



Press Release

WILPF Releases Its Gender-Militarism Analysis of the UNGA73 General Debate

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom is publishing a Gender Index of Statements made during the General Debate of the 73rd Session of the General Assembly. This Gender-Militarism Index examines the statements delivered during UNGA73 from a feminist perspective and supports policy-oriented advocacy and academic research around specific geographic and thematic areas, including Women, Peace and Security.

The WILPF April 2017 #ReclaimUN Convening in Geneva has demonstrated that in order to make the United Nations (UN) relevant for everyone, it has to reclaim its status as a peace organisation. At the core of the UN mandate is saving future generations from the scourge of war. It means that the UN should prioritise action on making the UN relevant to all people, through women's meaningful participation, integrating the Women, Peace and Security Agenda across all Agendas, support disarmament efforts and restructure funding for peace efforts and not militarised efforts.

During the General Debate of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA73), country representatives from 197 Member States and observer delegations similarly put forth their concerns, positions and priorities under the theme, "Making the United Nations Relevant to All People: Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Peaceful, Equitable and Sustainable Societies". The meeting was chaired by H.E. Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, the 4th woman as well as the first Latin American woman to become an UNGA President.

In her opening statement, the President of the General Assembly invited the international community "to take inspiration in the age-old Andean principle of 'minga', which refers to a collective effort and shared work that is carried out for the benefit of the community, [and] create a 'global minga' to build societies that are more egalitarian, peaceful, sustainable and resilient".

At the time, the conversation about women's role in the "global minga" was limited to the conversations on the margins of the Debate. Inside the General Assembly Hall, only 34 speakers (17.2 per cent) provided specific and policy-oriented statements aimed at ensuring that women's rights and women's participation at the core of the Global Agenda for Peace. Many references were generalised and vaguely asserted the importance of women's empowerment, gender equality and viewing women



as victims rather than specific actions necessary to ensure gender equality, women's meaningful participation and respect for their rights.

"Member States have to commit to political rather than technical change," said Abigail Ruane, WILPF's Women, Peace and Security Programme Director at the annual meeting of the WPS Focal Points Network. According to Ruane, this includes addressing structural discrimination and obstacles to women's meaningful participation, rights and justice, supporting consistent gender conflict expertise and analysis, ensuring safety and justice for women human rights defenders who are the beating heart of the WPS Agenda and ensuring strong funding for WPS and gender equality.

WILPF's Gender-Militarism Index is divided into several sections, including key highlights from the debate, gender and militarism analysis, review of the situation in WILPF's focus countries, including Colombia, Syria, Nigeria, Iraq, Palestine, Cameroon, Ukraine, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya and Bosnia and Herzegovina. It also features all government statements delivered during the UNGA73 General Debate in a form of Gender-Militarism Index with relevant extracts of statements.

The goal of the Gender-Militarism Index is to demand accountability for the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and strengthen policy coherence across other frameworks, including disarmament and sustainable development. The report specifically supports policy-oriented advocacy and academic research on Women, Peace and Security, conflict prevention and transitional peace processes and provides an opportunity for local activists in focus countries to develop policy-oriented actions based on the current international climate.

Download the report: <https://www.peacewomen.org/node/102987>

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