



Toward a Transformative Women, Peace and Security Agenda

The Inaugural “Feminist Roadmap for Sustainable Peace” Workshop

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Introduction

In June 2015, fifteen feminist scholars, policy makers and practitioners from diverse backgrounds were brought together in Oslo, Norway, for the inaugural workshop of the Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights' project to create a "Feminist Roadmap for Sustainable Peace." Hailing from and working in different regions of the world, some were experts on gender, war and peacebuilding, but others' professional lives were not framed around these issues, focusing instead in areas such as climate disruption, development, disaster risk reduction, urban planning, constitutional law, economics, and women's reproductive health and rights.

The motivator for the workshop, and for the Feminist Roadmap for Sustainable Peace project as a whole, was concern that the so-called Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda, even if it were ever fully implemented, would not achieve the core goal of those who initiated the agenda – the realization of gender-equitable, sustainable peace. There are multiple ways to frame why that would be the case. One would be to note that the WPS agenda does not address root causes. It is not based in an analysis of the intertwined historical, political, economic processes that caused and fueled the wars in the first place, and it thus does not address the ways these same political economic processes affect the possibilities for transforming unequal power relations after the war.

Another way to see it is that the WPS agenda focuses tremendous energy on trying to ensure that women are *at* the table, with little attention to the question of what they put *on* the table; that is, what rights, what mechanisms, what forms of governance they will need to advocate for if they are to achieve their (presumed) goals of greater gender equality in a more sustainably peaceful society? There seems to be a general assumption that they will fight for women's political, economic and social rights, and the rights of other marginalized groups, but insufficient discussion of what would make the realization of those rights possible. If, for example, women at the table sought to guarantee women's right to own land and to inherit property, and if they succeeded in enshrining these rights in a post-conflict constitution, that would still be very far from enabling women to enjoy those rights, for many reasons: there are local and national factors, from the need for community-level knowledge and acceptance of those rights to the necessity of creating, institutionalizing and funding *real* implementation mechanisms (which often doesn't happen, even when land reform is part of the peace settlement). And, equally if not more critically, especially at this historical moment, there are transnational factors, in the form of extractives corporations, agribusiness companies, development banks and international financial interests who, for a variety of reasons, seek access to the land in a series of more or less violent, legal, transparent and coercive ways; the result is that land dispossession is rampant in many post-war countries. In short, while the formal guarantee of women's or indigenous people's property rights is important, unless that broader set of economic relations, decisions about land acquisition laws, resource ownership, management and exploitation are addressed, it will not be enough.

Thus, the premise of the Feminist Roadmap for Sustainable Peace project is that while the WPS Agenda tends to focus on national political processes, it is very often transnational economic actors and processes that have an even greater impact on the lives of people in post-war states, on the structural inequalities that were conflict's drivers, and on the likelihood that peace can be sustained. The purpose of the workshop was to try to identify the

most important transnational actors, processes and dynamics that have shaping effects in post-war countries, and to begin to think-through what women – and men – who seek gender-just, sustainable peace need to know about them, so that if the chain of ifs (if we achieve women’s political participation, if these women get into positions where they have some amount of influence, if they want to use that influence for the purpose of transforming unequal gendered power relations) were to become a chain of actual events, they would be better able to achieve their goals.

Methodology, Methods, Format

The workshop, which took place over three days of presentations, brainstorming discussions and structured exercises, generated rich analyses and pathways forward. The richness, we are convinced, resulted from our specific theoretical and methodological approach:

Feminist political economy approach. We made a conscious effort to ground our analyses in the material realities of women’s lives, and how their life chances are determined by intertwining political and economic processes and decisions.

Collaborative cross-sectoral co-design. The complexity, scales and diversity of interests and information involved in bringing about gender-equitable sustainable peace indicate the need for new ways of producing and implementing knowledge. Our methodology was based on the assumption that when you bring people together from academic, practitioner and policy worlds, with different areas of expertise, you not only get new perspectives, but you create new knowledge and engender creative solutions to problems.

The workshop covered many topics over the three days. For reasons of space, this paper highlights just two areas of our discussion, the rebuilding of physical infrastructure and the deepening of extractivism, and draws out two of the themes that ran through both: the sidelining of the state and the impact of and on climate change. The report thus both conveys new insights into how to create a gender-equitable sustainable peace and demonstrates the value of our theoretical and methodological approach.

