



Regional Seminar

“Multi-stakeholder dialogue: Parliamentary action on the 2030 Agenda – SALW control in the MENA region with a global outlook”

Objective: Through policy dialogue and debate, enhance parliamentary action on uncontrolled SALW related violence, and maximise synergies between the 2030 Agenda, the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UN PoA), Women, Peace and Security and Youth, Peace and Security and their respective UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1325 and 2250.

September 24-25, 2019

Generations for Peace Conference Centre, Amman, Jordan

FINAL REPORT





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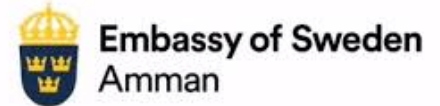
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Opening session

H.E Dr Nassar Al Qaisi, First Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Parliament of Jordan opened the session welcoming all participants. He noted that Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is a region on fire with tremendous human suffering. There are dark forces present which seek bloodshed of the innocent. He praised the King of Jordan, a man of peace and security and highlighted Jordan’s role in the region as a light house of peace and security. H.E Mr Erik Ullenhag, Swedish Ambassador to Jordan, a former parliamentarian himself, as co-organiser of the seminar expressed gratitude to Jordan for hosting such an event to identify common priorities. He noted that uncontrolled Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) are in circulation in MENA as well as in Sweden, where gun violence is on the rise. Regarding Jordan he commented on festive shootings where some end in tragedy. Lastly, he underscored the need to promote women’s active participation as sustainable peace cannot be achieved when representatives of half the population are not present at the table. He also welcomed the inclusion of the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda as part of the seminar. Ms Sara Ferrer Olivella, Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) continued by highlighting Jordan as an example of the possibility to embrace opinions. The seminar provided space for an important



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and timely dialogue as the 2030 Agenda cannot be achieved if people are left behind. UNDP has been strengthening efforts across the globe and believes that arms control is crucial in order to build inclusive societies. She highlighted a UNDP flag ship programme which has a focus on a governmental regional approach as SALW cannot be addressed unless there is cooperation across borders. The programme builds on positive results and lessons learned from Eastern Europe. To conclude, she also highlighted the critical need for a gender lens throughout programme cycles. Women and girls can be insightful of providing intelligence but also to raise awareness of negative impact. She also noted women as perpetrators, using and smuggling arms. To conclude there is a need to hold women accountable as well as to ensure rights.

Mr Mark Clark, Chief Executive Officer, Generations for Peace (GFP), was delighted to host but admitted that the invitation had provoked questions on rational and relevance of the theme for GFP. In grass-roots peacebuilding, arms control is considered more related to legislation or enforcement mechanisms. He reflected that a different set of questions might need to be asked. He gave an overview of why SALW control is important. With at least 875 million firearms in the world, 71% are owned by civilians and 700,000 to 900,000 new firearms are being produced each year. It is a growing issue that affects all populations, but in the MENA region in particular. He highlighted three priority areas 1) control of ammunition as equally important, 2) address politically and culturally sensitive issues such as state-to-state arms trade transactions, the lack of universal implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in MENA and grass-roots cultural issues related to the demand side, including cultural narratives and gendered aspects of masculinity as well as households keeping weapons due to lack of trust in state security and 3) the need to connect parliamentarians with perspectives of women and of youth. Underscoring that violence is a catastrophic waste of money with an annual global cost of violence at \$14.1 Trillion (11.2% of GWP), he believed this economic argument to be most compelling, supported by evidence about the cost effectiveness of peacebuilding, where \$1 spent on 'upstream' violence prevention saves \$16 on the 'downstream' costs of violence. **Ms Karin Olofsson, Secretary General, Parliamentary Forum on SALW (PFSALW)** in addition to her fellow speakers, also extended her warm gratitude to the Folke Bernadotte Academy, the Swedish Agency for peace, security and development enabling this initiative by financial support. Adding to the previous speaker she noted that armed violence kills half a million people globally and that firearms were used in about 38% of all violent deaths. She introduced PFSALW as the only membership-based organisation gathering parliamentarians globally across party-political lines, specifically related to the issues of reduction and prevention of SALW related violence. It is an organisation constituted by parliamentarians, for parliamentarians with over 250 members in 90 countries globally. The work to enhance parliamentary action rests on three, mutually reinforcing methodological pillars: capacity-building, policy-shaping and awareness-raising. Regional seminars constitute fundamental parts to create spaces for dialogue and inspire to parliamentary action. She emphasised that despite the urgency and complexity of the problem, SALW – control remains an under-prioritised area on the international disarmament agenda. Parliamentarians are at the same time underutilised actors in sustainable development efforts. She concurred with previous speakers on the importance of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and noted PFSALW's proven track-record of involving women parliamentarians, with 28% women members compared to the global average stated by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, of 24%. Lastly, she highlighted that the seminar will be a first where PFSALW fully



