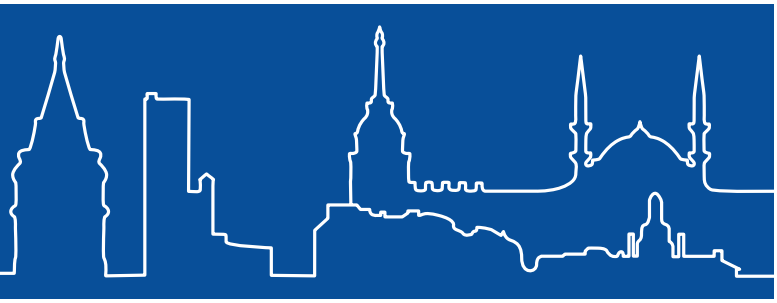
IPC–MERCATOR POLICY BRIEF



GENDER MAINSTREAMING: TURKEY'S POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN PEACEBUILDING INITIATIVES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This policy report provides an overview of United Nations (UN) mechanisms that have been developed to increase gender mainstreaming in mediation and peacebuilding. Some of these mechanisms include UNSCR 1325, the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) initiative, and the Secretary General's Seven Point Plan on Women's Participation in Peacebuilding and UNSCR 2122 (October 2013). In particular, the report investigates the Turkish case and provides an analysis of national gender mainstreaming policies and practices, as well as within its foreign policy efforts. This examination is particularly relevant in light of Turkey's increased influence as an international mediator and as a humanitarian actor who provides assistance and aid in militarized conflict zones. Turkey has also taken on an increased role within the UN in efforts such as co-leading with Finland the Initiative for Peace – Friends of Mediation Group, which was formed in 2010. In addition, Turkey has announced its candidacy for non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council for 2015-2016. The growing international focus on the practice of gender mainstreaming, along with Turkey's prominent role in regional and international mediation, makes inquiry into its gender mainstreaming and inclusion practices

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report concludes that Turkey has yet to develop a comprehensive framework for gender mainstreaming in its foreign policy and peacebuilding initiatives. Although progress has been made in national legislation, especially spurred by Turkey's EU accession process, the implementation and coordination of policies which include a gender perspective must be enacted throughout the governmental system, as well as within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Development. Turkey is not alone in this challenge; other countries within the UN have yet to implement inclusive policies and practices such as equal gender representation and employing a gender perspective on policy content. In the last ten years, however, the UN General Assembly has adopted several resolutions, specifically focused on the relationship between gender equality, protections, and peacebuilding; heightened focus has been given to targeting the practices and policies within the UN system itself. A strong foundation has been created to increase international and national implementation of these international agreements. For this research, interviews with diplomats, academics, members of civil society and government representatives were conducted. Extensive desk research and media monitoring provided additional support for the strong research foundation. The following policy recommendations for gender mainstreaming practices in Turkey are drawn from the analysis of this data and include:

- Heightened focus given to women's rights and gender equality through policy, programs, and by raising awareness throughout governmental institutions and civil society;
- Development of a clear framework for the incorporation of gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding efforts, sustained by a coordinated effort between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Development, and gender experts from Turkish civil society;
- Adoption of quotas for women's representation in mediation/peacebuilding teams as well as within the administrative structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Implementation of a gender equality mechanism throughout all ministries to support a widespread and systemic shift in gender policy and practices;
- Implementation of gender budgeting in all activities related to peacebuilding;
- In conjunction with civil society organizations and gender experts, development of a specialized National Action Plan on WPS and UNSCR 1325 to raise country-wide awareness and advance the goals of UN resolutions on conflict and gender equality;
- Open and transparent engagement and increased coordination between the government agencies, Turkey's civil society sector and international organizations on policy consultations, data sharing, and research to enhance insight and dialogue on governmental public projects;
- With the support of Turkey's Permanent Mission to the UN, the Foreign Service – Embassies abroad, the CEDAW Commission, EU, UNDP Turkey, the UN Peacebuilding Support, UN Women, or other international coalitions of women peace builders should raise awareness in governmental institutions and national civil society on WPS and UNSCR 1325;
- Formalize consultation practices with civil society organizations, particularly existing women's platforms, to strengthen civil discourse and provide consistent policy input;
- Provide gender sensitivity training, skills building, and knowledge on issues specifically affecting women in conflict by relying on gender expertise found in national civil society, academic centers, and policy-research centers dealing with gender and conflict, as well as seeking the expertise of international partners;
- Train governmental personnel (including those deployed) on gender equality and the specific and critical needs of women in conflict situations;
- Carefully monitor, follow up, and evaluate results/findings to measure success and hold gender mainstreaming initiatives accountable.

INTRODUCTION

In an era marked by the human rights discourse, increased attention has been given to the development of international mechanisms that foster gender equality. At the same time, emphasis on preventive diplomacy and mediation, as a more peaceful and sustainable means to resolve violent conflict has begun to frame many of the United Nations peacebuilding initiatives and security concerns. More recently, these two trends have converged, leading to the heightened realization for the need to incorporate a gender perspective in peacebuilding to better ensure a viable, representative and inclusive peace. Turkey, in its role as a rising power, has become a strong leader and advocate of mediation efforts and has strengthened both its economic and civilian empowerment in militarized conflict zones and post-conflict areas. Its pivotal location, cultural and historical ties to the region increase Turkey's value-added contributions to peacebuilding efforts. It is within this context that Turkey's foreign policy could serve as a model and forerunner of gender inclusion in all aspects of mediation.