Rebuilding of Physical Infrastructure

Infrastructure is often categorized as “hard” (e.g., transportation, energy, water) or “soft” (e.g., healthcare, education, housing). Our focus in the workshop was on the rebuilding of ‘hard,’ physical infrastructure after war. Partly this is because its importance has been far less analyzed and emphasized within the women’s rights and WPS communities than soft infrastructure; additionally, soft infrastructure itself cannot be accessed without it (e.g., women cannot get their children to school or themselves to health clinics without roads and public transportation). But equally, if not more importantly, we chose hard infrastructure because it is one of those central aspects of post-war reconstruction which is typically framed as technical, gender neutral, and urgent; something that has to be done *before* you start addressing “women’s” or “gender” issues – but is actually deeply gendered in its drivers and impacts, and can easily cement gender inequalities into place before gender even gets onto the agenda.

As outlined above, our participants were not chosen on the basis of having expertise on infrastructure, although infrastructure was a part of what several addressed in their work. We thought we might learn new things about what people need from infrastructure and the impacts of how infrastructure is currently planned, financed and built if the multidimensional experience and perspectives brought by the very diverse range of expertise in the room was brought to bear on the issue.

If women are to be able to participate in social, political and economic life, they need, as recognized by the SDGs,¹ at a minimum, safe, affordable, reliable and environmentally-sustainable means of travel – not only to access schools and healthcare facilities, but also to get their goods to market, to access other forms of livelihoods, to access justice and governance institutions. They also need safe, affordable, reliable and environmentally-sustainable energy and water supplies, also recognized by the SDGs, so that they are not spending the majority of hours every day collecting firewood or water.

The contributions of workshop participants indicated how far short of these goals we currently fall. The emphasis in post-war reconstruction is on major highways aimed at facilitating the movement of goods to ports and airports for export. Highways and railways are “corridors of extraction,” aimed at facilitating growth of GDP and profit generation, rather than meeting local people’s needs.² Another reason for building roads is to enable state militaries to pacify or suppress rebellion. This may or may not be beneficial for women and other civilians but, either way, women’s needs are not what is driving infrastructure development.

Indeed, the focus on major highways can undermine women’s livelihoods, such as when their traditional routes are blocked and their communities made less safe. One of the biggest hurdles facing girls getting to school in post-war Guatemala, for example, was unsafe rivers, but rural roads and bridges were not prioritised in the country’s post-war reconstruction. Many women in rural Guatemala had to walk through rivers to leave their villages, and many did not make it. Inattention to safe rural travel made it more difficult for women to mobilize, or participate in or advocate in regional or national political processes or to access livelihoods. Participants noted examples from other areas of the world. Flyovers over the new superhighways in areas of Pakistan block off the roads that women had used so now it takes them four times as long to get to the market and back. Many women in post-war areas in Sub-Saharan Africa want better roads, as they want to be able to trade crops and live their lives in safety, but they tend to want rural feeder roads that are paved, not a highway to the capital city designed for mono-cropping agribusinesses to export their goods.

Workshop participants shared their knowledge of giant hydroelectric projects, noting that they are typically designed to power industry and facilitate resource extraction, and usually offer nothing in the way of household energy supply. The aim of the massive infrastructure projects which attract private foreign investment is not to bring light and water to communities which lack them, but rather to ensure accelerated extraction, production,

¹ Gender is mentioned in one of the targets of SDG 11, which aims to Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. **That women and girls need safe, affordable water and energy are addressed in goals 6 and 7.** And that infrastructures should be sustainable is recognized in SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation. [need to check for gender. See <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs>

² See <http://www.thecornerhouse.org.uk/resource/how-infrastructure-shaping-world>

consumption and export. As with transport, when the starting point is “what do we need for economic growth?” rather than “what do people need?” the results have a disproportionate impact on women and girls. It is household energy supply that has a tremendous impact on women’s time and care burdens, as well as their health and safety, and thus their potential to participate in social, political and economic life.

Participants noted that few major infrastructure projects hire local staff, and if they do, it is rarely women. Although the International Labor Organization (ILO) has been trying, through employment guarantee programs, to ensure that a certain percentage of jobs on infrastructure projects must go to women, they have found it hard for a number of reasons, including cultural norms and gendered responsibilities of care. Meanwhile, these projects can threaten women’s security in many contexts, as the sudden influx of male workers leads to spikes in gender-based violence against women.