introduces the YPS agenda as a key topic, as well as welcoming young parliamentarians and youth organisations to take active part.

Session I: Women, Peace and Security – Parliamentarians’ role for national implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the MENA-region

Objective: Translate global strategic objectives into national policies and legislation for the implementation of UNSCR 1325

The session was facilitated by **Ms Karin Olofsson - Secretary General, Parliamentary Forum on SALW** who also gave an introduction and overview of instruments and tools for SALW control including the ATT, the United Nations Programme of Action on Illicit SALW¹ and Sustainable Development Goal 16, target 4 of the 2030 Agenda (SDG 16.4) as well as the women and youth in peace and security agendas and their respective United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and UNSCR 2250, showcasing synergies and differences between the instruments.

First keynote panellist **Ms Frances Guy, Gender Team Leader, UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States**, was grateful to be part of a very timely discussion as the 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 approaches. She underscored that UNSCR 1325 was a landmark resolution for galvanising international discussion about the role of women in peace and security but it was not a disarmament resolution. In fact, it has been criticised for failing to mention SALW and for generally betraying the feminist commitment to total universal disarmament as first voiced at the International Congress for Women at the Hague in 1915. She noted that the United Nations (UN) sometimes claims a monopoly on WPS questions, without crediting others. There are now 9 resolutions on WPS and in 2015 i.e. 15 years after the first resolution, the introduction of more explicit language on SALW was introduced². Unfortunately, in the MENA region this important role of women as agents of change and participants in prevention of conflict is often overlooked. There are currently five countries in the region with National Action Plans (NAPs) on the implementation of UNSCR 1325³. There is also a regional action plan drawn up by the League of Arab States. Of these five 5 NAPs there is little reference to disarmament and SALW, despite being a region with high levels of SALW proliferation amongst the civilian population. Although men often possess and use SALW, women can and should be involved in the assessment and decision making about its prevention. As NAPs are government owned documents, even if in some cases they have been drawn up

¹ United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA).

² UNSCR 2242 includes language on small arms, encouraging the empowerment of women to participate in efforts related to the “prevention, combating, and eradication of the illicit transfer, and the destabilising accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons,” UNSCR 2200 urges all relevant actors “to take further measures to facilitate women’s full and meaningful participation in all policymaking, planning and implementation processes to combat and eradicate the illicit transfer, accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons and in that regard, encourages empowering women ...to participate in the design and implementation of efforts related to the illicit transfer.

³ Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, Tunisia and Lebanon.



with the participation of civil society, some of these NAPs have not been subject to parliamentary approval.

Parliamentarians have a key role in allocating sufficient resources which are vital for NAPs to be successful⁴. Women's committees in parliament can make sure that commitments to the implementation of the WPS resolutions are discussed. Women's committees and defence and security committees can familiarise themselves with the terms of the relevant resolutions and their own NAPs where they exist and ensure that the key role of women in disarmament is acknowledged. She ended her intervention by noting that key stakeholders to collaborate with should be women's organisations including any national disarmament movements. The challenges are great in including civil society in parliamentary discussions throughout the region, but parliamentarians do have the possibility of reaching out and including such actors. In this effort, UN Agencies are available to provide support.