After the appointment of Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu in 2009, Turkey's foreign policy goals began to shift. A vision to broaden its sphere of regional influence through "soft power" emerged alongside a commitment towards conciliatory strategies with its neighbors.[1]

Through its endeavors to mediate in various geographical regions, Turkey has since proven itself as both a capable and mature mediator on the international stage. Although many view it as a successful and innovative leader, a nagging critique to Turkey's foreign policy profile has been its consistent democratic challenges,[2] such as the Kurdish question and human rights concerns. Tensions and governmental reactions to Gezi Park foment has also led to a diminishing of its international legitimacy. In recent months, however, officials have heighted their focus on the importance of maintaining conversation between national and international outlooks and finding the balance between "security and freedom" in order to foster domestic and regional stability.[3]

Despite Turkey's domestic tensions, Davutoğlu's foreign policy remains visionary. Multi-dimensional diplomacy, zero problems with neighbors, cooperation, win-win strategies, defending democratic values, and demanding a just international order are some of the foundational principles within Turkey's foreign policy that feed the ethics of its peacebuilding and mediation practices. Leaders refuse coercive methods of conflict resolution; they rather promote diplomatic engagement and dialogue between conflict parties. The Foreign Ministry's emphasis upon universal principles and international cooperation has led to an emerging "Turkish Model" of mediation. This model rests on the principles of a long term commitment, the implementation of flexible frameworks, context specific adaptation, and broad involvement of civil society. The uniqueness of its model is related to three additional factors: (a) Turkey's role as an "insider" mediator due to its historical legacy, shared culture, and regional proximity; (b) the political and economic ripeness of Turkey to serve as a mediator; (c) the legitimacy of Turkey as a mediator and its commitment not to impose its own values on the process.

As Turkey's framework for peacebuilding began to develop, so did its investment in becoming a leading advocate for mediation within the international arena. In 2010, Turkey and Finland co-led The Friends of Mediation Group and inaugurated the Mediation for Peace (MfP) initiative, which seeks to ensure that the UN assumes a leadership role in coordinating and facilitating activities and actors in the mediation field. The mission of the MfP is to foster capacity building and to strengthen the expertise of emerging powers and non-traditional mediating countries, as well as of non-governmental organizations. In addition to the MfP, The Friends of Mediation was a central actor in the adoption of the first-ever UN General Assembly Resolution on mediation, Strengthening the Role of Mediation in the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes, Conflict Prevention and Resolution, (A/RES/65/283) in June 2011. The Mediation for Peace initiative also led to the General Assembly adoption of a second resolution (A/66/291) in 2012, as well as the production of Guidance for Effective Mediation of the UN Secretary General (A/66/811).

The Friends Group has continued in its leadership role by articulating international values, norms, principles, and mechanisms that can guide effective and sustainable international mediation efforts. As co-chair of this ancillary effort, Turkey hosts annual Istanbul Conferences on Mediation by bringing together governmental and nongovernmental practitioners and experts on mediation to exchange experiences and insights. Through its leadership, active engagement and vast experience in the region, Turkey seeks to promote the establishment of international guidelines and a forum to exchange "best practices" in the field of mediation. With the propective establishment of a mediation retreat center in Istanbul for the use of the UN, Turkey has clearly positioned itself to become a focal point for regional mediation.

An important area of mediation that has not been developed in Turkey's framework is gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding. Leaders have yet to place a priority on the role of women and the importance of incorporating a gender perspective into their guidelines and practices. Although women's issues are listed as a major concern in Turkish Foreign Policy,[4] rhetorical attention remains primarily focused on the national context by highlighting the strides Turkey has taken in improving Turkish women's legal rights. Those gender mainstreaming efforts that have been executed have been coordinated by other branches of the government such as the Ministry of Family and Social Policies. There is little evidence that Turkey's foreign policy and practice considerations have run parallel to the UN initiatives or mandates that call for strengthening and utilization of the knowledge of women in preventive diplomacy and mediation.

While some of Turkish peacebuilding efforts, most notably in Afghanistan and Somalia, have provided aid for women's economic empowerment projects and girls' schools, these initiatives are exceptions rather than a coordinated framework that plans and budgets a gender perspective into a wider peacebuilding vision.[5]

To provide a broader context for this discussion, the following section briefly overviews the dynamic evolution of global advancement for women and the UN's current gender mainstreaming efforts.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

This section will briefly overview the dynamic evolution of global advancement for women and gender mainstreaming. The United Nations began raising awareness on the collective rights of women by spearheading several initiatives aimed at increasing the legal rights of women around the world. The landmark *Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW)[6] was established in 1979 and ratified in 1986 by Turkey, with its additional protocol adopted in 2001. To ensure that ratifying member states were in compliance with CEDAW, the General Assembly established a committee to monitor the program - specifically to review national reports describing the various ways each country is fulfilling treaty expectations. The slow but consistent trickling down effect which has continued since the establishment of CEDAW has generated increased awareness and significant policy and practice development throughout the world.

Another significant UN mechanism for ensuring that gender issues were mainstreamed into legislation and policy making was the fourth World Conference on Women, which resulted in the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of 1995* and its two follow up sessions.[7] Unfortunately, severe disagreement between member states at both meetings discouraged future events and demonstrated the contentious and complex nature of gender related forums within the UN. As a follow up to Beijing, however, The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was mandated by the General Assembly to "develop its catalytic role in mainstreaming a gender perspective" in United Nations activities. These activities include

"...assessing the implications for women and men of all planned action, including legislation, policies and programs, in all

areas and at all levels, and as a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and social spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated" (UN Women).

Subsequent platforms and mechanisms have continued to evolve in which the need for gender inclusion is asserted and mandated in policies and widespread practices throughout the UN. The Bosnian war and Rwandan genocide galvanized public awareness about the severity of war violence particularly upon the lives of women and children. As a way to begin addressing the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations *(Women, Peace and Security - WPS)* initiated a blueprint for gender and peacekeeping work in 2000 (Security Council resolution 1325 and successive resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960).[8] The recent UNSCR 2122 of October 2013 shows a contiunation of these efforts. Landmark UNSCR 1325 laid an important foundation for future initiatives by identifying women and children as the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict and by recognizing the consequent impact this dynamic has upon durable peace and reconciliation. The text outlines specific issues that are faced by women in conflict as well as the important, but often undervalued, role that women play in peacebuilding. UNSCR 1325 also affirmed the need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations and at all stages of peace processes and post-conflict construction efforts. The implementation of 1325 is the responsibility of the UN and national governments, and it is binding on all member states. National Actions Plans (NAPs) are devised as a concrete assessment to ensure resolution implementation at the national level. Of particular relevance is UNSCR 1889 because it focuses on post-conflict peacebuilding and calls for mechanisms to measure the implementation of UNSCR 1325 within the UN system itself as well as within each of the Member States. To date, Turkey does not have a National Action Plan connected to UN Resolution 1325 or any of the other WPS resolutions.

