

Peace negotiations have long been imagined as rooms full of men — from Vienna to Oslo. For centuries, women were largely excluded from these processes, creating a gap between lived experience and decisions made at the negotiating table.

Twenty-five years ago, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1325, recognizing that women's full and meaningful participation is essential to peace and security. Yet progress remains slow: in 2024, women made up only 7% of negotiators and 14% of mediators, and many formal peace processes still exclude women entirely.

And this is not simply a matter of equality or representation. It is a matter of security and of building durable peace. Because peace is not achieved just by signing a document — it is built and sustained in communities through the long, difficult process of rebuilding trust, stability, and social cohesion.

In that process, women are often at the forefront: as community leaders and organizers helping societies heal from conflict. That is precisely why their perspective must be present in decision-making — not less, but arguably even more than in times of peace. This is where parliaments have a crucial role to play. Women parliamentarians can bring perspectives that are too often missing from formal peace processes.

Representative parliaments — diverse in gender, age, and background — can bridge the gap between formal negotiations and real societal needs emerging in post-conflict societies. Because decision-making is essential to building peace and restoring a sense of security, and peace can only be sustained when it belongs to everyone.