

Conference Program

Horn of Africa: Women for Peace Network

Vienna Networking Meeting

10 - 12 June 2021

Women from the African diaspora with different professional backgrounds will meet in Vienna to create a new network for peace in the Horn of Africa. The need to create a women's network was the outcome of an online conference which was initiated by the activist and political researcher Dr Ishraga Mustafa Hamid in March 2021. The networking founding meeting will take place in Vienna between 10-12 June 2021.

A number of African women and human rights activists in Europe and the Horn of Africa have participated in a session entitled Peace in the Horn of Africa from a Gender Perspective at the First Conference of Banat Mendy "Mendy shines from Vienna with Global visions" (Mendy was an anti-colonial fighter in the Nuba Mountains in the Sudan).

The exchange of their concrete stories and the awareness about the suffering of the women in the frontline communities led to the idea of having regular discussions and to continuously supporting each other. The members of the founding group also underscored the need of creating a platform to enhance the efforts of promotion and protection of women's rights within the region.

The aims of the gatherings are to share the experiences about the situation in the region and gender empowerment, advocacy, and awareness-raising beyond borders. Furthermore, the participants will explore new strategies on how to implement national and international peace agendas like the UNSCR 1325 and the Maputo Protocol 2003 on the ground. Finally, the members intend to define the future priorities and aims of the network and lay the ground for the organisational structure.

In addition, the Vienna "Women for Peace" diaspora expert meeting will be hosted by the VIDC with the financial support from the Austrian Development Cooperation. The VIDC has extensive experience with diaspora cooperation. The institute will support and accompany this new initiative within the scope of its possibilities.

Registration compulsory: office@vidc.org

COVID-19 rules for June 10 and 11: You will need to show either a negative COVID test or proof of vaccination or proof of recovery from past infection (3G-Regel). FFP2 masks are required at the venue. Number of participants is limited.

Day 1 – Thursday, 10 June 2021

19:00 – 21:00 (CEST) Conflict and Peace in the Horn of Africa – Women Perspectives

Don Bosco Haus, St. Veit-Gasse 25, A-1130 Vienna
public event (according COVID-19 rules) and Facebook livestream
Welcome: **Ishraga Hamid, Franz Schmidjell (VIDC)**

- **Eiman Abulgasim Seifeldin**, Solidan campaign, former International Crime Monitor Director, Sudan/Germany
The dynamics of instability in the Horn of Africa.
- **Asia Abdulkadir**, Country Coordinator, Kindernothilfe, Somalia
Ethiopia's Tigray crisis: The importance of strengthening of women led CSOs to achieve sustainable peace
- **Mariam M. A. Wagialla**, Architect and Spatial Planner, Sudan/Austria
Conflicts over power and resources in the Horn of Africa and their impact on gender livelihoods and migration patterns
- **Rachel Ibreck (online)**, Researcher with focus on human rights, justice and civil society, Goldsmith University of London, UK
Security and justice for the Horn of Africa? A critical analysis of EU and AU politics?

Moderator: Rita Isiba, Speaker and Trainer, Aphropean

Day 2 – Friday, June 11 2021

9:30 – 13:00 Women for Peace: Protection and support of women in conflict regions

Don Bosco Haus, St. Veit-Gasse 25, A-1130 Vienna, round table with COVID-19 rules
Presentations and round table discussion with international and Austrian expert
Introduction: **Ishraga Hamid, Magda Seewald (VIDC)**

- **Karima Anthony Madut (video statement)**, Sociologist, Women Rights Activist, South Sudan:
Strategy for peacebuilding and security from views of women between communities' borders
- **Nahla Elbedry (video statement)**, Writer, Head of the Women's Awareness Initiative in Blue Nile State, Sudan: *Peace and security from perspectives of internal displaced and refugee women in Blue Nile region*
- **Fatumo Farah**, Director of HIRDA Somalia Association, Netherlands
Diaspora contribution to development of countries of origin in different aspects such humanitarian response, investment and know how transfer
- **Mihret Kebede**, Multi-disciplinary Artist and Poet, Ethiopia/Austria
Role of arts in conflict resolution and peace building

11:30 – 12:00 Coffee break

12:00 – 13:00 Comments and round table discussion

- **Melissa Mujanayi**, Federal Ministry for Defense Austria, International Security Policy - Africa: The Development of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Theory and Practice – Food for Thought
- **Corinna Pröll (online)**, Austrian Development Agency: Austrian Development Cooperation in the Horn of Africa in the context of the UNSCR 1325
- **Janine Wurzer**, WIDE Austria - Development Policy Network for Women's Rights and Feminist Perspectives

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch break

14:00 – 17:00 Women for Peace: Local Conflicts and UNSCR 1325

Presentations and round table discussion with international and Austrian experts

- **Kassaye Berhanu-Mac Donald (online)**, Writer and Activist, Ethiopia/Canada
The impact of family separation and reunification on women and children during conflict: Lessons for Tigray
- **Amira Awad Osman (online)**, Conflict Researcher, Sudan/UK
Gender and genocide in Darfur: Lessons learned and prospects for future peace and security
- **Sarah Ogbay (online)**, Linguist and Activist, Eritrea/UK
Implementing resolution 1325 in the Horn of Africa and the challenges for women's organizations in Eritrea and Ethiopia.

Moderator: Rita Isiba, Speaker and Trainer, Aphropean

15:00 – 15:30 Coffee break

15:30 – 17:00 Way forward I – round table discussion about objectives, activities, and projects

17:00 **Media interviews**

18:00 **Sightseeing and dinner**

Day 3 – Saturday, June 12 2021

9:30 – 12:30 Women for Peace: Way forward II - From an informal network to a formal structure

Zoom meeting hosted by VIDC, Möllwaldplatz 5/9, 1040 Vienna

Network members only: Internal strategy and organisational meeting

- **Khedijah Ali Mohammed-Nur (online)**, Women and Health Rights Activist, Co-Founder of Network of Eritrean Women, UK/Eritrea
Lessons learned - networking, mobilisation and advocacy by network associations
- **Ishraga Mohamed Hamid**, Initiator of the network, Activist and Political Analyst
Constitution of a future association, structure, members, and alliances

Moderator: Rita Isiba, Speaker and Trainer, Aphropean

Background Horn of Africa

After the hopeful peace agreements between Ethiopia and Eritrea (2018), the Sudanese revolution 2018/19 and the peace accord in South Sudan (2019), disillusionment has returned to the Horn of Africa. War and war crimes has severely hit the border province of Tigray with tens of thousands of people forced to leave their homes. Ethnonationalist protests and violent attacks ravage the province of Oromia where dozens of people were rounded up and killed and their livestock were stolen. Moreover, in South Sudan, the 2019 peace agreement has not brought peace and stability to the countryside. In Somalia the tension between central government and some provincial administrations and with the opposition are increasing.

Like in other places, the manipulation of ethnicity – especially of youth with little perspectives - covers the deeper going structural issues of the conflicts. The legacy of colonialism, the competition for power and natural resources as well as global capital interests are further drivers of conflicts.

The precarious security situation leads to instigating extreme violence against women in all conflict regions. Local women's organizations, national women's networks work under indescribable pressure and are hardly involved at the political level.