



Women, Peace and Security in Africa

June 21 - 23, 2021 Live-Stream

Press Release

Rabat, June 22, 2021

APSACO 2021: « Women, Peace, Security in Africa »

The 5th edition of APSACO, one of the Policy Center for the New South's flagship conferences, held online on the think tank's [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) pages, was launched on June 21, 2021 with distinguished guests. "It is important that Africa think about peace and security by itself and for itself," said Karim El Aynaoui, Policy Center Executive President. The conference hosts this year 35 experts from 15 different nationalities, with as many women as men.

At the heart of the discussions, we find the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), adopted in 2000: What about its implementation in Africa? The opening discussion, moderated by Mabingué Ngom (Senegal), Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Regional Office for West and Central Africa, provided an initial overview: "Despite the commitments made, the contribution of women to formal peacekeeping processes remains suboptimal".

"Strong discrimination of women in the security world"

Bineta Diop (Senegal), Special Envoy of the African Union (AU) Commission on Women, Peace and Security, recalled that 30 African countries have adopted national action plans on this issue. "Africa is ahead of the world on this issue, but the implementation phase is missing. We need to address the patriarchal attitudes on the continent and the strong discrimination against women in the security world.

A statement supported by Letty Chiwara (Zimbabwe), UN Women Representative in Ethiopia to the AU and the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA): "National and regional action plans are not financially estimated or included in the budgets. The presence of women remains weak, especially in mediation. Nevertheless, UN-Women is ensuring the inclusion of

women in peace negotiations in the Central African Republic (CAR), Sierra Leone, Burundi, Southern Sudan, and Mali.

"Gender Violence in the Military"

"The assumption that women's role in conflict prevention and resolution can be strengthened while the social context remains unchanged" was challenged by Mamphela Ramphele (South Africa), Co-Chair of the Club of Rome and Co-Founder of ReimagineSA. "Transforming relationships as we wish between men and women requires complex changes in thinking, to abandon traditions and customs that prevent social fractures from healing. Gender equality is central to the constitution and institutions in South Africa, but we still have gender-based violence in the military.

Erika Montincone, Advisor to NSD-S Hub for South, emphasized sport as a means of education and peacemaking, while Federico Borello, Executive Director of the Center for Civilians in Conflict (CCC), said: "Having women in peacekeeping missions with men facilitates operations with communities. Christina Foerch, Co-founder of Fighter for Peace, advocated for "effective capacity building" and disagreed with a certain image of women in conflict: "They are not only victims, but they can also be perpetrators, and play an active role in war as well as in peace.

Integrate and strengthen the gender dimension in defense structures

"We cannot develop anything without half of humanity," said General Birame Diop, Chief of Staff of the Senegalese Army. "We are not only discriminating by not opening the door to women as well as men, but also not creating strong civilian-military relationships." Jakana Thomas, an associate professor at Michigan State University, noted that we need to think about women in the plural, being careful to "include diverse groups of women, because there is no one women's agenda."

Referring to the example of his country, Mali, Ibrahima Diarra Siratigui, former chief of staff at the presidency of the Republic, recalled that women represent only 6.7% of the army and 12% of the police force. "Unfortunately, some are victims of sexual harassment, and we are trying to include training with the help of the European Union (EU) and other organizations.

APSACO continues this Tuesday, June 22, and will close on June 23 with, among other things, the presentation of the Policy Center's annual Africa Geopolitics Report (see below), as well as the "ISIS Files," a report from George Washington University that focuses on the analysis and presentation of 15,000 administrative documents left behind by the Islamic State in Iraq and collected by a New York Times reporter.

The webinar is broadcasted live in English and French on the Policy Center for the New South's [YouTube channel](#) and [Facebook page](#), with live tweets on [Twitter](#).

Press Contacts:

! **Hasnaa Tadili** (Press Relations Manager) | h.tadili@policycenter.ma | Tel : + 212 668 116 069

! **Sabine Cessou** (International press) | scessou@gmail.com | Tel : + 336 70 87 20 05

! **Karima Hachimi** (Moroccan press) | karima.presse@gmail.com | Tel : + 212 661 902 673

About the Policy Center for the New South

Launched in 2014 in Rabat with more than 40 experts of both south and north, the Policy Center for the New South (PCNS) is a Moroccan think tank aiming to contribute to the improvement of economic and social public policies that challenge Morocco and the rest of Africa as integral parts of the global South.

www.policycenter.ma

