**UNWomen**

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**The question of increasing the decision making roles of women in wars**

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**Timeline:**

Through history, war decisions have been shaped by men in positions of power, these decisions which are almost always driven by political and strategic factors usually have intense and violent outcomes.

 Such as the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the decision to invade Iraq was made by the former US president George W. Bush and his team of male advisors, notice how even then not a single woman was included In the decision making process for this course of action.

 The decision-making field in Yemen’s ongoing conflict is also extremely male dominated, the main actors in this conflict include Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, and Yemeni Houthi leaders which are all males. The decisions taken by these leaders have resulted in a very destructive humanitarian crisis, with so many innocent people suffering from displacement, food shortages and violence.

The Ukrainian-Russian conflict which was sparked by the annexation of Crimea in 2014, which was a decision taken by male president of Russia, Vladimir Putin, the decision he took created tensions not only between Russia and Ukraine, but also between Russia and other western countries, such as Germany, France, England, etc.… The decision taken by Ukraine to join the NATO alliance, was also taken by a male leader, the president of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, his decision caused an even bigger conflict between Ukraine and Russia.

In 2021 the US suddenly decided to withdraw from Afghanistan, this decision was also taken by male political leaders including President Joe Biden. This decision completely reshaped the ongoing Afghan conflict. The sudden withdrawal led to the Taliban’s taking over Afghanistan, which led to the oppression of women and girls in the area.

In 1919 “The treaty of Versailles” that ended world war 1, was a treaty that was negotiated and agreed on, mainly by male leader, including Woodrow Wilson (United States), David Lloyd George (United Kingdom), Georges Clemenceua (France).

**General Overview:**

The topic of increasing women’s decision-making roles in wars is a crucial one, considering that women have been underrepresented in leadership and decision-making positions in political situations, more specifically wars.

Seeing a few of many other male dominated war decisions previously shows that the world is in desperate need of diversity in the decision-making roles, especially for global security matters.

Psychologically men tend to be more aggressive and impulsive, while on the other hand, women tend to be calmer and more logical, especially when dealing with stress. Unfortunately, while men are given the upper hand in all decision-making roles, more violent outcomes are being faced, humanitarian crises usually affecting innocent civilians negatively, and escalation of conflicts as seen in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict as an example.

 Creating inclusive leadership has become a must in nowadays world, and giving women more decision-making roles is the first step towards building diverse and inclusive leadership.

Studies have shown that the involvement of women in peace negotiations, and decision-making processes increases the chances of long-lasting peace agreements. So, including women in decision-making processes especially in wars, and in matters of global security, is not just a matter of gender equality anymore, it has become a necessity. Women bring diverse perspectives, and their involvement can lead to more comprehensive strategies, and gender-sensitive approaches to certain challenges, where it is extremely needed.

In October, year 2000 the Security Council recognized that sustainable security is not possible without the involvement of women, so resolution 1325 was passed, it calls for increasing the representation of women at peace negotiations and at all decision-making roles regarding global security. Despite this, women are still highly under presented and their involvement does not come close to men’s involvement in decision making in wars.

**Challenges:**

Unfortunately, women to this day face many challenges that reduce their involvement in political roles, especially during wartimes.

These include:

1. Cultural norms: in most societies traditional gender roles still exist, limiting women’s participation in areas traditionally considered masculine, such as defense and security. Cultural norms may discourage women from pursuing careers in these fields.
2. Under-representation: Women are underrepresented in positions of power, which directly affects their ability to influence political decisions. Initiatives are needed to promote more women into leadership roles.
3. Gender-bias: Deep-rooted gender biases often prevent women from being taken seriously in political and military circles. The perception that women are less capable of understanding complex security issues can be a significant barrier