

Women in Peace and Transition Processes

November 2017

Name of process

The Inter-Congolese Dialogue

Type of process

Peace-making

Outcome of the process

- The Inter-Congolese Dialogue reached an agreement which formally ended the Second Congo War
- While the agreement has to a large degree been implemented, it has not prevented the recurrence of violence, particularly in the eastern part of the country

Women's inclusion

- Direct representation at the negotiation table
- High-level problem-solving workshop

Women's influence

High influence due to:

- A unified coalition of women delegates across conflict lines
- Advocacy from organized women's groups

However, influence affected by:

- Exclusive selection procedures
- Unequal decision-making power
- Men delegates' negative attitudes towards women's participation in politics
- Limited support from the facilitator

Democratic Republic of the Congo (2001–2003)

The Inter-Congolese Dialogue that took place from 2001 to 2003 formally ended the civil war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)—one of the deadliest armed conflicts worldwide since the Second World War. The Dialogue was inclusive, with participants from the main armed conflict parties, unarmed political parties, and civil society. However, the armed conflict parties de facto dominated the decision-making process. Women's organizations in the country initially faced difficulties joining the negotiations due to exclusive selection procedures and negative attitudes towards their presence. With some support from international and regional women's organizations, they nonetheless managed to deploy strategies to increase the number of women delegates participating in the Dialogue and successfully lobbied for the final agreement to include several provisions on gender. Famously, they safeguarded the signing of the agreement in Sun City by forming a human chain to block the exits to the committee room, insisting that the men negotiating inside would not leave until the final agreement was validated.

I. Background

The DRC was under Belgian colonial administration from 1879 to 1960. Between 1885 and 1908, the colony was brutally run as the private fiefdom of King Leopold II of Belgium. An estimated one-third of the population—around ten million people—died because of the brutality and chaos of

the King's rule. The DRC is endowed with abundant natural wealth;¹ however, the majority of the population does not benefit from these resources. The income per capita is among the lowest in the world,² as are human development indicators, with the country ranked 176th of 188 countries on the Human Development Index.³

More than half of Congolese women over the age of 15 have experienced physical violence

In terms of gender equality, the DRC is again poorly ranked at 153 out of 159 countries on the 2016 Gender Inequality Index.⁴ Women and girls experienced disproportionately high levels of violence and poverty during the Congolese Civil War.⁵ A survey conducted in 2013 and 2014 reported that 52 percent of Congolese women over the age of 15 have experienced physical violence.⁶ While laws protecting women from abuse and violence have been adopted, they are very often unenforced.⁷ Women and girls have less access to education than men and boys;⁸ only 66 percent are literate.⁹ Women also face legal discrimination: for example, until 2016, the Family Code of 1981 included a definition of the man as the head of the household, meaning a woman needed authorization from her husband to buy land or open a bank account.¹⁰ Despite formal legislation on land rights, large parts of the country (some estimate up to 97 percent) are in practice subject to customary law, which precludes women from owning land.¹¹

The DRC has experienced recurrent political instability since its independence in 1960

Since the country gained independence in 1960, it has experienced recurrent political instability and violence. After taking power in a 1965 coup d'état, Joseph-Desiré Mobutu (later known as Mobutu Sese Seko) ruled the country until 1997, renaming it Zaire in 1971. In the 1990s, political tensions and armed violence reached a new high when the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo, led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila, launched an offensive against Mobutu.

The armed conflict of 1996-1997, known as the First Congo War, was a result of growing domestic and regional tensions. At the beginning of the 19th century, Belgium, which also ruled Rwanda, had relocated 85,000 Rwandan Tutsis and Hutus to the eastern regions of present-day DRC. Tensions between ethnic groups over land worsened throughout the 1960s and 1970s as violence in Rwanda drove many Tutsis into the DRC.¹² In 1981, Mobutu aggravated these tensions by withdrawing Congolese citizenship from Tutsis.¹³ By the 1990s, there were deep political frictions over land ownership and citizenship rights for Tutsis. These tensions escalated with the massive influx of over one million Rwandan Hutus to Zaire in the aftermath of the 1994 Rwandan genocide against the Tutsis and civil war, with Hutu militia forces among the civilians who crossed the border. The ethnic rivalries that had sparked the war in Rwanda were effectively brought into Zaire, and spread as Rwandan Hutu militia united with Zairian Hutus. In 1996, the Hutu militia forces attacked Zaire's ethnic Tutsis. In response, the Tutsis created several militias with support from Rwanda, then controlled by the predominantly Tutsi Rwandan Patriotic Front. With the stage set for renewed armed conflict,¹⁴ Mobutu's regime grew increasingly unpopular among neighboring states and western powers. In 1997, Kabila overthrew Mobutu with direct military support from Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, and Angola, and renamed the country the Democratic Republic of the Congo.¹⁵