Civil society has played an important role in peacebuilding and is historically the platform that threaded the strongest ties between women and mediation – particularly at the grassroots level. [9] To encourage and strengthen these efforts, the UN established a high-level Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) on *Women, Peace and Security* to serve in a consulting role and provide strategic perspective on the advocacy of gender equality and women's empowerment. Additionally, the UN Peacebuilding support office and UN Women recently developed a *Seven Point Plan on Gender Responsive Peacebuilding.* This plan seeks to improve governments' responsiveness to sexual and gender-based violence against women, secure women's economic and social rights, design reparations for women's economic empowerment, incorporate gender budgeting in all post conflict financing arrangements, and prioritize general equality in the security sector. The plan is also meant to track the process of improving representation and participation of women in peacebuilding. The UNSG *Report on Women in Peacebuilding* covers several thematic areas related to post conflict transitions such as governance, rule of law and economic recovery. Ultimately, the plan provides a framework to guide member states within the UN system on how become more inclusive in their peacebuilding efforts.

The range of efforts and initiatives now focused on gender protections and inclusivity stretches from civil society sectors to international law, paving the way for significant involvement and increased mainstreaming of women in peacebuilding efforts throughout the world. The gap between these mechanisms and their implementation, however, remains significant. For example, although in many countries there has been little resistance to adopting resolutions recognizing and including women in peacebuilding activities, the development of national policies or frameworks for these provisions has lagged sorely behind. According to Bell (2013), increased efforts must be made to include women at all stages of peace processes. A strong rationale for this insistence is because

prior to the commencement of formal peace processes, women are often the primary catalysts for initiating these efforts at the grassroots level. The tendency for women to actively engage in peace processes at the community level implicates the current disconnect between them as actual stakeholders of these conflicts and the mediation/negotiation Track-I process. In addition, each subsequent stage of the mediation process has gender-specific concerns, ranging from process-oriented issues such as access and participation in the formal peace process itself, to substantive issues which may hold particular consequences for women such as the renewal of cycles of gendered violence following conflict.

The level inclusion or exclusion of women's involvement within the civil society sector often mirrors their level of participation in peacebuilding initiatives. Consequently, peace processes may actually form a unique opportunity to strengthen gender equality and women's movement activism. For instance, the first stage of pre-negotiation opens up an opportunity for women's organizations to mobilize, to shape the agenda of a peace process, and to also influence the roles women might play in future governance. The process of setting up a road-map for peace negotiations is similar to, and may also run parallel to, constitution-building efforts wherein it is imperative to include representative portions of society - which in this case means including the voices and presence of women. Moreover, after the mediation and negotiation efforts have been completed, the process of conflict reconstruction poses its own set of gender-specific challenges. Because these efforts will impact the lives of women, they must be involved in the conceptualization, leadership, and implementation processes; involving women in times of transition is critical.

In her analysis True (2013), for example, postulates that the post-conflict phase poses an important opportunity for increasing the rights and positions of women in newly emerging societies. She calls for the need of a gender perspective in post-conflict institution building, humanitarian planning, and within the long term peacemaking process itself. This stage of peacebuilding activities, however, can pose numerous challenges because of the interdependent and multi-dimensionality of efforts that range from political and security issues, to those of socio-economic reconstruction and cultural reconciliation processes. For this reason, the importance of a strong framework for gender mainstreaming and coordination is especially critical during this phase.

Post-conflict transitions are fraught with difficulties and contradictions. There is often a disconnection between establishing political-military order and planning socioeconomic stabilization.

Alongside these tensions is also the on-going peace versus justice debate; should the end of armed conflict at all costs be prioritized over the punishment of perpetrators? How is this debate complicated when women are victims of gender-specific crimes, such as mass rape? Alternatively the needs of women fighters undergoing Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) for instance, will be different from that of their male counter-parts following conflict. It is therefore even more important, at such a fragile time, to remain clear on the particular needs of women and the resources they can provide to the reconstruction and transition towards a peaceful and just society.

GENDER INCLUSION EFFORTS IN TURKEY

The ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) has been in power since 2002. During this time many legal reforms have been initiated to remove fundamental discriminatory practices against women. An impetus for these reforms was Turkey's official candidate status to the EU in 1999 and EU Accession Negotiations since 2005. Turkey has hosted various conferences on women's rights, such as the OSCE Istanbul conference, which culminated in the *Istanbul Declaration*[10], held in 1999. As a show of good faith, for example, Turkey was the first country to sign *The Council of Europe*

Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence[11], in May 2011. Although there have been some advancements for women, Turkey's gender equality record has only slowly improved. According to the Gender Inequality Index last year, it was rated 124th out of the 135 countries surveyed.[12] Persistent areas of concern revolve around women's higher education, employment, political empowerment, and the significant levels of gender violence. Examination of reform that is occurring in Turkey indicates that changes are likely the result of a growing national women's movement, pressure exerted by civil society organizations, and various international monitoring systems that have been placed upon the government. The following section provides an overview of the major vehicles of gender reform in Turkey.

Legislative Reforms

Within the past fifteen years, there have been several legislative changes made to Turkey's constitution. Article 41 (entered into force in October 2001) and The New Civil Code (entered into force in January 2002) both reinforced gender equality within the family. On May 2004, Article 10 of Turkey's Constitution was amended to give supremacy of international conventions related to basic rights and freedoms over national law. This amendment included CEDAW. Moreover, the Penal Code amendment was seen as a major step towards gender equality, and the protection of women's human rights in terms of bodily autonomy. Its new provisions entered into force on 1 June 2005. Many women's organizations, however, were dissatisfied with these amendments and even against the referendum in 2010, claiming that changes made to the Constitution were merely cosmetic and not far-reaching enough. Several groups joined forces under the *Yes, but not Enough* campaign in order to demonstrate that more changes were needed. More recent additional amendments, such as the *Law on the Protection of the Family* with Law 6248, passed on July 8, 2013 were deemed as a major success for the Turkish women's movement. The provision of this law now entitles all women, regardless of their marital status, from the violence of abuse. It also called for the establishment of Violence Prevention and Monitoring centers.