Dr Ibrahim Al Shdifat, Major General (R) Engineering, Jordan Army, expressed his gratitude to PFSALW in whose capacity building activities he has participated in during the time he served as Member of Parliament (MP) for Jordan, including in 2014 when a seminar was held in cooperation with the Parliament of Jordan where he served as liaison. In relation to the WPS agenda he explained how Jordan has, as part of implementation of UNSCR 1325, developed a NAP, where a range of specialised people are involved. Women do assume political positions but he admitted Jordan is still lagging behind. He noted that the Jordanian Army is taking a lead in recruiting women to the armed forces and there is a day dedicated to celebrate the military woman. There have also been several initiatives on social media and he noted the important role of media in creating awareness. He called on present MPs to gather under the umbrella of PFSALW and noted Jordan had no members in PFSALW since 2012, due to political turnover. He stressed the need to create a bridge between old and new members and safeguard institutional memory in order to overcome this challenge.

Hon. Wafaa Bani Mustafa, Jordan, Chairperson of the Coalition of Women MPs from Arab Countries to Combat Violence against Women gave the **first parliamentary response**. She asked how to best follow up and monitor implementation. She believed that if we are serious about empowering women, relying on reports is a weak mechanism as much more is needed. She also expressed concerns for a lack of budget to implement the plan and that it would remain a plan on paper. In general, she believed that Jordan and the Arab region were skilled in establishing strategies but that there is a lack of resources. Lastly, she highlighted the role of parliamentarians to encourage their government to adhere to international agreements where accession is pending. **Hon. Sana Mersni, Tunisia, Security and Defence Committee** agreed that with access to firearms there will be higher levels of violence. She underscored the vital role of women in peace and security and noted the positive development of increasing numbers of women in parliament as well as in local councils in Tunisia. The Tunisian Parliament is unique in the region as more than 30% of representatives are women, the highest female representation of any Arab country. The new electoral laws from 2011 and 2014 endorse parity and women rights. **Hon. Dr Sahar Qawasmi, Palestine, Board member of the Parliamentary Forum on SALW**, highlighted the benefits of gender balance in order

⁴ Globally of the 82 countries with NAPs on UNSCR 1325 only 34 (i.e 43%) have an allocated budget.



to incorporate different perspectives in conflict resolution and peace-building. She also stressed the need for adequate budgets for effective implementation of action plans at local level.

During the **floor debate** participants discussed the supply and demand aspects of SALW and how it constitutes a two-way street. Producing countries, many of which are found in Europe, have a responsibility to ensure that arms produced do not end up in the wrong hands. The ATT is a tool for preventing diversion with the objective of ensuring responsible arms transfers and reducing human suffering. Palestine, as a country under occupation and with increasing levels of violence, was also highlighted, underscoring that the ATT had been a priority area for Palestine as a tool which can contribute to higher levels of peace and security. At the same time, the community aspect and the need to address the demand side were discussed. The need for stakeholders with appropriate budgets was identified as a main priority in order to ensure follow up and adequate reporting. Both parliamentarians and civil society have a role to play in ensuring mechanisms are in place. Finally, participants were informed that PFSALW strives to regularly provide platforms where representatives from supply and demand countries can meet and have a dialogue inspiring to parliamentary action.

Session II: Women in Peace and Security – Strengthening the gender equality perspective in actions for the control of SALW and the prevention and reduction of SALW related violence

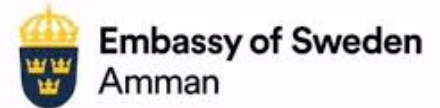
Objective: Integrating the gender equality perspective in national and regional work on SALW control in the MENA region

Hon. Sana Mersni, Tunisia, Security and Defence Committee introduced the session by stressing the importance of taking gender-based violence seriously and that the MENA region needs support in how to combat this type of violence. Keynote panellist **Mr Jakob Ström, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Sweden** started by highlighting the Swedish Feminist Foreign Policy which focus on ‘resources, representation and rights’ and that the topic was hence a main priority for Sweden. He continued by reflecting on while 84% of those killed by SALW are men, women are also victims in many ways. Spread over 125 countries, 603 million women are estimated to live in places where there is no legal protection against domestic violence. He stressed how coordination is key for enhanced results. In terms of how to improve women’s chances of involvement he gave a few examples including training programmes, scholarships and mentorships and to look beyond numbers and instead focus on qualitative results.