After seizing power, Kabila ceased cooperation with his former allies and expelled their advisors and soldiers from the country. As a result, power-holders in Rwanda and Uganda lost access to the country's natural resources. In an attempt to regain influence, they began supporting local armed groups operating against Kabila. This led to the Second Congo War (1998-1999) in the eastern regions of the DRC. The Government of the DRC was backed by Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe. The armed opposition was made up of two rival groups: the Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC), backed by Uganda, and the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD), backed by Rwanda and Uganda. The RCD split after the signing of the Lusaka Ceasefire Accord and its seats at the negotiation table were reallocated to one of its factions: RDC-Goma, sponsored by Rwanda only.

The Second Congo War developed into one of the deadliest armed conflicts since the Second World War

The Second Congo War developed into one of the deadliest armed conflicts since the Second World War. It is estimated that between 1998 and 2003, 3.3 million people were killed directly or indirectly as a result of the violence and insecurity;¹⁶ around 47 percent were children.¹⁷ Massive and widespread sexual violence was used to systematically destroy entire communities and dehumanize victims. Between 1994 and 2010, an estimated 1.3 million women and around 760,000 men, from eastern DRC's population of 5 million, were sexually violated.¹⁸ By the end of 2003, the armed conflict had displaced 4 million people internally.¹⁹

The Lusaka Ceasefire Accord was signed on 10 July 1999 by the Governments of the DRC, Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Uganda, and Rwanda; and a month later by the Rwanda/Uganda-backed RCD and the Uganda-backed MLC. The signatories of the Accord committed to convening an Inter-Congolese Dialogue with the mandate to:

- i. Agree on a transitional governmental authority that would include the unarmed opposition and civil society.
- ii. Develop a draft constitution towards free and fair elections.²⁰
- iii. Delineate institutions in support of democratization processes.²¹
- iv. Establish a new national defense force including the various non-state armed groups that were involved in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.²²

The Inter-Congolese Dialogue was postponed due to reluctance from President Kabila, who opposed the idea that the government be subject to the same negotiating terms as the other delegations. In January 2001, President Kabila was assassinated and the presidency passed to his son, Joseph Kabila. The new president was less reluctant regarding the terms of negotiation and pre-negotiations were held in Gaborone, Botswana, in August 2001. The first round of negotiations took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in October²³ but failed a few days later over issues of representation.²⁴

Kofi Annan prevented the process from stalling by initiating meetings with the conflict parties

To prevent the entire peace process from collapsing, the then United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan initiated informal meetings in November 2001 with the Congolese Government and the two main armed groups, which at the time were the RCD-Goma and the MLC. This effectively led to the reopening of formal negotiations in the South African resort of Sun City from February to April 2002, which concluded with a bilateral agreement between the Government and MLC, dubbed the Sun City

Accord. The agreement stipulated that President Kabila would remain in office during the transition period and appointed the leader of the MLC, Jean-Pierre Bemba, as Prime Minister. The RCD-Goma, then solely supported by Rwanda, did not sign the agreement, nor did a number of political opposition parties and civil society members.

The Sun City Accord proved short-lived due to disagreements between Kabila and Bemba. After pressure from the United Nations and South Africa, the parties recommenced inclusive negotiations in Pretoria in October 2002.²⁵ An agreement, the Global and Inclusive Agreement, was signed on 16 December 2002, drawing up a 1+4 government structure that included a president and four vice presidents, each from different armed and non-armed groups.²⁶ Several institutions were created to promote the democratization of the DRC, such as a truth commission, a human rights observatory, and an independent electoral commission. The agreement successfully settled power sharing among the five main actors involved in the negotiations: the government, the RCD-Goma, the MLC, civil society, and unarmed political parties; however, it failed to draft an interim constitution and to address issues related to security and the integration of the armed forces into a united national army. To address the remaining open issues, negotiations were resumed in Sun City in February and March 2003 and the parties signed the Final Act on 2 April 2003, officially ending the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and the Second Congo War.

