

Women as Peacemakers: The Untapped Potential in Global Politics

Abstract:

In spite of their demonstrated success in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, women are still far from being well represented in international political processes. Studies continue to affirm that peace settlements negotiated with the participation of women are more stable and more inclusive. Still, hurdles of political exclusion, gender discrimination, and cultural values keep women from assuming leadership positions in negotiations. It is not only a question of equity but a strategic imperative for sustainable world peace to acknowledge and empower women as peacemakers.

Article:

For centuries, women have been key yet underappreciated actors in peace-making and conflict resolution. In the last several decades, their efforts have begun to gain greater recognition, but their potential remains significantly unrealized in official global political processes. Research shows that if women are brought into peace talks, agreements are 35% more likely to survive for 15 years or more. This incredible statistic underscores the pivotal, yet underexploited, role that women can play as builders of enduring peace.

Women's own experiences in economies, communities, and families give them a distinct approach that can be more concerned with the human costs of war than any external outcome. Theirs is an approach that emphasizes rebuilding and reconciliation and social justice rather than political or military victory. It was efforts such as those spearheaded by Leymah Gbowee's Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace in Liberia that showed that women's activism can effectively get warring parties to the negotiating table and insist on accountability.

Nonetheless, systemic impediments still restrict the engagement of women. Institutional prejudices, cultural norms, and limited access to power structures tend to exclude women from decision-making positions. In spite of international guidelines such as the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, which urges increased incorporation of women in peace and security, actual developments have been sluggish.

Women's potential as peacemakers must be deliberately realized. Governments and international institutions must go beyond gestures and enact policies that secure women's full, equal, and effective participation. Mentorship schemes, gender quotas at the peace table, and support for women-led peace processes are tried and tested measures to bridge the gap.

In a world struggling with long and multifaceted conflicts, the inclusion of women's leadership is not only an ethical necessity but a pragmatic one as well. Peace processes that echo the voices of all segments of society are more just, inclusive, and sustainable. The day has arrived when women are not merely seen as victims of conflict, but as powerful peace agents.