Hon. Dr Sahar Qawasmi, Palestine, Board member of the Parliamentary Forum on SALW focused her presentation on showing how armed violence and uncontrolled SALW arguably affect all Sustainable Development Goals, showcasing how it especially affects women and the connections to reproductive health. Countries experiencing conflict and crisis account for 50% of maternal deaths. Another area for attention in relation to representation is the labour market. According to World Bank data, the representation of Arab women in the labour market did not exceed 2%. She also noted the low number of women in parliament, which at 18% for MENA is below global average of 24%. According to the Global Gender Gap Index of all regions, MENA is at the bottom in terms of distance to gender parity. The dilemma



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lies in a lack of participation of women and a lack of stability. Women are the 'soft' force and she stressed that this in no way means the 'weak force', but rather that women tend to find other ways to manage conflict and crisis than men. She finished by reflecting on that with stronger collaboration between men and women, the world would be different. The first **parliamentary response** was given by **Hon. Gen. Dr. Kamal Amer, Egypt, Defence and National Security Committee**, who agreed on the important role of women, especially at community level. He noted that Egypt currently has 90 women in parliament which out of 596 legislators constitute 15%. Egypt has 9 women ministers, including the Minister of Investment and International Cooperation. There is a new amendment regarding quota for women. Egyptian women will be granted one fourth the number of Parliament seats according to the proposed constitutional amendments to increase women quota. **Hon. Belal Qasem, Palestine, Member of the Parliamentary Forum on SALW** wished to discuss Yemen which in the 1970's was a peaceful country, a situation that has changed due to several factors, among them the spread of weapons at cheap prices, in turn having led to civil unrest. He emphasised women's important role in educating the youth and to prevent them from acquiring weapons. Lastly, in relation to violence against women he stressed the importance of passing on the message to the next generation.

During the **floor debate** discussion relating to the supply and demand continued. While weapons to a large extent come from Europe, it is important not to just blame arms exporting countries but to work at national level to address the demand side of weapons, including tackling unemployment as a vital aspect in this work. Participants then noted that the presentations had highlighted the important role of women in the community but that this now needs to be translated to the national level and decision-making positions. Some participants underlined the importance of appointing qualified women with suitable knowledge and experience for their posts. This and the traditional view that women must appear and act respectfully was also debated and different perspectives brought forward. Tunisia was again shown as a country which has made exceptional progress in the MENA-region and compares itself to Scandinavian countries. However, there are still many obstacles. For example, as in many other countries, women are held back by unequal burden of household work and childcare. Women in MENA also oppose laws set by men to limit their rights and freedoms.

Moreover, participants argued that the notion of a woman who 'brings harm to herself' must be brought to an end and acts such as marital rape, female genital mutilation (FGM) and honour crimes must be criminalised and penalties implemented. It is also clear that in MENA, to a certain degree, views that violence against women can and should be used as an educative measure or a way of showing love are still prevalent. Participants noted that the acceptance of violence as part of ethics or tradition is disastrous. In the past, women were not aware of their rights but things are now changing. In sum, women have a vital role in peace and security and their role in educating youth was brought forward.

In the final conclusions from the panel, some views expressed during the debate, for example that MENA was a peaceful region before the 1st World War, were questioned. It is important for both Western and MENA countries to have a nuanced view of the security situation in the region. While it is not conducive for Western countries to categorically stop immigration of Muslims and claim a link to violence, neither should countries in the region claim that violence in MENA solely comes from outside.



