



Beijing+15 Talking Points (TPs):

Background:

In March 2010, the Commission on the Status of Women will undertake a fifteen-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Emphasis will be placed on the sharing of experiences and good practices, with a view to overcoming remaining obstacles and new challenges, including those related to the Millennium Development Goals. A series of parallel events will provide additional opportunities for information exchange and networking.

WILPF was actively engaged with the NGO CSW two-day seminar on 30 & 31 October in Geneva and with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe on 01 and 02 November.

Strategy:

NGO CSW Roundtables (30&31 October 2009):

- During the NGO Roundtables there was no specific agenda item for Violence Against Women or Women in Armed Conflict.
- WILPF representatives attended different working groups to raise issues concerning military expenditure and the implementation of Critical Area E

UNECE Beijing+15 Meeting (02 & 03 November 2009):

- During the UNECE meeting WILPF contributed through added recommendations in the NGO statements:
- The report of both meetings can be found on our WILPF Beijing+15 website.

CSW Beijing+15 Review and Appraisal:

- Issues surrounding Critical Area E should be raised: especially on military expenditure, the new UN Gender Architecture, the implementation of Security Council Resolutions (SCR) 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889 and the economic impact of violence against women.

TP.1: Progress Critical Area E:

Strategic Objectives and their realities:

- (E.1): Increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation.
Women continue to be significantly underrepresented in decision making positions that influence peace-keeping, preventive diplomacy and peace negotiations
- (E.2): Reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments.
In the world today, 1464 billion dollars in total or 216 dollars per person are spent every year on weapons and military infrastructure. Arms build-up not

only fosters the notion of security as military strength, but also utilizes resources needed for improved protection of human rights.

- (E.3): Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations.

In the UNECE, there have been proven human rights abuses in violent forms of conflict resolution in Israel.

In post-conflict areas human rights abuses continue to be highly prevalent.

Women are victims of domestic violence and trafficking in these areas.

Violence against women and girls is perhaps the most socially tolerated of human rights violations, particularly in patriarchal societies.

TP.2: Economic impact of VAW

- Violence against women in conflict zones is often an extension of the gender discrimination that already exists in peacetime. In armed conflicts raging around the globe, soldiers and paramilitaries terrorize women with rape, sexual and other physical violence, and harassment. These tactics are tools of war, instruments of terror designed to hurt and punish women.
- Since we are discussing the implementation of Critical Area E within an Economic Commission, we should focus on the costs of Violence Against Women¹.
- Analysing the costs of VAW is useful because it shows the financial impact on businesses, the state, community groups and individuals of the violence. Moreover, it not only emphasizes the pervasiveness of such violence, but also provides important information for specific budgetary allocations for programmes to prevent and redress violence against women.
- A 1999 seminar given at a Council of Europe conference provided a review of the methods used to calculate the costs of VAW: police, criminal justice system, health care services, social services, housing and refuges, civil legal costs and employment support.
- VAW has strong implications on a woman's access to paid work and, as a consequence, on her opportunities to earn an income.

TP.3: Promotion partnerships

- In Europe we tend to think that conflict and post-conflict situations are only found on other continents. When looking at the list of countries that are member to UNECE it is clear that currently Europe has enough conflict and post-conflict which make Critical Area E of the Beijing Platform for Action applicable.
- Israel is currently in a conflict situation; an outburst of violence during Operation Cast Lead ,was classified as a war crime by the independent Fact Finding Mission.
- The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan centers around the area of Nagorno-Karabakh where full fledged fighting took place until 1994. Since 2008 tensions in the area have increased.
- Post-conflict situations are found in: Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia and Northern Ireland.
- It is clear that in the case of Northern Ireland the UK government is not spending sufficient time on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325.

¹ http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/GAP-09_EN.pdf

TP.4: Major developments

- Security Council Resolution 1888, adopted on 23 September 2009, reaffirms SCR 1325 and 1820 and outlines actions which the UN and Member States can take to prevent sexual violence and end impunity. To enforce accountability perpetrators of sexual violence should be brought to justice and survivors must be ensured access to justice.
- Another small step was taken in this direction by the UN Security Council by the adoption of Resolution 1889. SCR 1889 builds on SCR 1325: it urges Member States to take further measures to improve women's participation during all stages of peace processes, calls upon the Secretary-General to develop a strategy to increase the number of women appointed to pursue good offices on his behalf and requests relevant UN bodies to collect data on, analyze and systematically assess particular needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations.
- On the 14th of September the General Assembly adopted a resolution amalgamating four United Nations agencies and offices (UNIFEM, DAW, OSAGI and INSTRAW) to create a new single entity to promote the full enjoyment of all human rights by women worldwide and to work towards gender equality.

TP.5: Disarmament

- The to-be appointed Under Secretary-General for Women requires substantial funding, a strong mandate and the full support of Member States to fulfill this task. The UNECE should discuss this development from a financial perspective and look into its potential for the further implementation of the Platform for Action.
- Strategic Objective E.2 of the Beijing Platform for Action urges the signatories to "reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments".
- If one looks at the status of contributions to the UN, which has a major responsibility to further the realization of the Critical Area E of the Beijing Platform for Action, one can see that Kyrgyzstan, Georgia and Albania have built up deficits².
- In addition, the Committee on the Status of Women urged the Member States in 2008 to "ensure that adequate resources are allocated for activities targeting persistent serious obstacles to the advancement of women in situations of armed conflict and in conflicts of other types, wars of aggression, foreign occupation, colonial or other alien domination as well as terrorism".
- Almost fifteen years down the line we have not seen sufficient disarmament or funding towards peaceful purposes and the advancement of women, but current developments may allow us to rectify that situation.
- In short: invest excessive military expenditure towards the advancement of women through the provision of sufficient funding for the new UN Gender entity and the office of the Under-Secretary General for Women.

² http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=ST/ADM/SER.B/727