In 2003, the parties to the Dialogue reached an agreement that officially ended the Second Congo War

While almost all of the provisions of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue agreements were implemented, the process can hardly be heralded as a success. In the years since the Dialogue's conclusion, large-scale violence has continued in eastern DRC. The underlying causes of this violence stem in large part from the shortcomings of the agreement, including the failure to address issues of citizenship (including of the Tutsis) and illegal resource extraction.²⁷ Moreover, not all armed groups from the eastern part of the country were included in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, so the Congolese government engaged in subsequent bilateral negotiations, which reached peace agreements with varying levels of success.²⁸ The highly adverse context in which the peace process was conducted has weighed heavily on the agreement and the ensuing 1+4 government structure.²⁹ As such, the 1+4 structure has been criticized for being unworkably inefficient due to the high levels of disagreement among the armed conflict parties and the significant potential veto powers given to the president and the four vice presidents.³⁰

The agreement failed to address issues of citizenship and illegal resource extraction

Actors Involved in the Process

The Inter-Congolese Dialogue was an inclusive process that involved the armed and unarmed signatories of the Lusaka Ceasefire Accord. The three main armed parties were the Government of the DRC, the Uganda-sponsored MLC, and the Rwanda-sponsored RCD-Goma. The latter was a faction resulting from a split of the RCD after signing the Lusaka Ceasefire Accord. The seats originally allocated to the RCD were allocated to the RCD-Goma.

Alongside the main armed groups, unarmed political opposition parties and civil society organizations (called *forces vives*) were formally included on equal terms. The civil society actors included representatives from churches, development and human rights NGOs, trade unions, and various professional associations, including pharmacists, doctors, taxi drivers, lawyers, and other business actors.

Initially, each of the five main actors in the negotiations was to be represented with 60 delegates; however, financial constraints led to the reduction of the number of delegates to 15 during the first round of negotiations in Addis Ababa in 2001. After the Addis Ababa negotiations, new funding made it possible to increase the total number of delegates to 362, including three additional entities: the Mayi-Mayi (local militia), and the Uganda-sponsored armed groups, the RCD-National and the RCD-ML.³¹

Women Involved in the Process

Women made up 11 percent of the delegates during the negotiations in Sun City and Pretoria

Albeit in small numbers, women were included in all delegations (the government, the RCD-Goma, the MLC, unarmed political parties, and civil society) as well as the three additional entities (the RCD-National, the RCD-ML, and the Mayi-Mayi). The government and the RCD-Goma had the highest number of women delegates. The Lusaka Ceasefire Accord did not mandate a gender quota for the talks and the facilitator of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, Sir Ketumile Masire (former President of Botswana) only started promoting the inclusion of women after pressure from women's groups. In total, 6 of 74 delegates in Addis Ababa were women (8 percent) and 40 out of 362 delegates in the negotiations in Sun City and Pretoria were women (11 percent).

Modalities of Inclusion of Women's Groups³²

Women participated in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue through two modalities. First, women were directly represented at the negotiation table; second, they took part in a high-level problem solving workshop for women, which was set up in Nairobi before the Sun City negotiations of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.

1 | Women Delegates in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue

The Inter-Congolese Dialogue was mandated by the Lusaka Ceasefire Accord and consisted of a series of track one negotiations in Ethiopia (Addis Ababa) and South Africa (Sun City and Pretoria) from 2001 to 2003. The selection procedure for delegates was not specified in the Lusaka Ceasefire Accord and varied between armed and non-armed groups. The delegates representing the government and main armed groups were selected internally by their members, while the delegates from civil society and other political parties were elected in provincial elections organized by the facilitator. This narrowed down the number of candidates from which the facilitator subsequently chose the final representatives in collaboration with civil society groups and political parties.³³

There was no quota of women and no dedicated women's delegation in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue; women were included as individual members in all delegations. Notably, the women participants built a coalition prior to the negotiations in Sun City in February 2002 as a result of the high-level problem-solving workshop held in Nairobi the same year.