The displacement of communities for massive infrastructure projects such as dams is an injustice which has been well-documented since the 1960s and 70s, but it continues to happen. In response to protests, multilateral development banks insist they have “safeguards” or compensation packages which ensure those people who are dislocated can maintain the same level of livelihood. There are a number of problems in practice:

- the compensation packages are rarely fully implemented
- the “safeguard” only applies to people who are dislocated, neglecting secondary impacts, such as, in the example of dams, those who are not displaced but who live downstream of the river
- when people get displaced to another village area, it can create tension and/or exacerbate work burdens, and destroy social networks
- compensation does not address the environmental damage caused by such major infrastructure projects

Crucially for the WPS agenda, the displacement of communities has particular yet rarely-acknowledged impacts on women:

- women’s livelihoods are more connected to upland and forests, so when dislocation happens the impact on women is larger
- relatedly, the relocation is normally done by the unit as a household, so they give all the compensation to the household, often to the disadvantage of women

Not only do major infrastructure projects lead to massive environmental degradation at the site, but the building of these corridors of extraction means long-term locking-in of the current extractivist development model, with all that means for climate breakdown.

If some of these issues are decades old, others stem from more recent developments. Infrastructure projects today are increasingly funded through private finance and public-private partnerships (PPPs). The world is experiencing the “biggest investment boom in human history” in major infrastructure, with some \$6-9 trillion annually (8 per cent of global GDP) devoted to mega, giga and tera (million, billion, and trillion) dollar projects. These massive infrastructure projects are seen as a major engine of global economic growth, as well

as a huge profit-making opportunity. So we are increasingly witnessing the financialization of infrastructure funding, with PPPs being pushed as a key mechanism. The public contribution comes from pension, insurance and sovereign wealth funds. This is a funding model which socialises the risk whilst privatizing the gains. Risks are transferred to the pensioners of the global north, and, given the potential for huge debt burdens, onto the governments of postwar countries. Profits, thanks to the guarantees offered to private firms in order to get them to invest, accumulate in the coffers of the already-rich.

Participants noted in addition that we cannot discount the role of dominant ideals of masculinity in driving the return to extreme infrastructure, given the scale, profit-generating potential and geographical engineering at play. Like WMDs, massive physical infrastructure is big, it is powerful, and, from an engineering and profit-maximizing point of view, it is exciting.

Given this look at post-war reconstruction of physical infrastructure – one based in a feminist political economy approach that crosses academic/practitioner siloes as well as academic disciplines – what sort of ideas could women bring to the table in order that things could be done differently? Participants made several suggestions.

Recommendations:

- Involve women in infrastructure planning, and strengthen women's groups to participate more effectively, from the Post-Conflict Needs Assessment stage onwards.
- Ensure that government at all levels engages in gender-responsive analysis, planning and budgeting, in general and regarding infrastructure. States should be charged with planning and delivering infrastructure, rather than letting corporations influence decisions about what is needed, where and when, but states must be required to carry out gender analysis, planning and budgeting first.
- Physical infrastructure should be funded by the state, to avoid the distorting influence of private corporations who will always privilege their profit over people's needs. Resources can be found through addressing capital flight, cancelling odious debts, and instituting tax regimes which are both more lucrative and just, including taxing the international community, and adding financial transaction taxes and other redistributive measures.
- Meaningful Gender Impact Assessments should be conducted on all infrastructure projects. By meaningful, they should go beyond simple box-ticking requirements such as jobs for women or obvious impacts on women and raise the issues discussed here: does the infrastructure help women and other marginalised groups to participate in social, political and economic life?
- Meaningful Environmental Impact Assessments should also be conducted on all infrastructure projects. Questions must include whether the project contributes to or helps avoid climate breakdown.

Extractivism

Luz Mendez participated in the Guatemalan peace negotiations as a member of the Political-Diplomatic Team of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity. She described what took

place in Guatemala after the signing of the peace agreement: the rapid advance of land expropriation and the installation of mega mining projects, open-pit mining, and monoculture for agro-exportation. For the post-war state, the extraction and export of natural resources is seen as significant source of revenue; for donors, it is a central way of stabilizing the economic system; and for multinational and transnational corporations (MNCs and TNCs), obviously, a chief source of profit. Many scholars have documented the harm that extractive industries have caused to people and land, in Latin America³ and beyond.⁴ Participants in the workshop highlighted neglected pieces of the story.