National organs advancing gender equality continue to develop in Turkey in the confluence of external influence and internal debate. For example, as a requisite of Turkey's CEDAW ratification, the General Directorate on the Status of and Problems of Women (KSGM) was created as part of the Executive branch of the government in 1990. The Directorate serves as a bridge between the Turkish state and civil society on matters related to women's issues as outlined in the CEDAW Convention. Although it was originally attached to the Prime Minister's Office, KSGM moved under the purview of the Family and Social Policies Ministry in 2011. It is important to note here that a significant institutional shift and development for women's affairs occurred following the elections in June 2011. The Ministry of Women and Family Affairs was renamed the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, sparking large demonstrations by women's movements throughout Turkey because of the perception that this shift was a setback, and undermines the status and focus on women's rights within the Ministry.[13] Although this political debate continues, KSGM is now comprised of four main departments: Educational and Social Affairs, Economic Affairs; Documentation, Publications, and Statistics, and Foreign Affairs. The mission of this Directorate is to conduct periodic reports to the CEDAW Commission, and to execute the National Action Plan for Gender Equality by working with different Ministries on gender related issues. Although efforts are being executed on behalf of women's issues through various ministries, research indicates that a coordinated and overarching gender mainstreaming policy has yet to be developed. Additionally, a major criticism leveled at the KSGM is that they still have not been allocated a specific gender budget under the Ministry of Family and Social Policies.

In cooperation with civil society organizations, KSGM established a national initiative, the Woman – Man Equal Opportunities Commission (KEFEK) of the Turkish Grand National Assembly in 2009, through the legislative branch and Law 5840. Under the auspices of the Turkish parliament, the Commission analyzes proposals related to gender

legislation, makes amendment suggestions to existing legislation, and receives legal complaints. Its mandate includes ensuring that women's voices are heard and broadly reported upon through all arenas of the governance including the economy, education, and health.[14] A National Action Plan (NAP) was distributed to all public institutions and organizations, local governments, universities, non-governmental organizations, and the private sectors identifying their various duties and responsibilities. Areas covered by the plan include promoting gender equality in education, health, economy/poverty, the environment, media and calls for full inclusion in power and decision-making mechanisms. Although various projects have commenced, a strategic long term vision is lacking and specific steps to follow up the NAP are missing. As the expiration of this initiative nears, follow up plans and implementation strategies are needed to ensure the continuation of existing efforts.

The UNDP Turkey office designed a National Action Plan called *Fostering an Enabling Environment for Gender Equality in Turkey* which was also executed by KEFEK. It was implemented with the support of the UNDP and UN WOMEN between July 2011 and July 2013. The focus of this project was to involve local authorities to better ensure gender mainstreaming practices into Turkish policy-making processes and legislation. Overall, KEFEK is at the cusp of institutionalizing gender equality and would certainly be in a strong position to act as a future gender mainstreaming leader and monitor for Turkey's policies. Although it is systemically located to advise Parliament and to raise awareness of women's issues to legislators, critiques have been directed at KEFEK's inability to truly influence policy because of the lack of political will to follow its suggestions. Perhaps the European Union and the CEDAW Commission rightly forecasted these dynamics when it welcomed KEFEK's creation, but underscored the importance of ensuring that gender mainstreaming moved off of paper and out of the rhetoric of "national projects" and into actual practice throughout all sectors of policy.[15]

In conjunction with the Prime Ministry Circular (No. 2006/17) on *Measures to be taken to prevent custom and honor killings and violence against children and women,* A National Action Plan to Combat Violence against Women is also in effect. A national research project on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey followed in January 2009 by KSGM and the European Commissions' Delegation to Turkey. Its aim was to identify and examine systemic and institutional practices which work together to generate a culture of tolerance and silence towards violence against women. This work culminated in the formation of the *Combating Domestic Violence Against Women in National Action Plan* of 2007-2010. This plan was later updated in order to ensure its continuity for the period of 2012 – 2015. The action plans aims to be applied to all areas of national policy. An annual evaluation report is prepared by the KSGM and published on the website. Combined efforts and accumulated research from relevant public institutions such as KSGM, along with NGOs, women's research centers and universities support this initiative.

Between 2006 and 2010 a coordinated effort between the United Nations Joint Program (UNJP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF) worked through various other UN and aid agencies on the Women Friendly Cities Project. Under the auspices of Turkey's Ministry of Interior, several gender equality projects took place in six provinces (İzmir, Kars, Nevşehir, Şanlıurfa, Trabzon, Van). These projects focused on the development of mechanisms that examined or evaluated local services and policies to better ensure gender equality. Additionally, capacity-building activities carried out by the local authorities and NGOs in 2008, culminated in Local Equality Action Plans. These were sent for approval to the various project provinces and municipalities to be adopted by county councils. Due to its success, the scope of the program extended past 2011 and its mandate now includes increasing gender planning through local governance in seven new provinces (Adıyaman, Antalya, Bursa, Gaziantep, Malatya, Mardin, Samsun). Several other national and country-wide programs have been instituted as well. Under Parliament, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies has organized *Women and Gender Equality Training Programs* in several governmental

departments such as Agriculture, Education, and the Turkish Business Council. To ensure the continuity of these projects, a *Training of Trainers on Gender Equality and Material Development Project* is scheduled for 2014.

Current Gender Platforms and Peace/ Mediation Efforts

National women's organizations and platforms are the strongest forums through which gender mainstreaming is being demanded in Turkey. Many of these organizations are networked with other national and/or international mechanisms such as the CEDAW committee and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

Although the Ministry of Family and Social Policies attempts to engage civil society on a range of projects, and in fact there is increased dialogue compared to earlier years, the women's movement continues to push for a stronger voice, and increased consultation opportunities, in policy making and policy implementation. Currently, the dissonance between civil society and governmental priorities is related to the salience of issues.

While the government tends to focus efforts on traditional women's questions such as the prevention of domestic violence, women's organizations and platforms are working on issues of gender equality. They are attempting to provoke a general shift in societal values in which women's human rights are more fully exercised and respected.