Decisions in the Dialogue were taken on a consensus basis in five thematic subcommittees as well as in the plenary.³⁴ Women delegates were included in each subcommittee. Only the Committee for Humanitarian, Social, and Cultural Affairs made recommendations addressing gender-related issues. This committee was also the only one to be chaired by a woman, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (who would go on to become President of Liberia in 2006). Gender-related recommendations were later added to the agreement reached in Pretoria—the Global and Inclusive Agreement—including, among others:

- The creation of rehabilitation centers for war-affected women and girls.
- The introduction of a 30 percent participation quota for women in all national-level decision-making sectors.
- The modification of laws discriminating against women.
- The increase of the marriageable age of girls to 18 years.

Women played a significant role in the Sun City talks by blocking the exits until the agreement was signed

The women delegates also successfully pushed for the creation of a Ministry of Women and Family Affairs in the transitional administration.³⁵ Finally, the 40 women delegates played a significant role in the final evening of the negotiations in Sun City in April 2002 by forming a human chain inside the room to block the exits until the agreement was signed.³⁶

2 | Workshop to Enhance Women's Inclusion and Influence

Traditionally, women in the DRC are excluded from the political arena. To address this issue in the context of the peace process, a high-level problem-solving workshop was organized before the negotiations in Sun City by Women as Partners for Peace in Africa-DRC, Femmes Africa Solidarité, the Nairobi Peace Initiative, and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, now UN Women). In particular, the workshop aimed to increase the number of women representatives in the upcoming negotiations, as the negotiations in Addis Ababa only included 6 women out of 74 delegates.

The workshop included 64 women, who were government officials, members of armed groups, and members of organized civil society and women's groups.³⁷ Initially, the women tended to represent their own groups or the position of their delegation. However, positions softened as the workshop progressed and the women increasingly abandoned their party alliances and started to work together for a common agenda. Women from civil society and the churches notably played a bridging role between government and armed group participants.

At the workshop in Nairobi, women started working together for a common agenda

Among other demands, the women asked for a 30 percent quota for women in all governmental institutions

The women agreed on a common declaration, the Nairobi Declaration and Action Plan, which included recommendations concerning the general peace process:

- End all hostilities and withdraw all foreign troops.
- Respect the territorial integrity of the country and the reunification of the DRC.
- Democratize the country.

The Declaration elaborated further on gender provisions, for which the women demanded, among other things:

- The inclusion of the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in the preamble of the constitution.
- Equal access to land and resources.
- A 30 percent quota for women in all governmental institutions.
- Internal commitment among the women in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue to ensure that there is no impunity for criminal acts and that rape is legislated as a crime against the humanity of women.³⁸

In addition, the women wrote an open letter to the facilitator of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, Masire, recalling the DRC's commitment to the CEDAW and UN Security Council Resolution 1325 of 2000. UNIFEM and local women's groups also held a meeting with Masire to discuss how to enhance women's participation in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. By the beginning of the negotiations in Sun City, the share of women delegates had increased from 8 to 11 percent.

II. Analysis of Women's Influence: Enabling and Constraining Factors

Overall, decision-making power was de facto dominated by the armed groups, which were overwhelmingly made up of men, and constrained the influence of women in the negotiations. Nevertheless, advocacy and pressure from national women's organizations led to an increase in women delegates in the negotiations in Sun City and Pretoria. Through the formation of a strong coalition which lasted throughout the Sun City talks, the women's organizations managed to get several provisions on gender into the final agreement, including the creation of rehabilitation centers for war-affected women and girls, the imposition of a 30 percent participation quota for women in all decision-making sectors at the national level, the modification of laws discriminating against women, and the increase of the marriageable age of girls to 18. The women delegates also contributed to the signing of agreements by blocking the exits in the final hours of the negotiations in Sun City. Nevertheless, selection criteria and the attitudes and expectations surrounding gender roles constrained the inclusion and influence of women's groups. The following section offers further insight into the process and context factors that enabled or constrained the influence of women in the peace process.

Process Factors

1 | Strong Coalition of Women

Women used several strategies to end violence, push for negotiations, and increase their influence

Coalition-building among women across party lines was initiated at the high-level problem-solving workshop in Nairobi prior to the negotiations in Sun City. The workshop effectively settled internal disagreements among the 64 women participants relating to their different positions as members of the government, the armed factions, or civil society. The women's ability to settle internal disagreements allowed them to produce the Nairobi Declaration and Action Plan, forge a women's coalition which lasted throughout the first talks in Sun City, and make unified demands in the negotiations. The coalition played a crucial role in ensuring that several gender provisions were later included in the agreement reached in Pretoria (the Global and Inclusive Agreement) as well as in establishing a Ministry of Gender and Family Affairs in the transitional administration.

