

**UNSC OPEN DEBATE  
ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY**

**Statement by  
The Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations**

**NEW YORK, 20 October 2022**

Madam President,

Let me start by thanking you for organizing today's important debate, and the briefers for their insightful contributions. The Kingdom of the Netherlands aligns itself with the statements of the EU, the Group of Friends of WPS, the Group of Friends of Women in Afghanistan, and the Group of Friends of R2P, and would like to add some remarks in our national capacity.

Madam President,

We welcome the focus of this debate on women's resilience and women leadership. As the SG rightly states in his report: the WPS agenda is not just an answer to historic wrongs and marginalization, it is an opportunity to do things differently.

An opportunity for us to address the great challenges faced by women and girls in conflict situations in so many corners of the world – from Afghanistan to Ukraine, from Mali to Yemen.

At a time when progress in women's and girls' rights is being reversed, the number of violent conflicts is increasing, and armed groups are committing atrocious human rights violations, we need a strong UN, and we need collective action.

Collective action for full, equal and meaningful participation of women leaders, women peacebuilders and women human rights defenders at all levels.

Collective action on prevention: to address the root causes of conflict and instability, including unequal power relations. To eliminate the gender stereotypes and negative social norms that are at the root of gender-based discrimination and gender inequality.

For this, we can learn from work done at community level, for example by peace committees. We can learn from initiatives to involve men and boys as they are an important part of the solution. We can learn from these approaches and their success at de-escalating emerging conflicts.

Let me share the example of the work done by one of our partners with pastoralist groups in South Sudan. Through so-called 'Peace Caravans', men and boys in cattle camps come together with women, girls and the elderly to reflect on gender, positive male participation and inclusive peace.

Finally, protection is key. It is unacceptable that the space for women leaders, women peacebuilders and women human rights defenders is shrinking; that they are increasingly facing threats and violence putting them in danger and preventing them to do their important work.

Madam President,

The Kingdom of the Netherlands remains strongly committed supporting the work of the UN on the WPS agenda and to protecting and defending the hard-won progress made for women and girls in all their diversity. To protecting their rights. And to keep on working collectively to ensure their voices are heard, their contributions are recognized, and their leadership embraced. Let's seize this opportunity and do things differently.

Thank you.