Women's civil society movements have proven remarkably capable of organizing and forming platforms around particular issues. There is strength and energy in these initiatives and over 250 organizations dedicated to women's issues currently exist, and the number is growing. Although grassroots and local initiatives do not typically lobby the government directly, their agendas are pushed through coalitions spearheaded by larger women's platforms. For instance, 126 women's organizations participated in The Civil Code Women Platform as well as the Women's Penal Code platform; both efforts are widely believed to be successful and efforts remain ongoing. Moreover, a majority of the existing women's organizations participated in the *Şiddete Son Platformu* (End to Gender Based Violence Platform). Networks are strong and short-term platforms quickly coalesce when specific attention is necessary, such as the one focused on Turkey's constitutional process. Currently, a civil society watchdog organization is being developed through the Gender Equality Monitoring Association (CEID). It has received approval by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies and funding from the European Union with the goal of launching in 2014. In summary, research and interviews conducted for this project overwhelmingly indicates that civil society organizations perceive the process of gender mainstreaming as being driven from the bottom-up instead of by the initiative of the government. However, the interviews conducted also uncovered the recognition by civil society of the importance of a government-led process for gender inclusion and equality policy making, and the demand for increased involvement of policy makers in tackling these issues. Leveraging this arena will be vital for the overall success of gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding efforts.

Academia has also been instrumental in pushing women's issues to the forefront of social and political dialogue. For example, an innovative project known as the *Genovate Project* received funding from the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7) of the EU and was launched in May 2013 in Ankara. It is a four year plan focused on gender mainstreaming in academia at Ankara University. As the first gender equality plan executed in Turkey's universities, the vision is to produce a strategic framework that can be replicated in other universities. Women's studies centers exist in a number of universities throughout Turkey, though they remain an underutilized resource. To date there has been little consistent dialogue between the centers and the government on policy issues, and graduates of Women's Studies rarely find employment in their field of expertise in Turkey. There are, however, notable exceptions of strong

academic organizations that persist in making their voices heard. One of those examples is the Turkish Organization of University Women (TÜKD), led by their president, renowned gender and human rights lawyer and activist Nazan Moroğlu. Under her leadership, civil society managed to push through the aforementioned *Law on the Protection of the Family* (Law 6248) deemed as a landmark step. Moreover, cooperation between local organizations and activists, and international networks of expertise and solidarity form important ties. International organizations such as the European Women's Lobby is another platform through which Turkish organizations engage in lobbying efforts for both national and international agendas.

Gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding has yet to become a priority or wide conversation within women's platforms, institutions, or academia. Although UN mechanisms such as CEDAW or the Commission on the Status of Women are largely known and utilized in Turkey, UN Resolutions on Women in Peacebuilding has been diffused to a much lesser degree (e.g. UNSCR 1325 and the WPS initiative).

This dynamic might simply reflect the acute priority that women's platforms are placing on gender inclusion in policy consultation and at the national leadership level - instead of an overall lack of interest in Turkey's foreign policy or peacebuilding initiatives.

There are a few women's organizations, however, working on conflict issues at the national level. One notable platform is the *Barış için Kadın Girişimi* (Women´s Initiative for Peace), which is a network of organizations, academics and individuals focused on issues related to women and conflict within the borders of Turkey. The sphere of its efforts is directed towards the Kurdish conflict in particular and the ongoing peace process. They work in tandem with active Kurdish women's groups and community organizations that operate largely at the local level and within conflict affected areas in Turkey. Until recently, these grassroots organizations were not aware of international efforts to gender mainstream women into the peacebuilding process. With the recent re-commencement of the Kurdish peace process, awareness has increased, and more of these organizations have been pushing for the inclusion of UNSCR 1235 into the practices of this national peacebuilding initiative. Currently, international mediation efforts are being inductively examined to identify best practices which may in turn inform those platforms monitoring of the current peace process. Perhaps it is within the country's internal peace processes that a framework for gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding can be developed and tested; these national experiences can be pooled to inform similar process in Turkey's mediation efforts abroad.

Platforms and Organizations for Collaboration

Women for Women's Human Rights – New Ways (WWHR): WWHR has initiated and coordinated a number of national campaigns, including the *Campaign for the Protection Order against Domestic Violence* in 1997 – 1998, the *Campaign for the Reform of the Civil Code* in 2000-2001, and the Campaign for the Ratification of the Optional Protocol to CEDAW by Turkey in 2001. In 2002-2004 they also worked on the *Campaign for the Reform of the Penal Code from a Gender Perspective*.

Flying Broom (Uçan Süpürge): This organization works in the field and on national issues. Its goal is to implement "legislation in action" through lobbying and advocacy. In coordination with WWHR, Flying Broom also participated in the Civil and Penal Code platforms. Along with advocacy efforts, they provide gender expertise and training to a large number of professionals in public service. They have also conducted large scale projects with the Ministry of Family and Social Policies as well as the Parliament. In their work on early enforced marriages they published a report with KEFEK which generated the creation of a Commission on this issue in 2009 for the Ministry of Family and Social Policies. On the international level, their efforts include working together with governmental representatives in comparing best practices to combat early enforced marriages and making field visits to India, Niger, Nigeria and Bangladesh.

Women Entrepreneurs Association of Turkey (KAGIDER): The activities of this platform include capacity-building, policy-advising and lobbying for the empowerment of women entrepreneurs, mostly in the economic, but also in the electoral, sphere. Their area of operation ranges from the local and societal to national endeavors. They work collaboratively with government institutions (e.g. KSGM and the Ministry of Family and Social Policies) as well as with the private sector. They are headquartered in Istanbul but several affiliate members reside and work throughout the country. In combination with KA-DER, KAGIDER showed its political and economic influence by helping to establish the KEFEK Commission for Parliament.

