



Amplifying Women's Voices Towards Sustainable Peace

Women CSO-Led Panel Discussion during the High-Level Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, April 24-25 2018

Presentation by Ma Annie Nushane, Peace Hut Leader, Liberia Final Draft as of 24 April 2018

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am Good morning. Thank you to the UN Women, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, Peacebuilding Support Office and the Permanent Missions of Canada, Japan and Liberia for this opportunity to share the perspective of Liberian rural women on Sustaining Peace.

It is not often that a woman from a rural community gets the opportunity to share her experience of working to build peace at the grassroots level at such important meeting.

We the women of Liberia have risen beyond the experiences of our civil war and are leading the way for peace in Liberia through our work in the Peace Huts.

Having witnessed the civil war in our country for several years, we are grateful to the International Community for intervening and bringing peace to Liberia. As a means of keeping the peace, I along with other women in my community have organized peace huts for signs of early warning and settling disputes. This is of great help to our community and we continue to look forward to more support as these peace huts are the first line of contact for settling disputes at community level.

Today, our communities are getting more peaceful but there are a lot of things that need to be done to make our peace sustainable.

- Increased support to women's involvement in peacebuilding, especially the inclusion of community women structures like the Peace Huts. We are the backbone when it comes to peacebuilding
- Strengthening of the justice system: Recruitment of more women police/security officers, training of rule of law actors (Police, Lawyers etc)
- Improvement in the socio-economic conditions of the country, especially targeting vulnerable and marginalized segments of the population (women, youth etc)

The Women of Liberia have tried to first focus on keeping peaceful families both in homes and communities. We together with other Civil Society organizations have been pushing for the recruitment of more women in the security sector as a way of sustaining the peace. We are also focused on Information sharing among all other women groups.

During the elections, women at the peace hut played a major role in ensuring that violence was never embraced by holding regular forums with youths and other women reminding them about the importance of keeping the peace.

While we are pushing to keep the peace, there are challenges:

- The Justice system still needs to be improved.
- Unemployment of youths is still high and this is a serious threat as in most cases youths are the ones often used during crisis.
- Increase in Land conflict. Land was a major issue that led to our civil war and this has not been properly addressed.

In the view of the above, I would like to make these recommendations:

- That government with the help of International Partners invest more in the Justice system by building more courts and providing better salaries to ensure fair justice and avoid bribery
- The government and International Partners create programs for youth employment or engagement
- For our government to ensure that the land right act is passed into law
- Those who committed crimes during the civil war, be brought to justice.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you.