Session III: Open floor discussions on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in relation to SALW control and the 2030 Agenda in the MENA region

Objective: Exchange of best practices, conclusions and discussions from the day

All participants were divided into two groups for a 40 minutes discussion guided by key questions. The groups reported the following conclusions:

Opportunities	Challenges
Political will Will to maintain sustainable peace Raise awareness, especially on social media Cooperation NGOs - governments Regional and national action plans Include SALW awareness in education system Women quotas Increase women in strategic positions / specified committees Increase women in military and security forces	Lack of financial resources Cultural aspects / values Patriarchal system Social / religious taboos Lack of coverage of whole spectra, including on women's situation Lack of a disarmament perspective

Session IV: Youth, Peace and Security and the 2030 Agenda – maximising synergies to enhance the role of youth to achieve sustainable peace and development

Objective: Discuss regional and national strategies to implement UNSCR 2250 and the 2030 Agenda by increasing the participation of youth in peace, security and sustainable development.

The introduction was made by **Mr Mümtaz Güner, Secretary of the Turkish Delegation of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)**, on behalf of Hon. Zeynep Yildiz, Turkey, Committee on National Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Member of the Turkish IPU delegation, who had to cancel for medical reasons. He introduced UNSCR2250 from December 2015 which is the first of its kind to promote inclusion of youth in peace and security. He noted that the resolution which has been hailed by young people rests on the 5 pillars of participation, protection, prevention, partnerships and disengagement and reintegration. Keynote speaker **Mr Barik Mhadeen, Senior Researcher, West Asia-North Africa Institute** reminded participants that today's youth population is the largest the world has ever seen. He noted that youth are often associated with insecurity and violent extremism. While the situation in MENA has been deteriorating and many young people are recruited to extremist groups, there is a strong need to change this narrative and avoid policies of panic. We need to remember that only 0.1% of youth are violent. **Ms Ekram Zubaydi, the Palestinian Centre for Peace and Democracy** gave an overview of the situation of youth in Palestine where 49.9% of Palestinian youth are unemployed and only 1.4% are active in political



parties. She noted that their main concern is trying to make a living. In addition to these economic obstacles, social challenges include a traditional culture which still sees older people as better equipped to make decisions than the young. The patriarchal system prevents many women from participating in political life. Lastly, the Israeli occupation in combination with the weakness of the Palestinian political system is a major political challenge for Palestinian youth.

Mr Arafat Awad, Youth coordinator, Solidarity is Global Institute, started his intervention showing his gratitude to the King of Jordan, a role model in relation to the YPS agenda. With UNSCR 2250 in place, young people are no longer playing the role of the victim but as actively involved peace-builders. He stressed the importance of coordination and the risks involved when actors, although aiming for the same goals, end up pulling in different directions. He underscored the need to work across Jordan. In the past, focus was very much on the capital Amman, but now interventions are made also in rural areas. On a final note he stated that while passion can inspire, commitment is what will ultimately make us achieve our goals.

The **first parliamentary response** was given by **Hon. Mahmoud Kissari, Algeria, Committee of the National Council on Local Development, Committee on Agriculture**, who was pleased to share that Algeria is making great progress in terms of development. A strategy was adopted and this has been complimented by a substantial budget and resources which he believed had been instrumental in the success. Main focus had been poverty reduction as well as human and women's rights. He agreed with previous speaker of the importance of not only investing in urban areas but remote places as well. In his work linked to the agricultural sector he had seen the important role this sector has in terms of poverty reduction which in turn has its links to SALW-violence reduction and SDG 16. **Hon. Sabrine Ghoubantini, Tunisia, Defence and Security Committee**, continued and noted that the situation in Tunisia is very different from a regional perspective. Tunisia is considered the first democratic country in MENA, with higher levels of political freedom as well as free media. However, many challenges remain. In relation to youth she highlighted education and employment. 62% of young people between the ages of 18 and 30 do not accept work unless they are in public service, due to the private sector being highly uncertain. At the same time 60% of young people do not trust state institutions and 50% of young people consider that their degree does not enable them to get a job – a view backed up by reality as many with degrees remain without work. She concluded by noting that politics overall is conducted by a metropolitan elite, where marginalised groups have little space. She was however hopeful for change. The new quotas introduced to boost representation of women and young people are good examples. She noted that it was thanks to this form of positive discrimination that she herself had been elected.