Association for the Support and Training of Women Candidates (KA-DER): KA-DER has conducted capacity building, policy research as well as lobbying activities over the last 15 years. It is one of the few civil society organizations dealing with the policy side of gender in Turkey. The organization works to empower female candidates for electoral office through organizing trainings and skill building, as well as providing practical information on the political and electoral process. In 2011, KA-DER conducted a *Representation of Women in Bureaucracy* campaign and the Women Who are Right Platform urging women's representation in the 2011 elections. KA-DER is also a contributor to the *Barış için Kadın Girişimi* (Women´s Initiative for Peace). An aim of this initiative is gender mainstreaming throughout political parties and within policy. KA-DER partners with KEFEK, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, the Ministry of EU Affairs, as well as the Ministry of Labor and Social Security and The Ministry of National Education. They also follow up UN efforts through the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), as well as the EU's Women's Lobby. As one of their initiatives, KA-DER organized a gathering of women's organizations from the Arab region in order to exchange views and lessons on their constitution making processes. KA-DER could be an important actor in major gender mainstreaming efforts and capacity building/training of gender experts in its experience from work supporting female candidates for elected office.

KAMER Foundation: KAMER is a traditional woman's organization dealing with ending gender based violence. However, with its vast geographical reach, offices throughout Turkey, and expertise in a range of areas – including areas affected by conflict – its potential sphere of influence is wide. KAMER's work ranges from raising awareness of women's human rights programs and facilitating women's entrepreneurship programs to identifying and mapping regional gendered concerns through research and dialogue. KAMER has an emergency hotline for victims of gender based violence and also provides a range of other services. This organization is a strong resource for learning about the on-the-ground issues faced by women within Turkey. Additionally, it has a wealth of experience and sensitivity in dealing with women in conflict affected areas and about the issues they face.

Women's Initiative for Peace (Barış için Kadın Girişimi): Women's Initiative for Peace has been active since the early 1990s but was officially formed as a platform in 2009. Their efforts underscore the necessary involvement of women in peacebuilding processes in order to achieve a sustainable peace. The women who are involved with the initiative come from diverse backgrounds (feminist, leftist, unionist, Kurdish, Turkish, Islamist, secularist, non-Muslim etc.). With 400 members, their representation is nationwide, spanning such cities as Bursa, İzmir, Denizli, Ankara, Adana, Mersin, Diyarbakır, and Van. The platform has held numerous workshops and one recent conference in relation to the current peace process. They have met with Parliament member women and also women in the guerrilla to discuss the implementation of UNSCR 1325. Moreover, presentations have been done for the *Wise People's Commission* (The commission responsible for increasing awareness in Turkish society about the current peace process) created in the Parliament, as well as field visits in order to document the particular grievances of women in relation to the Kurdish conflict, both in the West and the East of the country.

On February 24th 2013, organizers gathered more than 60 women comprised of activists, writers, journalists and academicians to discuss lessons learned regarding women's participation in peace

negotiation processes. The Women´s Initiative for Peace is one of the few platforms in Turkey employing the language of UNSCR 1325 and demanding that a National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325 be developed for Turkey. After a conference held on May 4th, a monitoring group was set up to follow the process of developing a NAP for UNSCR 1325, in addition to other thematic focal points related to the peace process. Leaders are actively engaging within peace processes efforts as well. For example, twelve of its members visited the Tunceli (Dersim) region on 29-30th May to observe the negotiated peace and retreat processes of PKK from a gender perspective. This particular platform is quite visible and engaged in the issues of women in conflict and peacebuilding.

Their demands include:
a) the creation of a truth commission investigating crimes against women during conflict
b) equal representation of women in all commissions created for peace including the Parliament
c) gender based security reform
d) constitutional change so that discrimination against women in general and Kurdish women in particular will stop.

Women's Initiative for Peace (Win-Peace): WinPeace was started as an initiative between Turkish and Greek Women to increase cooperation among women from the two countries on a range of conflict issues. The group also coordinates youth trainings and works on issues related to Turkish-Greek relations and the social/political reconciliation of Cyprus.

CRITIQUE

The international standing of Turkey in relation to its effective mediation and gender mainstreaming practices is more important than ever. The potential establishment of a retreat mediation center in Istanbul for the use of the UN, coupled with Turkey's candidature for non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council for the period of 2015-2016, symbolize the unique and dynamic leadership position Turkey holds at the international level. Minister Davutoğlu's visionary foreign policies have garnered respect within the UN and the strength of Turkey's influence, particularly in regional affairs, continues to evolve. As a secular Muslim country, Turkey is in a unique position to act as a bridge builder between opposing views on the issues of women's rights and the importance of their involvement in peacebuilding. A pre-requisite for this conciliatory role, however, is that Turkey must create its own holistic framework for gender mainstreaming in both its national and foreign policy efforts.

Women in Turkey continue to face gender inequities and rights violations. Although women's civil society initiatives, organizations and platforms are actively engaged in attempting to shape domestic policy, there needs to be a mechanism in place whereby the knowledge and experiences of these institutions are combined to (a) elicit more awareness for the need to implement a gender perspective in all departments of the government; and (b) collaborate on the development of gender frameworks, policies, and practices.

At the national level, while Turkey's long-standing commitment to constitutional and democratizing reforms appear to run parallel with its gender equality provision, in reality, women's legal protections still lack force in both implementation and practice. Mechanisms such as KEFEK and KSGM and various National Action Plans have been initiated, spurring a number of projects, but a much more coordinated and long-term commitment is needed from the highest levels of government to foster true change. In addition to these gaps, Turkey's brave decision to embark on the Kurdish peace process has been a short-sighted and missed opportunity for it to increase the international legitimacy of its mediation framework – specifically as it relates to mainstreaming women into peacebuilding practices. The lack of women in this process underscores the need for gender inclusivity throughout the government; but in particular, this absence of women's involvement is indicative of a gap in Turkey's mediation framework.

Fortunately, a vision for civil society engagement within foreign policy is already in place. Davutoğlu has articulated the necessity to mobilize civil society, universities, and NGOs into international peacebuilding efforts through the principle of "total performance."[16] This pillar of Turkey's foreign policy framework is an integrative portal through which the insights and on-going efforts of women's civil society platforms and organizations – especially as it relates to gender mainstreaming - can enter. There is a need for a transparent and inclusive mainstreaming policy making process which includes a strategy to strengthen women's roles throughout Turkey's foreign policy and mediation initiatives. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs would clearly benefit from the long history and extensive expertise of NGOs working on women's rights and inclusivity efforts within Turkey by initiating dialogue and incorporating their best practices and insights.