Luz highlighted the role that sexual violence played in clearing the land for extractivism in postwar Guatemala. In 2007, hundreds of private guards of the Guatemalan Nickel Company, a subsidiary of the Canadian Hudbay Minerals, together with officers of the police and the army, violently evicted an indigenous peasant community, Lote Ocho, in the North East of Guatemala. They burned houses and crops and brutally gang-raped all the women in multiple ways, often in front of their children; many of them became pregnant. Luz's account demonstrated how the imposition of nickel extraction by means of violence and militarized eviction has generated serious human rights violations and sexual crimes and exacerbated the marginalization of women.

Participants debated the extent to which postwar reconstruction resembles the old "Banana Republic" model of state development in Latin America. A historical perspective reminds us that land grabbing, expulsion of indigenous people through terror including sexual violence, and the privileging of profit over people's livelihoods and environment are not new. That said, some things have changed in post-peace agreement Guatemala and in other Latin American postwar states. Participants suggested we are witnessing an intensification or deepening of the extractive model; it is no longer one corporation from the USA dictating development, but many from many countries, and rather than one or two key resources, TNCs are looking to exploit multiple high-value resources, and to gain from hydroelectric and other major infrastructure projects.

The intensification of extractivism exacerbates environmental destruction. War and postwar reconstruction, it seems, tends to move land down the ecological ladder, as the land changes from a multi-use, diverse, regenerating environment, to a single-use degraded environment. This degradation of the land hits women particularly hard because of the ways they rely on both cultivating and gathering resources from the land to carry out the caring and provisioning roles they are assigned.

Another feature perhaps particular to today's extractivism in Latin America in comparison to the 1950s Banana Republic model is the role of drug trafficking and transnational criminal groups. As before, the state is facilitating corporations' ability to make profit at the expense of the land and people, but the state is now also facilitating the underground criminal economy. The growth of the criminal economy also has profound impacts on women's

³ Galeano, Eduardo. *Open veins of Latin America: Five centuries of the pillage of a continent*. NYU Press, 1997; Veltmeyer, Henry, and James F. Petras. *The new extractivism: a post-neoliberal development model or imperialism of the twenty-first century?*. Zed Books, 2014.

⁴ Engels, Bettina, and Kristina Dietz, eds. *Contested extractivism, society and the state: Struggles over mining and land*. Springer, 2017.

bodies and lives, including through increases in human trafficking as well as in domestic and community violence.⁵

Even if states would like to regulate corporations, to increase the revenue of the state and to mitigate environmental harms, they find it hard to do. TNCs have so much more power than states emerging from war. Government ministries in the Global South, who are supposed to be regulating extractive corporations, can even find they have to ask to use the corporations' helicopters order to travel to inspect the extractive sites. Enormous pressure can be put on states to change legislation and to relax their regulatory regimes, often by International Financial Institutions as well as TNCs themselves.

TNCs show signs of increasing sophistication in their efforts to acquire land for extractive activities. Where international organizations have secured laws to ensure land concessions should only be given where the land is degraded, corporations themselves degrade the land. Rubber corporations operating in southeast Asia, for example, have cleared the indigenous forest in order to claim it is degraded and thus ripe for commercial plantation. Another strategy TNCs deploy, in countries where they are only allowed to buy land that is unused, is to categorize as "unused" land which is very much in use by local communities, but which has been left fallow for a period, as is customary in many forms of indigenous land-use. Even when there are efforts to compensate communities for their loss of land there can be unintended consequences. The returned land can be given to the men or the community, when it originally belonged to the women. This was the fate of women in a matrilineal indigenous community in Cambodia, where land is passed from mothers to daughters; when the community was compensated for the land grabbed for extractive TNCs, it was "returned" to married couples, thereby effectively giving the men much more control.

A feature which is not necessarily new, but which is under-explored, is the complicity of citizens in the global north in the extractivism which takes place in the global south. Individual Canadian households, for example, are invested through pension plans and national pride in these transnational mining corporations. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) promotes Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), requiring corporations provide employment opportunities and services for local communities; in practice this means buying-off locals with promises of jobs, amenities, and services. The corporations then justify the low level of taxes they pay the state by claiming that the community is on board.