During the **floor debate** the participants highlighted youth as drivers for change and key for success. This had been the case in for instance Tunisia. The issue of unemployment was also raised but also that questions related to youth must be considered in a holistic manner. It was emphasised that youth must be appointed positions in government as they have valuable experiences. The implications and challenges involved in being both woman and young was also brought up. Participants noted that young people can easily be discouraged and turn against a society they feel do not represent them. They become prone to radicalisation in different ways, as had been seen in various extremist groups in MENA, linked to religion



as well as in Europe and USA with far-right movements. The idea of democracy is also contested to some extent in the MENA region. Nevertheless, participants agreed that there is a will to learn and embrace democratic systems but this sometimes takes time and may be more successful with generations to come.

Session V: Promoting dialogue between youth and parliamentarians in peace-building

Objective: Identify strategies to promote regional and national dialogue between youth and parliamentarians in peace-building

Hon. Sabrine Ghoubantini, Tunisia, Defence and Security Committee introduced the session by referring to experiences from Tunisia, highlighting the need to reflect on perceptions of youth as well as parliamentarians. It is vital to find alternative mechanisms to communicate with youth, where social media has shown to be an innovative channel especially in Arab countries. One strategy to involve more youth is to increase collaborate with civil society. She also mentioned a recent media initiative spreading success stories of young people as key to spread hope and trust.

First keynote panellist **Dr. Mohammed Arabiat, President, Generations for Peace (GFP)**, started by stating that the young bear the heaviest burden in terms of unemployment and conflict. He shared some numbers from Jordan where 30% of the population is between 15-29 years old and where unemployment is at 19%. When looking at the female side of the population, it is even higher. There is a strong need for a paradigm shift in order to look at youth with potential, socially, economically and politically – as change makers rather than as a security threat. He noted that a main challenge is that old, often men, speak for young people and the young are left without their own voice or the possibility to share their experiences. Political institutions are often slow to adapt to the needs of younger generations. A focus should not only be on doing things for youth but to have them truly engaged in processes and go beyond superficial consultations. In a final note, he highlighted GFP's focus on providing a platform for young people and emphasised the importance of building trust.

Mr Mümtaz Güner, Secretary of the Turkish Delegation of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) presented a global view of young parliamentarians which showed figures of very low representation. Based on IPU research, he noted that fewer than 2% of all MPs are under the age of 30. With the IPU's definition of a young MP as under the age of 45, which is also the age limit to form part of its Forum of Young Parliamentarians, the world average is at 28.1%. **Ms Lina Haddad, member of Solidarity is Global Institute Youth Committee** continued by highlighting increasing youth unemployment, conflicts, low representation reflecting a dire need to build and invest in capacities among youth for sustainable peace building. The UNSCR 2250 is an acknowledgement from the UN on the important role of youth, showing the need to activate the role of young people in all official channels, not only parliamentarians. She pinpointed the need of a comprehensive national strategy to address the situation; to pass legislation reflecting good impact and to revisit the real need of youth to address the weak trust between youth and decision makers and to establish a real dialogue on peace building. She also mentioned the need to establish



communitarian youth coalitions; lower the age limit of running for office and the importance of giving space to the voices of youth at international events.