2 | Effective Advocacy Strategies of Women

The women's groups relied on transfer strategies to ensure that their inputs would reach the facilitator and the negotiation table. These strategies were developed during the high-level problem-solving workshop and included an open letter to as well as meetings with the facilitator. These strategies effectively helped to increase the number of women in the Dialogue despite a lack of gender-inclusive criteria in the selection procedure.³⁹

In addition, the women's groups used several other strategies to promote the peace process and their demands. At the beginning of March 2002, women's groups went on hunger strike to push for new negotiations following the lack of progress in the talks. When the negotiations were reopened in Sun City, the women produced a daily leaflet called *La Pensée du Jour* (Thought of the Day) to comment on the issues under discussion and their relevance for women. They also held a press conference on International Women's Day (8 March 2002) to advocate for constructive negotiations and the end of violence against women in the Congolese armed conflict.⁴⁰

3 | Exclusive Selection Criteria and Procedures

In the absence of a gender quota or a women-only delegation, women were included as members of other delegations

Selection procedures constrained the inclusion of women, who were under-represented across the delegations. There was no women's quota. The selection procedure for armed groups was carried out by internal nomination, from which very few women were selected. In contrast, civil society and unarmed political parties' delegates were elected by their peers in local polls. While it was intended that the facilitator Masire and his team supervise the elections, security constraints meant that they were only able to visit some areas of the DRC. The provincial elections were conducted according to a "first past the post" procedure, which favored candidates with an already-established

political profile, and hence limited the selection of women.⁴¹ At the negotiations in Addis Ababa in October 2001, only 6 out of 74 delegates were women. Influenced by advocacy from women's organizations, Masire encouraged the various parties (armed and unarmed) to include more women. The civil society delegation increased its share of women delegates to 25 percent. As a result the total women's participation across negotiating groups increased to 11 percent by the time the negotiations began in Sun City.⁴²

4 | Co-optation of Decision-making by Armed Actors

The armed groups co-opted the decision-making process to preserve their own interests

The Lusaka Ceasefire Accord gave all actors included in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue equal decision-making power. However, this was only implemented superficially and the interests of the main armed conflict parties were arguably safeguarded, possibly with the complicity of delegates from civil society and unarmed political opposition groups. Years after the conclusion of the Dialogue, civil society delegates still suspect some of their counterparts of having voted in favor of the main armed conflict parties in return for political positions or leverage. In addition, one civil society delegate claims that the final draft of the Global and Inclusive Agreement was altered the night before signature without informing civil society delegates, who then signed the agreement unaware of the changes that had been made.⁴³

5 | Insufficient Support of the Facilitator to Civil Society Actors

Despite the inclusion of civil society and organized women's groups in the process, their overall influence was significantly constrained by actions of the armed conflict parties and the facilitator, Masire. In this regard, civil society delegates claim that the main armed conflict parties consulted them only after decisions had been taken and conclusions drawn.⁴⁴ Moreover, delegates recall that Masire encouraged and even facilitated these exclusive negotiations when impasses arose in the Dialogue. The working relationship between civil society and the facilitator was worsened by the fact that Masire could not speak French.

Context Factors

1 | Importance of the UN Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace, and Security

Congolese women's organizations benefited from the momentum around UN Security Resolution 1325

The Inter-Congolese Dialogue was one of the first peace negotiations to be concluded after the UN Security Council adopted its first resolution on the role of women in the field of international peace and security (Resolution 1325) in October 2000. Congolese women's organizations benefited from the momentum in so far as international actors such as UNIFEM supported Congolese women's organizations to put pressure on the facilitator to include more women in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. Women's groups used this to their advantage, citing the resolution in an

open letter to the facilitator that demanded the inclusion of more women. Moreover, the women translated the document into the four national languages to raise public awareness on the resolution.

