

At the 20 September 2018 [Commission on the Status of Women](#) monthly meeting, a panel presentation called “Young Women’s Leadership in Peace and Security” was presented. The meeting was held at the Salvation Army, E. 53rd Street, New York, NY, United States.

Report Submitted by Connie Sobon Sensor, Sigma United Nations Liaison

The program examined how important it is for young women to be involved in peace processes. [Azadeh Khalili](#), United Nations representative of [the International Alliance of Women](#), which is dedicated to eliminating all forms of oppression, addressed the prevalence of conflicts in many countries and the 80% casualty rate of women and children as a result of war, and sexual violence as a tool of war. [Ivy Gabbert](#), the Program Coordinator of [the Soka Gakkai International Office for UN Affairs](#), pointed out the relevance of [Resolution 1325](#) in countries that think they are exempt because they are not in active conflict. She said that if violence against women exists in a country, that country is in conflict with itself. Megan Manion, an attorney and policy analyst with [UN Women](#), talked about making connections between women’s participation and influence over conflict resolutions. She emphasized the explicit and meaningful participation of women in peace and security. [Marina Kumskova](#), Programme Associate at the [Women, Peace, and Security Programme of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom \(WILPF\)](#), advocated for the promotion of State accountability for women’s rights violations and a conflict prevention approach by transforming the way security is viewed with a gender analysis. [Mallika Iyer](#), Program Officer for [The Global Network of Women Peacebuilders](#), reaffirmed the important role that women play in peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction, and involvement in fostering peace and security. She presented the “Young Women for Peace and Leadership,” program launched in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2014. It is currently being implemented in Indonesia and South Sudan. The program is based on the UNSCR 1325 and trains women to see themselves as advocates who initiate change in their local communities, as opposed to hostages of conflict. They also provide literacy workshops and educate the women on how to acquire and share information. Lastly, they provide economic empowerment tools to be independent, to be involved decision-makers and collaborate with each other. The discussion reinforced the critical importance of women’s involvement in the peacebuilding process in order to create change in their communities.

UNSCR 1325 urges Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional, and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict. The resolution urges the Secretary General to appoint more women as special representatives to pursue good offices on his behalf. This resolution also calls for inclusion of a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations. This is relevant to our members to know that women are supported to be in positions that will make them stronger candidates for higher-

level positions within decision-making committees at the UN and in other government-supported offices of power. The [Security Council Report](#) was adopted in 2000.