The first parliamentary response was given by **Hon. Elias Hankach Lebanon, Youth and Sports Committee** who emphasised the importance to learn from one another in exchange between countries. The youth is not the future they are the present, he stated, referring to himself as being youth in the Lebanese parliament. Involving the youth is crucial; otherwise you leave out the opportunity to include their voices. The youth also has a responsibility to involve themselves. One important step could be to include youth quota as legislation, as for example in Tunisia, referring to ongoing work to draft a Lebanese version. **Hon. Mahmoud Kissari, Algeria, Committee of the National Council on Local Development, Committee on Agriculture** continued by stating that Algeria has not sufficiently involved the youth, as resistance is faced from several actors. Many parties are not admitting that youth has any problem, which is the first step to address the situation. Measures such as quotas can be important but shall be temporary; as the goal must be to have youth included in long-term political processes and the community should be the one choosing politicians. Algeria has combated violent ideology that can spur violence and the country is committed to a stability based on democracy and international treaties and conventions. It is vital to support dialogue but also provide economic opportunities, such as student loans, and address migration issues to enable studies and work abroad. During the **floor debate** different aspects on the topic were raised. As parliamentarian it could be challenging to build dialogue with young people as they expect quick responses and there is a need to be proactive. On the other hand, young parliamentarians need to adapt to bureaucracy and often traditional frameworks of political parties, which can limit initiative and driving force. The vital role of understanding both urban and rural realities and ethnic identities was pinpointed; in some communities there is a limited understanding of democracy which leads to lack of real representation in parliaments.

Session VI: Towards inclusive processes on peace, security and development by implementing UNSCR 1325 & 2250

Objective: Gain expert advice and insights on actions to take to enhance regional efforts to include women and youth in processes on peace, security and development.

Key panellist **Mr Hédi Abdelkefi, Parliamentary and Constitutional Support Specialist, UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States**, emphasised the contribution of women in supporting peace and youth, and highlighted the example of Sudan where women had played a major role. Over the last three decades, women's participation remains low in the region. Among the 10 countries with least women in parliament, the MENA region account for four despite many countries having quotas. In terms of youth there are some alarming numbers too. Globally parliamentarians under the age of 30 are 2%. In the MENA region it is even lower at 1,08% and 3-4 countries have 0% youth in parliament. Among the challenges in the world today he pinpointed the rise of right-wing movements and referred to elections in many EU countries. This means that democracy is in crisis. He noted an earlier comment from Tunisia that political parties must open up. Another important aspect is involving civil society in oversight efforts *visavi* the



government as well as in legislative processes. **Mr Arafat Awad, Youth coordinator, Solidarity is Global Institute** continued by emphasising the need to invest in order to successfully implement UNSCR 2250. Committed parliamentarians as well as support from civil society and youth organisations to follow up on processes will be needed. There is also a need for success stories as negativity is high in the Arab region. Platforms such as Facebook can be used to spread positive messages. He ended by stating that by taking part in the seminar, and through dialogue with dedicated young parliamentarians, has inspired him to run for election.

The first parliamentary response was given by **Hon. Nedal Mahmoud Ahmed Al-Ta'ani, Jordan, Chairperson International Affairs Committee** who noted the high numbers of refugees who had come to Jordan in search for peace and stability. Jordan will continue to serve this diplomatic role. In order to see advancements in the future he highlighted the need to have the trust of the citizens. He encouraged youth leadership and to overall improve the situation for young people.

During the **floor debate** participants recommended PFSALW that onwards more time should be given to elaborate on national situations. The challenges women face were exemplified by field work where community leaders had refused to speak with female representatives of organisations, and had only talked to men. Participants agreed that it is vital to change perspectives but some meant changes must come gradually as to not feel imposed. The agreement that women are good decision-makers in the home must now be translated into political life. The benefits of and need for quotas, especially in the MENA region was once again highlighted.

Session VII: Exchange of Parliamentary experiences and adoption of a Parliamentary Action Plan, including Coffee Break

Objective: in groups discuss and identify main priorities & actions needed in terms of regional work on SALW control and the implementation of UNSCR 1325 & 2250. Main conclusions to be incorporated to the Parliamentary Action Plan. Discussion and adoption of Parliamentary Action Plan.

Participants were divided into groups and after one hour of discussion returned to the plenary. They presented their conclusions, modifications and amendments to the draft Parliamentary Action Plan.

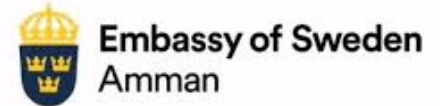
The Parliamentary Action Plan for MENA was then adopted. Participants were informed that it will be translated into Arabic.