In the past few years, Turkey has increased its collaborative ties with several UN organs and INGOs. In projects related to gender, however, there is a significant disconnection between the priorities of various Ministries and departments. For example, the Turkish permanent mission to the UN has been very involved in women's issues, particularly after women's organizations lobbied to become part of its delegation. The mission is seen by many as being more in touch with international trends and developments regarding gender mainstreaming, and therefore serves as an important link between domestic developments and on-going global discourse. Moreover, the permanent mission's work on the international level has often preceded changes nationally. An example of this is the Mediation for Peace Initiative which was spearheaded by the delegation in the UN. In the context of Istanbul potentially becoming a hub for various UN offices, UN Women also announced last year that it would be moving its regional offices for Europe and Central Asia to Istanbul due to its strategic location in the region. With the presentation of a renewed UN System Wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) in April 2012, as well as its reporting and implementation mechanisms and the UN Women's previous experience with training Women, Peace and Security experts, increased cooperation between the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UN Women could greatly benefit Turkish foreign policy efforts.

Turkey continues to face domestic challenges related to the strengthening of women's rights and gender equality within the political agenda. Problem areas specifically relate to political representation, girls' access to education, women's economic empowerment and labor participation, as well as persistent gender based violence. Although UNSCR 1325 and WPS have not been disseminated widely throughout Turkey, in light of the country's on-going national peace process, demands for the implementation of a UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan are mounting and will continue to gain importance in the future. Additionally, with Turkey's increased commitment to and activity in, international peacebuilding and mediation, international actors like the UN, the CEDAW committee[17] , and other international mechanisms such as the EU and OSCE will continue exerting pressure for more involvement and discussion about the issues women face in conflict areas. If Turkey is to remain a respected and sought-after mediator, the exclusion of women in these important political and social processes – both nationally and within foreign policy – is no longer tenable. The United Nations and Turkey emphasize preventive diplomacy and mediation as a more peaceful and sustainable means to resolve violent conflict in their policies and practices. As the field of mediation continues to emerge, the importance of coordinated efforts, as well as shared guidelines for effective mediation is of increasing importance. Turkey, as an international and regional leader in these efforts, needs to pave the way and model gender mainstreaming into its peacebuilding policies and frameworks.

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SPECIFIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- More focus must be given to women's rights and gender equality through policy, programs, and by raising awareness throughout governmental institutions and civil society. The current focus upon violence against women must be expanded. For true social change to occur, examination must be given to the systemic reasons for gendered violence in Turkey.
- To produce a more coordinated effort of gender inclusion in peacebuilding, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (in conjunction with the Ministry of Development and gender experts from civil society) must develop a clear framework for the incorporation of gender mainstreaming in international efforts.
- Quotas should be adopted for women's representation in mediation/peacebuilding teams as well as within the administrative structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Implementation of a gender equality mechanism throughout all Ministries will support a more thorough systemic shift in gender policy and practices.
- Gender budgeting must be adopted in all activities related to peacebuilding. This application could be coordinated by The Treasury and the Ministry of Family and Social Policies with the support of international and national gender experts.
- Developing a National Action Plan specifically on 1325, in conjunction with civil society organizations and gender experts, will assist in raising national awareness and advancing the goals of WPS and UNSCR 1325.
- Follow up the expired Gender Equality Plan of 2008-2013 with a comprehensive National Action Plan – executed in order to compliment or in combination with a National Action Plan specifically focused upon the implementation of UNSCR 1325.
- Transparency and open engagement between the government, Turkey's civil society sector and international organizations on policy consultations, data sharing, and research will enhance insight and dialogue on governmental public projects. KSGM and KEFEK could serve as dialogue intermediaries for these processes.
- Raising awareness in governmental institutions and national civil society on WPS and UNSCR 1325 can be done by engaging actors from international arenas, either through Turkey's Permanent Mission to the UN, the Foreign Service – Embassies abroad, the CEDAW Commission, EU, UNDP Turkey, the OSCE, and the UN Peacebuilding Support, UN Women, or other international coalitions of women peace builders.
- Consultation with civil society organizations, particularly women's platforms, should be formalized to strengthen civil discourse and provide consistent policy input.
- Gender sensitivity training, skills building, gender representation and knowledge on issues specifically affecting women in conflict is needed. This gap could clearly be filled by gender expertise found in national civil society, academic centers and policy-research centers dealing with gender and conflict or international partners.
- Training of governmental personnel (including those deployed) on gender equality and the specific needs of women in conflict situations is critical.
- Increased communication between women's studies centers and graduate programs at Turkish universities and the State will encourage graduates from these institutions to work for the government and to provide gender expertise.
- Careful monitoring, follow up, and evaluation of specific results/findings must take place to measure success and hold gender mainstreaming initiatives accountable.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING FRAMEWORK RESOURCES

- UN Security Council Resolution 1889 – Women, War and Peace – UNIFEM
  http://www.womenwarpeace.org/

- For an outline of the UN's mechanisms of gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding at various levels and activities see the Secretary General's Report on the Seven Point Action Plan for Women's Participation in Peacebuilding
  http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pbso/pdf/seven_point_action_plan.pdf

- For an overview of crafting National Action Plans for 1325 see website of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILFPF)
  http://wilpfus.org/

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NGO'S AND IGO'S IN TURKEY WORKING ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING

- Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR) http://www.wwhr.org/
- Women's Initiative for Peace (Barış için Kadın Girişimi) http://www.barisicinkadinlar.com/en/
- Flying Broom (Ucan Supurge) http://www.ucansupurge.org/english/
- Association for the Support and Training of Women Candidates (KA-DER) http://www.ka-der.org.tr/
- KAMER Foundation http://www.kamer.org.tr/english/index.php
- Women's Initiative for Peace (Win-Peace) http://www.winpeace.org/
- Women Entrepreneurs Association of Turkey (KAGIDER) http://www.kagider.org/?Dil=1&SID=324
- Turkish Organization of University Women (TÜKD) http://www.ifuw.org/turkey/english.htm
- Ankara University Women Studies Center http://kasaum.en.ankara.edu.tr/
- Genovate Project http://www.genovate.eu/
- Overview of the Penal Code Platform http://www.wwhr.org/category/the-campaign-for-the-reform-of-the-penal-code-from-a-gender-perspective
- Overview of the Civil Code Platform http://www.wwhr.org/category/the-campaign-for-full-gender-equality-in-the-civil-code
- For more information on Constitutional Reform Platform (ongoing) http://www.wwhr.org/category/news/31830/turkish-womens-platform-for-a-new-constitution-releases-press-statement-on-october-2-2007
- European Women's Lobby http://www.womenlobby.org/spip.php?article5115&lang=en
- UN Women Europe and Central Asia Regional Office http://www.unifem.sk/
- UNDP Turkey Office http://www.tr.undp.org/turkey/en/home.html
- Permanent Representation of Turkey to the United Nations http://turkuno.dt.mfa.gov.tr/default.aspx

