More than 150 delegates from 48 countries — including U.N. officials, peace mediators, police and security officers, female peacekeepers, government officials, directors of national and international organizations, judges and attorneys, technical advisors, scholars and policy experts — attended the conference “Breaking Barriers” from September 26 to 28, 2012.

“Breaking Barriers” marked the fifth bi-annual international conference of the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice at the University of San Diego’s Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies. Convened to create and advance the knowledge and recommendations of international gender experts from across disciplines on issues addressing women, peace and security, these meetings demonstrate the depth of gender expertise available to advance global security.

On the basis of the input gathered during this year’s conference on the barriers to Security, Justice and Peace, conveners call on all relevant actors to heed the following actionable recommendations, recognizing that unless and until these points are taken into account and expanded upon, any investment in peace, justice and security will be both inefficient and insufficient.

SECURITY

*Recognizing* the challenges of traditional security apparatuses to protect all civilians and address the root causes that fuel violence and its recurrence,

*Realizing* that for women and girls insecurity exists as much in the domestic sphere as in the public sphere, that physical threats to women and girls present an equal or larger threat to their security after conflict, and that the presence and actions of armed police and security forces can create insecure spaces for women and girls, and

*Reaffirming* the wide-reaching provisions for human security enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Rome Statute, UNSCRs 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals,

The conference co-conveners and delegates:

*Urge* Member States to adopt a Human Security framework as the dominant paradigm of national security, lessening the dependence on and resort to...
Consultations with women should be systematized at every step of the U.N. peacekeeping process. Women are rarely involved in these meetings/consultations and their voices are not heard.

- Appoint more women to leadership positions in U.N. peacekeeping operations, particularly as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations or Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

Prioritizing Human Security (freedom from fear and freedom from want) as the dominant measure of national and global security, military and security activities should be carried out in accordance with the following:

- National and local approaches to security should involve a “whole community” approach, involving a wide range of stakeholders including, e.g., police, armed groups, military, civil society, displaced communities, business community, policymakers — and addressing human security needs as the overall objective.

- Member States should support the spirit and the letter of U.N. Security Council agreements that have been advanced on Women, Peace and Security, and continue to critically assess the effectiveness of existing policies.

- The outsourcing of security duties to non-state, for-profit companies or individuals should be strongly condemned.

- Member States should adopt the recent CEDAW committee recommendations, prioritizing State responsibility to protect and address threats to women human rights defenders under the Convention.

Consultations with women should be systematized at every step of the U.N. peacekeeping process from pre-assessment to deployment of the mission to evaluation of the mission to change of mandate to transition to peacebuilding.

For example, U.N. peacekeepers generally meet with male representatives of political parties, local authorities and some human rights organizations. Women are rarely involved in these meetings/consultations and their voices are not heard.

- Involve and consult with local actors and leaders, both male and female, in how to develop local protection mechanisms that are culturally and gender aware. For example, in Afghanistan new schools for girls were at risk of being burned down. But if boys attended in the morning and girls attended in the evening, the schools were not destroyed.

- Know the gender hierarchy in the local culture. Do not expose women to further violence through gender-blind operations. In order to consult and work with women, it may be necessary to identify and educate male leaders. Within a human rights framework, do not accept excuses of culture or tradition to allow harm or violence toward women to continue.

- Change job experience requirements for these leadership positions that few women currently meet. For example, instead of requiring 10 years of diplomatic experience and finding only a pool of men, include, e.g., grassroots peacemaking experience or activist experience with relevant political savvy.

An integral part of a robust Human Security framework would include a good working military and security forces, with a revised mandate aligned to human security priorities.

traditional security mechanisms. An integral part of a robust Human Security framework would include a good working military and security forces, with a revised mandate aligned to human security priorities.
JUSTICE

*Recognizing* that the prevention of violence and the upholding of rights are dependent upon the passing of just laws — and both prosecutorial and transformative justice mechanisms that are accessible, transparent and locally relevant to women and men — conference co-conveners and delegates recommend the following measures to combat impunity and increase the effective provision of human rights for women and men, girls and boys in societies in peacetime, wartime and transition:

- Increase education and awareness of justice mechanisms to ensure people know what their rights and possible legal recourse/processes are.
- Transform prosecutorial justice mechanisms so that they do not contribute to a second violation of women’s rights.
- Create stronger, more accessible and transparent mechanisms for reparative justice that include guarantees of non-occurrence and rehabilitation, and which facilitate the economic empowerment of women survivors and victims.
- When designing transitional justice mechanisms ask:
  - What does justice mean for women affected by the conflict?
  - What were women’s experiences of conflict?
  - What were the pre-existing gendered power relations?
  - What has been the impact of violations experienced?
  - For which violations do we seek redress?
- Invest in and develop robust witness protection programs.
- Enable women economically so that they can enter decision-making circles, for example, identify existing women-led organizations and gender-sensitive leadership within civil society rather than creating a new elite.
- Take into account the cultural context — though customary mechanisms such as customary or tribal law must be equally in line with international human rights standards — addressing human rights gaps where they exist.
- Document the existing work being done, including recognizing the lessons born from traditional processes.

*Concerned* with national and transnational human rights violations which occur when humans are trafficked, conference co-conveners and delegates:


PEACEBUILDING

*Recognizing* the trends of violent extremism occurring in societies around the world and within multiple religious faiths, the conference co-conveners and delegates:

- **Urge** political, military, religious and civil leaders to enact their leadership to promote tolerance, education and understanding of diversity.
- **Urge** Member States to close the gaps between the intent and the implementation of resolutions on women, peace and security.
Finally, as cross-cutting recommendations:

Recognizing that perceptions of security, justice and peace are gendered, we assert that research, policy and practice must re-conceptualize the concerns and possible solutions to security, justice and peace, based on context-specific, sex- and gender-disaggregated data, and should focus on achieving holistic outcomes that benefit the majority of women and men, as well as marginalized groups.

And with the intent of making the international human rights monitoring and protection system more responsive, we urge civil society to actively utilize the Universal Periodic Review at the U.N. Human Rights Council, especially through reporting to committees such as the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, to hold states accountable to address gaps in women’s rights.

On behalf of collaborating organizations and delegates, we, as co-conveners, affirm and demand that all relevant actors take account of these essential next steps in their deliberations, planning and promotion of engendered peacebuilding and peacekeeping.