

Concept Note
ASEAN Regional Forum
Workshop on Women Peace and Security

1. Background

Following on efforts in 2018, this inter-sessional year Canada and fellow co-sponsors Indonesia, Thailand, New Zealand, and the European Union are advancing an ASEAN Regional Forum statement on Women, Peace and Security (WPS). This statement works to ensure that the ARF continues to effectively carry out its preventive diplomacy goals, by recognizing the different and at times disproportionate impact that conflict has on women and girls.

Regional organizations can play an important leadership role in advancing the WPS agenda globally. Conflicts are increasingly taking on regional dimensions, and we therefore need to develop and advance regional commitments to implementing the WPS agenda.

Looking ahead to the 2019-20 inter-sessional year, Canada proposes co-chairing a two-part ARF workshop series on WPS. The year 2020 will mark the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 which advanced the global WPS agenda. Canada is examining options on the format, content and timing of such a workshop. An initial draft concept is outlined below, and we welcome ARF members' input and suggestions. Canada would also welcome expressions of interest from ARF members who may wish to co-support such a workshop.

2. Workshop description

There is an important role to be played by regional and sub-regional organizations in the advancement of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. As conflicts continue to increasingly take on regional dimensions (e.g. flow of arms, trafficking in persons, and violent extremism), regional strategies need to be put in place as a response. Workshops on WPS would enable the ARF to strengthen existing regional coordination mechanisms and mainstream WPS into its activities, explore opportunities to include women on all peace and security engagements, and be forward looking in how the ARF can advance the WPS agenda. These workshops are well timed as they will occur concurrently with the 20th anniversary of the passing of resolution 1325 (2000).

Specifically, working with a co-chair, Canada proposes undertaking the following two activities:

- a) **Q1 of 2020 (or another potential date in the ARF 2019-20**

(DRAFT)

inter-sessional year): Working-level workshop on WPS in the Asia Pacific region. This workshop could bring together policy or subject matter specialists from ARF member states, civil society organizations and academic expertise, to familiarize ARF members with cutting-edge best practices concerning WPS in conflict prevention and other relevant contexts for the ARF. Day two of the workshop can focus on canvassing and strategizing how the ARF could showcase and leverage a potential late 2020 event at the United Nations in New York to highlight the opportunities and strengths of the ARF in terms of WPS.

- b) **October 2020 (or another potential date in 2020):** Timed on the sidelines of an event such as the UN's WPS Global Anniversary, scheduled to take place at the United Nations to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the WPS UNSCR 1325. This workshop or event can bring together ARF members' 27 diplomatic missions to the UN, the ASEAN Secretary General's mission to the UN, and selected invitees such as UN Women. In a global multilateral setting, the event would showcase some of the strengths and opportunities for WPS in the ARF region and context.

3. Potential location

The first proposed workshop could be hosted by a co-chair in the Asia-Pacific region. The second event or workshop could be hosted in New York at the United Nations, where ARF members' diplomatic missions in New York could participate.

4. Contact Information

Any comments or questions may be directed to following contact:

Mr. Antoine Nouvet
ARF Point of Contact for Canada
Global Affairs Canada
Antoine.nouvet@international.gc.ca