In Guatemala, some of the survivors of sexual violence have taken Hudbay Minerals to court in Canada, a case that breaks ground in that Canadian courts have accepted jurisdiction over Canadian-based corporation's violations of human rights in another country.⁶ There is thus a sense in which the violence done to Guatemalan women has had a positive politicizing effect, with women playing increasingly important roles in the growing movement of indigenous peace and human rights organizations. At the same time, corporations and their local subsidiaries negotiate with men in the community to persuade the women to back down from their campaigns for justice, often successfully, undermining the women's campaign and reinforcing their subordination in the household. This an effective strategy in many contexts

⁵ See y de los Rios, Marcela Lagarde, and Mercedes Olivera. *Terrorizing women: Femicide in the Americas*. Duke University Press, 2009.

⁶ <https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/hudbay-minerals-lawsuits-re-guatemala-0>

where women are financially and socially dependent on marital harmony. Powerful men press the husbands of activists to pressure their wives to back down from their activism. Thus, relations between men of different classes combined with patriarchal household dynamics can facilitate extractivism, and, in turn, extractivism can reinforce those patriarchal household relations, further entrenching gender inequalities.

The discussion prompted by Luz's account of the Guatemalan experience of post-war recovery made clear that you need a feminist political economy approach, one that attempts to cross academic/practitioner siloes as well as academic disciplines, in order to grasp the dynamics that are currently undermining progress towards a gender-equitable sustainable peace. What could be done differently? Participants made several suggestions that women participating in peace negotiations and other WPS-advocates could use.

Recommendations:

- Natural resources, land ownership and land concessions should be discussed from the very outset of peace talks, at agenda-setting or pre-negotiation phase. (Pre-negotiation talks begin to set and circumscribe the agenda for substantive peace agreement issues;⁷ it is therefore crucial that issues of land and natural resources are on the table, *and* that women can participate *at this stage*.)
- Where broad consultative processes are convened, such as national conversations or constitutional conventions, questions about natural resource extraction and land ownership should be part of the discussion.
- Natural resources should be seen as natural assets/public goods, not commodities.
- A certain percentage of land should be protected and preserved as common land.
- Land on which indigenous people live should be legally protected as their territory, and indigenous peoples should give free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) before any extraction of natural resources.
- As with infrastructure, Environmental Impact Assessments and Gender Impact Assessments should be meaningful. Although currently, in many instances, EIAs and GIAs are carried out on the implementation of specific projects, the framework for such projects is determined in forums dominated by TNCs and where local communities have no voice. The overarching framework, the economic development strategy of the postwar state, is what needs to be examined through EIAs and GIAs. Resources should be made available for this to happen.
- If natural resources are extracted, postwar states should make use of instruments such as sovereign wealth funds, along the lines of Norway's where: only the interest can be drawn; spending is ring-fenced for health and education; there is gender representation in the management; and gender-analysis is applied to the investments that the sovereign wealth fund is going to make.

⁷ For stages of peace processes, see Bell, Christine. "Women and peace processes, negotiations, and agreements: operational opportunities and challenges." *Oslo: NOREF* (2013).

- Ideas and principles along these lines should be written into the constitution, and there must be stronger implementation and enforcement measures to ensure the constitutional provisions are meaningful.

Conclusion

In most WPS discussions, the rebuilding of physical infrastructure is rarely mentioned. In gender and development contexts, where it is sometimes discussed, the focus tends to be on the need for infrastructure to meet women's needs: for clean water, safe cook stoves and public transport. Discussions might also touch upon the dearth of employment opportunities for women and how to ameliorate that situation. This workshop cast a wider net and revealed a broader range of concerns. Drawing upon the experience and perspectives brought by the very diverse range of expertise in the room, it became clear that the problems go beyond the absence of infrastructure and jobs women need to include a range of issues related to the shaping of how, where and why infrastructure gets constructed, its frequent impacts on deepening the inequalities underlying war, and its role creating new ones.