END NOTES

1 | Vision Paper No.6, Center for Strategic Research (SAM) "Turkey's Mediation: Critical Reflections from the Field", Ahmet Davutoğlu, July 2013.

2 | Professor Bülent Aras, Lecture "The Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy Revisited", Sabancı University 10.05.2013.

3 | Vision Paper No.3, Center for Strategic Research (SAM) "Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy and Regional Political Structuring" Ahmet Davutoğlu, April 2012.

4 | Ministry of Foreign Affair's website, *The Right of Women, Gender Equality and Struggle with Violence Against Women,* http://www.mfa.gov.tr/the-right-of-women_-gender-equality-and-struggle-with-violence-against-women.en.mfa

5 | "Turkey's Civilian Capacity in Post-Conflict Reconstruction" T. Murphy and O. Sazak, Istanbul Policy Center.

6 | Also called the "Women's Convention".

7 | Beijing Plus 5 (2000) and Plus 10 (2005).

8 | UNSCR 1820, (Passed in 2008), was on "sexual violence as a weapon of war" as an issue of international peace and security. UNSCR 1888 and 1889, (Both adopted in 2009) "...SCR 1888 builds on SCR 1820 and calls for the appointment of the Special Representative on sexual violence in conflict, as well as establishes Women Protection Advisors (WPAs) within peacekeeping missions, in addition to a Team of Experts, meant to rapidly deploy to situations of sexual violence. SCR 1889 is focused on post-conflict peacebuilding, and in particular calls for the development of indicators to measure the implementation of SCR 1325 both within the UN system, and by Member States. UNSCR 1960 (2010) re-iterates the focus on sexual violence in conflict, and establishes institutional tools to battle systematic abuses. (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) – Peace Women Project Website – *National Action Plans* - http://www.peacewomen.org/pages/about-1325/national-action-plans-naps).

9 | According to the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), National Action Plans are vital in ensuring the actual implementation of the UN1325, as well as the inclusion of civil society and women's organizations in order to increase national awareness and an inclusive process building on the experience of civil society. (Ibid.)

10 | On strengthening the role of peaceful conflict resolution, where several provisions were made in the Istanbul Declaration underlining the commitment of the member states to include gender mainstreaming and produce a Gender Action Plan for the organization. The first OSCE Action Plan on Gender Issues appeared in 2000, followed by a more comprehensive plan in 2004, underlining the importance of gender mainstreaming in three dimensions: politico-military, the economic and environmental, and the human capacity.
http://www.osce.org/what/gender.

11 | Also known as the "Istanbul Convention", which has been ratified by Turkey since March 2012.

12 | From the Gender Inequality Index Report of 2012, published by the World Economic Forum. Turkey increased its' score from a couple of years ago, but actually worsened its' ranking in comparison with recent years. Indeed, Turkey occupied the last place in the regional rankings (Europe and Central Asia), and though the country performs above average on the health and survival sub-index, though it lags behind on the other three sub-indexes (political

empowerment, educational attainment and economic participation and opportunity. http://www.iwda.org.au/2013/03/26/2013-human-development-report-and-gender-inequality-index-now-available-egender.

13 | In 2011 with decree 633, the KSGM was restructured under the Ministry of Family Affairs and Social Policies (formerly the Ministry of Women and Family Affairs). Under this department there is an advisory board on the status of women, headed by the Ministry. With this change, a number of institutions would now be represented under this new Ministry, including the General Directorate of the Status of Women (KSGM), the General Directorates of Family and Social Services, of Children Services, of Services for Disabled and the Elderly and of Social Aid, as well as the Head Department of Veterans and Families of People who Died while Serving the Turkish State.

14 | The Commission has prepared reports on different areas of women's issues such as psychological harassment of women and girls, dowry and traditional marriages, the prevention of violence against women and deficiencies in legislation and its practice, early enforced marriages, the role of the media and the constitutional process.

15 | As outlined in the aims of the UNDP Turkey Gender Mainstreaming Project.

16 | "Turkey's Mediation and Friends of Mediation Initiative", TEPAV Policy Brief Series, 6th edition, 2012, Bulent Aras, http://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1353933780-1.Turkeys_Mediation_and_Friends_of_Mediation_Initiative.pdf.

17 | The CEDAW Committee also monitors the implementation of UNSCR 1325, and are next year publishing a report on Women in Conflict and Post-Conflict, although there is no institutional body in the UN to monitor UNSCR 1325, the resolution is gaining importance in the UN and international system. Moreover, although Turkey has not been subject to a revision of their implementation of UNSCR 1325 it is probable that it will be subject to such revisions in the future.

Thank you to the interviewees

Prof. Dr. Feride Acar – Turkish Candidate to the CEDAW Committee, Office of the UN High Commissioner of Human Rights; Professor, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Middle-Eastern Technical University (METU).

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Pınar İlkkaracan – Co-founder Women for Women's Human Rights – New Ways (WWHR); Initiator, Coalition for Sexual and Bodily Rights in Muslim Societies (CSBR); Adjunct Professor, Political Science Department, Bogazici University.

Serpil Sancar - Ankara University's Women's Studies Center (KASAUM); Professor, Department of Political Science, Ankara University (AU); Director, Women's Studies and Gender Department, Political Science Department (AU).

Sevna Somuncuoğlu – General Coordinator, Flying Broom/Uçan Süpürge.

Ufuk Gezer – Head of Department, Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs D.G. Policy Planning.

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