



## **Event summary**

### **Linking SDG16 and SDG5 in a time of crises - Women in Peacebuilding and Justice**

*Co-organized by Austria, Italy, and Jordan in collaboration with UN Women, SDG Watch Europe and the Ban Ki-moon Centre for Global Citizens.*

The event took place on July 14 in a hybrid format at the Permanent Mission of Austria (AT) to the United Nations in New York. The event featured a number of outstanding speakers, first and foremost, Ms. Karoline Edtstadler, Austrian Federal Minister for EU and Constitution, Ms. Sima Bahous, UN Women Executive Director, Mr. Fabio Cassese, Director for Development Cooperation at the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ms. Adela Raz, former Permanent Representative of Afghanistan (AF) to the United Nations and Director of the Afghanistan Policy Lab at Princeton University, Ms. Mavic Cabrera Balleza, Director of the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP), and Ms. Brittany Roser, UN Advocacy Advisor at the NGO PAX for Peace. The event was moderated by Monika Froehler, Chief Executive Officer of the Ban Ki-moon Centre for Global Citizens.

The goal of the event was to generate heightened awareness of SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and SDG 5 (Gender equality) at this year's HLPF and beyond. The leitmotif of the roundtable being a quote from UN Women ED "Crises multiply threats, women are solution multipliers", the participants discussed how peacebuilding efforts, the rule of law, equal participation and stopping violence against women are essential components to the work on linking SDG 16 and SDG 5. Overall, the event highlighted the importance of further implementing SDG 5 and SDG 16 as fundamental pillars of the 2030 Agenda.

**Federal Minister Karoline Edtstadler** underlined AT's strong commitment to the rule of law (SDG 16) and the equality and empowerment of women. This is, inter alia, reflected in the cooperation with UN Women and AT's contributions in AF and the Sahel region. **Ambassador Fabio Cassese** emphasized that gender equality and the rule of law are mutually reinforcing and more generally, that the exclusion of women and girls is a form of violence in and of itself. Thus, IT is also placing SDG 5 at the centre of its development cooperation programs. **UN Women ED, Sima Bahous** stressed the regressions in women's rights worldwide - sexual violence in conflicts such as AF, Ukraine, restriction of women's self-determination etc. Ms. Bahous reiterated her conviction that societies with more gender equality are more stable and cope better with crises, which was also illustrated by a recent study published by UN Women on "COVID-19 and Ending Violence against Women and Girls".

**Ms. Adela Raz** powerfully described the regressions regarding women's rights in AF and appealed to the international community not to forget the situation of women in AF. **Ms. Mavic Cabrera Balleza** informed about the work of GNWP, specifically regarding the support for women's rights organizations in Ukraine. Moreover, referring to the role of local civil society organizations as so-called "first responders" in case of conflicts, she appealed for the strategic funding of women's rights organizations in all crisis regions as the role of local NGOs can

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hardly be replaced by international (non-governmental) organisations. **Ms. Brittany Roser** continued the discussion on the topic of Women Peacebuilders and the UNSC Resolution 1325 and informed about the work of PAX for Peace. The latter NGO is inter alia engaged in Iraq with local NGOs, and also works to improve environmental protection and the handling of natural disasters during armed conflicts. **Mr. Bernhard Zlanabitnig**, Director of the European Environmental Bureau and steering group member of SDG Watch Austria and Europe concluded the panel by commenting from the perspective of the European umbrella organization of NGOs that also monitors the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The event was broadcasted via Zoom and reached over 1,880 viewers around the globe via a [livestream](#).