The emphasis in postwar reconstruction, as we saw, is on major highways, railways, and ports aimed at facilitating the movement of resources and goods out of the country, and on massive hydro projects typically generating energy for export and industry rather than households. In sum, infrastructure is aimed at facilitating the growth of GDP and profit generation, rather than meeting local people's needs. Indeed, the way physical infrastructure is designed and built often undermines pre-existing subsistence livelihoods, rather than strengthening them, when we consider the physical barriers, environmental degradation, and displacement outlined above.

Likewise, the WPS agenda rarely considers the role of extractive corporations in postwar contexts. When the nexus of gender and extractive industries is debated, the concern tends to be restricted to the scarcity of employment opportunities and the social and environmental impacts around the site of development. Participants in this workshop broadened and deepened the analysis to consider the gendered causes and consequences of the central role the extraction and export of natural resources plays in postwar reconstruction.

There are clear connections between the workshop's analyses of these two sample elements of postwar reconstruction. Two cross-cutting themes in particular stand out. One is the simultaneous neoliberal defunding and "decapacitating" of the state. This decapacitating of the state, combined with the hungry global expansion of finance capital looking for new investment opportunities, has resulted in a transition in the very idea of physical infrastructure from a development project or even obligation to an investment opportunity. It has made monitoring and regulating extractive TNCs practically impossible, thus stymying potential debates as to how natural resources could benefit people and planet. An overarching lesson from the workshop was that the state needs to be involved directing and regulating the economy if we are to achieve gender-equitable sustainable peace.

The second cross-cutting theme was the need to center environmental concerns in every aspect of postwar reconstruction. Climate change is too often treated as a separate issue, not discussed as part of peacebuilding, but the workshop made clear the ways that postwar reconstruction has to consider how to deal with the effects *of* climate disruption and the effects of postwar rebuilding *on* climate disruption, and on citizen's resources to cope with it.

Current approaches to the rebuilding of physical infrastructure and the extraction of high-value resources do not come close to doing this. The building of these “corridors of extraction” means the long-term locking-in of the current extractivist development model, with all its implications for climate breakdown and the rise human insecurity and inequality that will surely follow.

The rich discussions of the workshop – of which only a sample is provided in this report – convey a far fuller account of gender and postwar reconstruction than that which usually emerges when these issues are discussed (on the rare occasions that WPS discussions move beyond protection and participation). And thus they point to different solutions and priorities. Suggestions are included in the report above, but the overall lesson is perhaps that the solutions cannot be sectoral but must be holistic. The connections between the challenges of the risk of renewed violence, the entrenchment of inequalities, and the breakdown of the climate demands an overarching approach that tackles the neoliberal capitalism system that drives all three. Translating that holistic approach into implementable policies requires the kind of collaborative, creative, cross-sectoral approach, based on feminist political economy analysis, pioneered in this workshop.

Participants

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Carol Cohn is the founding Director of the Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights. She works across scholarly, policy, and activist communities, creating the multidimensional, feminist gendered analyses required to achieve sustainable peace.

Pam DeLargy, currently Senior Advisor to the UN Special Representative to the Secretary General for Migration. One of the Independent Experts involved in developing UNSCR 1325, she has worked on gender, peace and security for two decades.

Cynthia Enloe is Research Professor at Clark University. She has published twelve books on the workings of patriarchal cultures and institutions around the world, with a particular interest in women's organizing to challenge myriad forms of militarization.

Kade Finnoff is an Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Boston. Her work focuses primarily on countries emerging from violent conflict and gendered violence. She has been technical consultant for UNDP, UNIFEM and UN Women.

Paola Foschiatto has over a decade of experience as a Programme Manager and Gender Specialist working with public institutions, civil society organizations and UN agencies.

Kyoko Kusakabe is an Associate Professor at Gender and Development Studies, Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Thailand, and before that, an NGO worker in Cambodia. She researches gender issues in labour migration, women in informal economy and border trade.

Luz Mendez took part in the Guatemalan peace negotiations, and was on the National Council for the Implementation of the Peace Accords. She was a member of the UN High Level Advisory Group for the Global Study on the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

Laura Mitchell is a senior adviser at the Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre (NOREF) where she works geographically on the Middle East and North Africa (Iraq, the Gulf, Egypt and Libya) and thematically on gender and inclusivity.

Christina Murray is a member of the Mediation Support Standby Team in the Mediation Support Unit of the UN's Department of Political Affairs. She is also Professor of Human Rights and Constitutional Law at the University of Cape Town.

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