Concluding remarks

Hon. Dr Sahar Qawasmi, Palestine, Board member of the Parliamentary Forum on SALW thanked all participants as well as PFSALW – a forum established to enhance peace and security. She emphasised that work in the MENA region should be in harmony with the international agenda, but from an Arab



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perspective. Women and youth will be key in this work to ensure sustainable peace-building. **Ms Karin Olofsson, Secretary General, Parliamentary Forum on SALW** also expressed her sincere gratitude to all participants, hosts and co-organisers as well as the PFSALW secretariat for their dedicated work in planning and implementation of the event. The interpreters were given a special mention as the invisible heroes making the dialogue possible. She noted her admiration for all participants' devotion and competence and congratulated on being part of adopting the first Parliamentary Action Plan for the MENA region. She encouraged everyone to stay in touch, interact with PFSALW, and to continue the vital work to take action to prevent armed violence for more peaceful societies. On that note the session was closed.

List of participants

Member of Parliament	Country	Organisation
Hon. Mahmoud Kissari	Algeria	Member of Parliament
Hon. Gen. Dr. Kamal Amer	Egypt	Member of Parliament
Hon. Elias Hankach	Lebanon	Member of Parliament
H.E. Hon. Dr. Nassar Al Qaisi	Jordan	First Deputy speaker, House of Representatives, Parliament of Jordan
Hon. Nedal Mahmoud Ahmed Al-Ta'ani	Jordan	Member of Parliament
Hon. Wafaa Bani Mustafa	Jordan	Member of Parliament
Hon. Belal Qasem	Palestine	Vice-President, Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean
Hon. Dr. Sahar Qawasmi	Palestine	Member of Parliament
Hon. Sabrine Ghoubantini	Tunisia	Member of Parliament
Hon. Sana Mersni	Tunisia	Member of Parliament
Hon. Zeynep Yildiz	Turkey	Member of Parliament
Experts and civil society representatives		
Hédi Abdelkefi	Jordan	Parliamentary and constitutional support specialist, UNDP regional hub for Arab states
Dr. Ibrahim AL Shdaifat	Jordan	Former Member of Parliament, Jordan
Dr. Mohannad Arabiat	Jordan	President, Generations for Peace (GFP)
Arafat Awad	Jordan	Youth coordinator, Solidarity is global institute/Jordan (SIGI)
Mark Clark	Jordan	Chief Executive Officer, Generations for Peace (GFP)
Francis Guy	Jordan	Gender Team Leader, UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States



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Sara Ferrer Olivella	Jordan	Resident representative, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Lina Haddad	Jordan	Youth member, Solidarity is global institute/Jordan (SIGI)
Barik Mhadeen	Jordan	Senior Researcher – Human Security, West Asia-North Africa Institute (WANA)
Ekram Zubaydi	Palestine	The Palestinian Centre for Democracy
Karin Olofsson	Sweden	Secretary General, The Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PFSALW)
Teresa Dybeck	Sweden	Programme Manager, The Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PFSALW)
Emmanuelle Texier	Sweden	Programme Officer, The Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PFSALW)
Mümtaz Güner	Turkey	Secretary of Turkish IPU delegation
Diplomatic representation		
Christopher Hull	Canada	Chargé d'affaires, Embassy of Canada
Akram Elgendi	Egypt	First Secretary- Political Section, Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt
H.E. Mr. Sherif Kamel	Egypt	Ambassador, Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt
Mobarak Al Hajri	Kuwait	Counselor, Embassy of Kuwait
Rosie de Kieft	Netherlands	Defense Attaché, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
Maja Petersson	Sweden	Junior Political Officer, Embassy of Sweden
Jakob Ström	Sweden	Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Sweden
H.E Mr. Erik Ullenhag	Sweden	Ambassador, Embassy of Sweden
Amani Hammad	UK	Political Advisor, British Embassy
Adam Kotkin	USA	Political Officer, U.S. Embassy
Yasmeen Asfour	USA	U.S. Embassy



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Annexes

Annex 1: [Parliamentary Action Plan \(in English\)](#)

Annex 2: [Parliamentary Action Plan \(in Arabic\)](#)