



UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement

Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente

Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде

برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة

联合国环境规划署



Reference: DEPI/EO-0311/2014/HS/yo

27 May 2014

Dear Ms. Kane,

Thank you for your memorandum dated 10 February, requesting inputs for the Secretary-General's report with respect to promoting the role of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

UNEP has partnered with UN Women, UNDP and the Peacebuilding support office to analyze the relationship between women and natural resources in conflict-affected and peacebuilding settings. Among other topics, the resulting policy report, "Women and Natural Resources: Unlocking the Peace building Potential", examines how natural resource management can support the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) of female ex-combatants. The report and supporting materials are available at the following link:

<http://www.unep.org/disastersandconflicts/Introduction/ECP/WomenandNaturalResourcesinPeacebuilding/tabid/131156/Default.aspx>).

The report examines how women's diverse experiences in times of conflict have powerful implications for their contributions to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Shifting gender norms coupled with women's roles in natural resource management can greatly influence their ability to recover and participate in various decision-making processes. For example, when disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes fail to recognize these roles and develop gender-specific programmes, female ex-combatants can be further marginalized and even denied the support services afforded to male ex-combatants, such as access to land or disbursements of cash through which land can be purchased.

Furthermore, secure access to valuable natural resources such as land is key for ex-combatants to be able to provide for themselves and sustain productive livelihoods, especially when they do not return to their families or communities of origin. In many conflict-affected contexts women face unique challenges in accessing land. This remains a significant barrier for reintegration for female combatants.

Ms. Angela Kane
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The report contends that failure to recognize the specific natural resource related challenges and opportunities for women in conflict-affected settings can perpetuate discrimination and exacerbate inequality which can result in conflict relapse. It provides an initial analysis on how natural resources can provide an entry point for increasing women's engagement in decision-making and conflict reduction and encourages further inter-agency cooperation on these issues.

Yours sincerely,

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