



30 December 2016

Dear friends of the Women in Foreign Policy initiative,

We wanted to share this letter as an appreciation of your support and to let you know about our activities in 2016. Against increasing discrimination, lack of accountability and the popularity of demagogues in the world, we stand in solidarity with our colleagues who believe in liberal democratic values.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

When we first launched our Women in Foreign Policy (WFP) initiative, we were determined to advocate for the inclusion of women in all levels of peace activities. In partnership with the **Swedish Consulate General in Istanbul** and the **Office of UN Women Europe and Central Asia in Istanbul** we began to more formally take stock of the environment in Turkey with regards to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.

Key Provisions of SCR 1325 include:

- Increased participation and representation of women at all levels of decision-making.
- Attention to specific protection needs of women and girls in conflict.
- Gender perspective in post-conflict processes.
- Gender perspective in UN programming, reporting, and in SC missions.
- Gender perspective & training in UN peace support operations.

In November, we brought together 18 representatives from Turkish civil society spanning 14 diverse organizations to raise awareness of the Resolution, strengthen communication and deepen trust among the new network of civil society organizations. In 2017, we will continue to convene meetings with interested stakeholders about devising a National Action Plan (NAP) that is appropriate for Turkey.

For more information on the UNSCR 1325, see. http://www.usip.org/gender_peacebuilding/about_UNSCR_1325#What_is_U.N._Security_Council_Resolution_1325

Roundtable Series

With the support of the **Hollings Center for International Dialogue**, **Kale Group of Companies** and the **Office of UN Women Europe and Central Asia in Istanbul** we hosted several roundtable events. We had about 25 – 30 guests from academia, civil society, media and the private sector attend each meeting.

On November 9th, we launched a high-level speakers' series with female consul generals and other senior diplomatic staff to promote women's participation in the foreign policy field. We are grateful to **Ingibjorg Gisladdottir**, UN Women Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia and Representative to Turkey for hosting our first meeting, which focused on the "Syrian Humanitarian Crisis". **Zeynep Alemdar**, Founder of WFP, moderated the event. **Christina Bache Fidan**, Co-Founder of WFP, Turkey presented on the major human security threats



facing Syrian women and girls in Turkey and **Sabine Freizer**, UN Women Regional Advisor for Governance, Peace and Security shared how the UN is providing support to the Syrian community in Turkey.

On October 25th, **Prof. Serhat Güvenç** from Kadir Has University and **Assoc. Prof. Evren Balta** from Yıldız Technical University provided remarks on “Understanding International Relations During Times of Crises: Transformation of Power Politics and Change in Security.”

Elie Gardner, Freelance Filmmaker and Photographer, spoke about her work on “Documenting the Resilience of Syrian Refugees,” on April 18th.

Loubna Amhair, Member of the Parliament, in the Kingdom of Morocco, presented on the “Refugee Crisis: The Moroccan Model,” for International Women’s Day, on March 8th.

Emre Erdoğan, INFAKTO RW Founder and Professor at Bilgi University, shared his research on “The Dimensions of Polarization in Turkey,” at a meeting with Columbia Global Center on February 11th.

We hosted **Diana Janse**, Former Ambassador, and Senior Foreign Policy Advisor to nya Moderaterna, who presented on “Diplomacy and Foreign Policy from the Inside Out: A Swedish Perspective,” on February 2nd.

Amplifying Women’s Voices

We strongly believe that the gender imbalance in the foreign policy field is not only outdated, but limits the prospects for sustainable solutions to address today’s security threats. To amplify women’s voices, we employed our social media accounts to promote the hashtag #notoallmalepanels (#sırferkekpanellereson in Turkish), and encouraged our male friends to do the same. We still have a long way to go, but we immediately received support throughout Turkey and the region! We continue to mentor young women who are interested in the dynamic foreign policy field and support a variety of youth organizations from Turkey and the MENA.

Each one of us had various speaking engagements ranging from Turkey-EU Relations, Sustainable Peace and Inclusive Security to the Situation of Syria’s Women Refugees in Turkey.

Next Steps

Despite the incredibly difficult political and security environment we find ourselves, we remain committed to amplifying women’s voices and to the inclusion of women in the diverse foreign policy field in Turkey and the region. As dedicated volunteers, we believe we must protect the safe environment we have created where public officials and foreign policy professionals can discuss and devise solutions to the current security challenges facing the region.



Please continue to support our activities through social media. You may find us on Facebook at the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/WomenInForeignPol/>, @WFP14 on Twitter, and visit our- soon to be active website- www.wfp14.org and www.dpk14.org!

We hope 2017 will bring **PEACE** and **EQUALITY** to every corner of the world.

Zeynep, Christina, Rana
Co-Founders of the Women in Foreign Policy initiative

