



World Assembly for Women: WAW!2022 Concept Note

(Reference) Current Situation and Challenges Concerning Women's Participation in Peace and Security

More than 20 years have passed since the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which for the first time enshrined the participation of women and their role in international peace and security. Yet world peace has not been achieved. In February of this year, Russia's aggression against Ukraine began, shaking the very foundation of the international order. Several countries in Africa and the Middle East continue to experience conflicts and extreme political instability.

The spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has further aggravated the situation of women in some conflict-affected and fragile states, where they have lost the means to report the violence they suffered from due to restrictions on leaving their homes ^(Note1). In Ukraine, civilians, including women and children, have suffered greatly, and sexual violence against women resulting from Russia's aggression has been reported. As 90% of the displaced people are women and children ^(Note2), the dangers of human trafficking and other forms of violence targeting them must also be addressed. Also in Afghanistan, the Taliban, an Islamic fundamentalist organization, took control of the capital, Kabul, and the rights of Afghan women, which had been steadily restored over the past 20 years since 2001, have severely eroded. Women have been forced out of their jobs, unable to participate in politics, and required to wear the hijab again. Further, girls' education has not yet been fully resumed ^(Note3).

There is global concern that high prices and energy and food supply problems will further deteriorate the lives of women in conflict-affected and fragile states.

In such circumstances, are women merely powerless?

The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 affirmed that women are not only passive victims but also positive agents of conflict resolution, prevention, and peacebuilding ^(Note4). In order to protect women's human rights as well as to build a peaceful society, promoting women's participation in policy-making and all other efforts is essential.

One study found that peace agreements for which women participated in the negotiations lasted an average of 15 years longer than those for which women did not participate in the negotiations ^(Note5). UN Women statistics also point out that when women participate in the decision-making processes of the military, police, parliament, and other decision-making bodies involved in peacebuilding, peace is maintained longer than when women do not participate. The participation of women may create diversity and a tolerance to recognize diverse entities. And, since adopting the UN Security Council Resolution 2250 in 2015 ^(Note6), the international community is also increasingly emphasizing the participation of young people in decision-making on peace and security ^(Note7).

Another point to be taken into account is the treatment of survivors of sexual violence in conflict. It is important to support victims so that they are not marginalized or isolated; rather, support should be provided to empower them to become contributing members of society while economically independent.

For many years, Japan, through the Office of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG-SVC), has been helping to establish the rule of law, provide support to strengthen victims' access to justice, and contribute to the consolidation of peace under the rule of law through its contributions to the International Criminal Court (ICC). Japan has also supported survivors through the ICC's Trust Fund for Victims (TFV) and the Global Fund for Survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence to help them achieve economic independence and among other things.

In light of the above background, the WAW! 2022 will provide an opportunity to consider:

- (1) How have women in conflict-affected countries been affected by the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan, and the

Russia's aggression against Ukraine? What should the international community as a whole do now?

- (2) What efforts have been made by the Japanese government, the international community, and aid organizations such as UN agencies and NGOs to promote women's participation in peace and security (Women, Peace, and Security : WPS), and what are some good practices of such efforts?
- (3) How should the governments, international organizations, NGOs, civil society, and individuals act to increase and support women and youth as peacebuilders, which is the core concept of UNSC Resolutions 1325 and 2250, or how we can play such a role by ourselves?

(Note1) [Office of the special representative of the secretary-general on sexual violence in conflict, "Conflict-Related Sexual Violence – Report of the United Nations Secretary-General"](#)

(Note2) [UN Women and Care International, "Rapid Gender Analysis of Ukraine" p.10](#)

(Note3) [UN Women, "Press briefing: The situation of women and girls in Afghanistan"](#)

(Note4) [United Nations, "S/RES/1325. Security Council Resolution on women and peace and security"](#)

(Note5) [International Peace Institute, "Reimagining Peacemaking: Women's Roles in Peace Processes" p.12](#)

(Note6) [United Nations Security Council, "Resolution 2250 \(2015\)"](#)

(Note7) [United Nations Security Council, "Youth and peace and security, Report of the Secretary-General"](#)