2 | Patriarchal Attitudes towards Women's Involvement

The women delegates were encouraged to only address "women's issues," namely sexual violence

In general, the main armed conflict parties questioned the legitimacy of the participation of unarmed political parties and civil society representatives as well as the inclusion of women delegates. The included women were encouraged to only address "women's issues," namely sexual violence. Moreover, they were excluded from a range of key issues including military-related discussions. According to Laura Davis, this exclusion partly resulted from self-censorship on the part of women:

A lack of experience and confidence in engaging with national and international military authorities contributed to this, and many women censored themselves as it had never occurred to them that women or women's associations should be part of technical conversations dealing with security sector reform and DDR [disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration], even in the communities they were closely connected with.⁴⁵

In addition, the 40 women included in the negotiations in Sun City and Pretoria found it difficult to be heard as men politicians and members of other civil society groups rarely recognized the role of women in politics.⁴⁶ Consequently, many women delegates had difficulty influencing the negotiations, particularly with regard to key issues in the Congolese armed conflict such as citizenship, access to land and resources, the reform of a weak and corrupt government, and foreign interference in the DRC.

III. Conclusion

Despite an adverse political climate, women in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue were able to make several significant contributions to the process and final agreement by forming a strong coalition across conflict lines and employing innovative advocacy strategies. First, the women were successful in increasing the number of women included in the Dialogue. Second, the women managed to get gender-related provisions into the final agreement. The provisions included a modification of laws discriminating against women, a 30 percent participation quota for women in all decision-making sectors at the national level, an increase of the marriageable age of girls to 18 years old, and the creation of rehabilitation centers for war-affected women and girls. Third, women were pivotal in the signing of the final agreement, in so far as they blocked exits to the negotiation room to put pressure on the delegates to sign. As the agreement was the basis for the constitution, a commitment to gender parity in public institutions and the elimination of sexual violence was included in the constitution.

The women managed to secure the inclusion of several gender provisions in the final agreement

The main armed conflict parties, who decided on the political and military aspects of the negotiations, nonetheless dominated the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, and their approach to negotiation was not one of compromise. This limited the ability of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue process to create real and sustained political change in the country. As of 2017, the DRC continues to be affected by political instability and intermittent waves of violence. In particular, the eastern part of the country has experienced recurrences of violence despite the formal ending of the Second Congo War. The political situation has also been affected by the government's decision to delay the planned presidential elections scheduled for 2016 by up to four years, referring to security risks associated with elections⁴⁷ and the need to update the electoral register.⁴⁸ This has confirmed fears that President Joseph Kabila will attempt to remain in office despite the two-term limit set by the constitution.⁴⁹

Women made up only 8 percent of parliamentary members in 2015

Several of the gender-related provisions have gone unheeded since the signing of the Final Agreement. Significantly, the first transitional government did not meet the 30 percent quota set for the inclusion of women in politics. In 2015, women made up only 8 percent of members of parliament.⁵⁰ In addition, despite an increase in the marriageable age to 18 years old, more than 10 percent of women aged 20 to 24 had been married by the age of 15 in 2015.⁵¹

Violence against women is still a major issue in the DRC, and rape is committed with impunity.⁵² In 2010, the UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Margot Wallström, described the DRC as the most dangerous place on earth to be a woman and “the rape capital of the world.”⁵³ There is no evidence that violence against women has decreased since the agreement was reached in 2003. Rather, violence against women has continued and may have even increased according to certain estimates.⁵⁴

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Women in Peace and Transition Processes

Case studies in this series are based on the findings of the “Broadening Participation in Political Negotiations and Implementation” research project (2011-2017), a multi-year comparative research project led by Dr. Thania Paffenholz at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva. The Broadening Participation project examined how and under what conditions various actors participated in and influenced peace and political transition processes. The project’s dataset comprises 40 mainly qualitative case studies of negotiation and implementation processes, which took place between 1989 and 2014, covering 34 countries. These cases are categorized according to a range of groups of included actors and a framework of seven inclusion modalities developed by Thania Paffenholz. Among the case studies examined in the framework of this project, 28 included measurable involvement of women. In this context, women were defined as relatively organized groups, including delegations of women, women’s civil society organizations, coalitions or networks, which sought inclusion in peace negotiations and the implementation of agreements. The project did not investigate the role of women as mediators. For more information, see: www.inclusivepeace.org.

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The Inclusive Peace & Transition Initiative (IPTI) is dedicated to evidence-based research and its transfer to policy and practice. The objective of the initiative is to support sustainable peace by providing expertise and information on the inclusion of diverse actors in peace and transition processes. This expertise is drawn from a collection of research projects that have been conducted for nearly a decade at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva under the lead of Dr. Thania Paffenholz.

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