

# “WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY” AGENDA IN ARMENIA

## FACTSHEET

*This factsheet is prepared by the Advocacy and Policy Development team of the Women Resource Center NGO. It is intended for Government agencies and Civil Society representatives who carry out advocacy activities in this field. The factsheet is based on a rights-based and evidence-based approach.*

### Brief description of the situation

*“Women, Peace and Security” (hereinafter WPS) is a policy agenda affirming that women should be essential actors in achieving peace and security. It promotes the raising of gender issues in times of war and women’s equal and meaningful participation in peace processes, peacebuilding, and security. The “Women, Peace and Security” agenda came from UN Security Council Resolution N1325 adopted on October 31, 2000.*

#### ***Different groups of women and wars***

The Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) war provoked by Azerbaijan in 2020 and military operations carried out by Azerbaijan on the territory of the Republic of Armenia in September 2022 created new security risks and challenges for Armenia and for the whole region.

After the 44-day war, women displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh, living in communities bordering Azerbaijan, faced a new reality that affected security, as well as domestic roles, changes in income management, new healthcare needs, an increase of domestic violence, and other problems. Different groups of women, including widows, those forcibly displaced, lost child(ren), living in residences bordering Azerbaijan faced complex social problems, such as loss of breadwinner and residence, poverty, the uncertainty of the future, worsening of sexual and reproductive health problems that must be addressed by state policy.

Without a decision on NK’s final status, women there live in unsafe circumstances and their livelihood is constantly threatened by the possibility of armed conflict. The Russian peacekeepers are not under Armenian jurisdiction and/or do not answer to any international body, therefore in the event that they commit crimes against the native population of NK, only the Russian government can try them which is a clear conflict of interest. Controversial and heinous acts are committed by peacekeeping missions all around the world which is why right now this is a big concern. The closure of the Lachin Corridor road by the Azerbaijanis since December 2022 once again points to this reality. International organizations, such as the UN and its agencies, do not work in NK, which deepens the neglect of women’s needs and prevents them from responding to them on the spot.

#### ***“Women, Peace and Security” agenda and militarization***

The next problem concerns advancing state militarization/militaristic agendas under the WPS agenda. The WPS agenda is intended to prevent wars but not to make wars safer for women. Comments on security issues within the framework of the WPS agenda should not be seen within the framework of military security but should also include social, health, educational, and housing security issues. The position of high-ranking government officials in Armenia in the field of women’s security is mainly limited to making women participate in the armed forces. The Ministry of Defense put for public discussion the package of legal provisions related to the temporary military service of female representatives on a voluntary basis in February 2023. However, the army as a social institute is not adapted to women’s needs, and from a security perspective, women can face violence in the army.

From a security perspective, another challenge in a post-war country is the state’s approach to promoting fertility policies with only financial assistance programs, which puts additional pressure on women who are already vulnerable to violence. A comprehensive policy to promote fertility should include a wide range of measures, including policies to promote gender equality, particularly male participation in childcare, adequate childcare facilities, and financial support programs for families with children.

## National Action Plan for the implementation of provisions of UN Security Council Resolution N1325 "Women, Peace, and Security" 2022-2024

RA government adopted the National Action Plan (NAP) for implementing the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution N1325 "Women, Peace and Security" 2022-2024 with its decree N 803-L on July 2, 2022. The analyses of the main directions of the NAP in the context of the final results, the main actions can be distinguished as: "increase the role of female soldiers, disclosure of barriers to women's needs and promotion, and application of relevant measures", "women's rights protection, rehabilitation measures after war and violence: psychological, social, economic support", "increase in emergency response preparedness, if women are prepared we can say that children and families are also prepared". The distribution of general actions and state structures (the main actors are attributed to the Ministries of Defense and Internal Affairs) proves that the general logic of the document is not towards human security, which would include a broad understanding of this concept and peace, but rather towards overcoming the consequences of war and preparing for a new war. The lack of state funding for implementing activities is also a concern.

## Recommendations

Taking into account the above-mentioned, we recommend:

- To reflect the needs of all women's groups within the framework of promoting the WPS agenda.
- To change the concept of security within the framework of the WPS agenda from militarization to social protection and active participation.
- To ensure state funding for the National Action Plan for the implementation of provisions of UN Security Council Resolution N1325 "Women, Peace, and Security" 2022-2024. As well as to ensure productive mechanisms in order to implement monitoring by civil society.
- To involve various groups of women in the development, implementation, and monitoring of national follow-up action plans to implement the provisions of resolution 1325.

## References

"Women, Peace and Security" agenda; Analysis of international and local experience", study. "Women Resource Center" NGO, 2022. <https://bit.ly/3mqWT8L>

The National Action Plan for the implementation of the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution N 1325 "Women, peace and security" is available in Armenian at: <https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?docID=163530>