## **Learn and educate others**

- Read, attend talks, webinars, or community events on gender, peace, and security
- Share what you learn with others and encourage discussions in your networks

## **Organizations to support**

### **UN Association of Stockholm**

Become a member and help us create more events like this while working in our focus groups on Peace & Security, Environment & Sustainability, and Human Rights & Gender Equality

### **Kvinna till Kvinna**

Support their work and apply for their leadership training

### **UN Women**

Become a member and join your local association to promote gender equality and strengthen the rights of women and girls

### **Operation 1325**

Join their volunteer group and become a supporting member to help strengthen women's influence in peace processes and conflict resolution

### **Women's International League for Peace & Freedom (WILPF)**

Become a supporting member to advance peace, freedom, and feminism

### **International Rescue Committee**

Support their work to deliver emergency aid and assistance in crisis and disaster areas

### **MÄN**

Become a member and join a conversation group to support the work of preventing violence and strengthening caring masculinity