

# Women Mediators Networks as New Civic Actors

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DSA Civil Society Study Group Webinar

“Public Diplomacy’s New Civic Actors: NGO’s, Women Mediators Network and  
Diasporas”

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# Why Women Mediators?

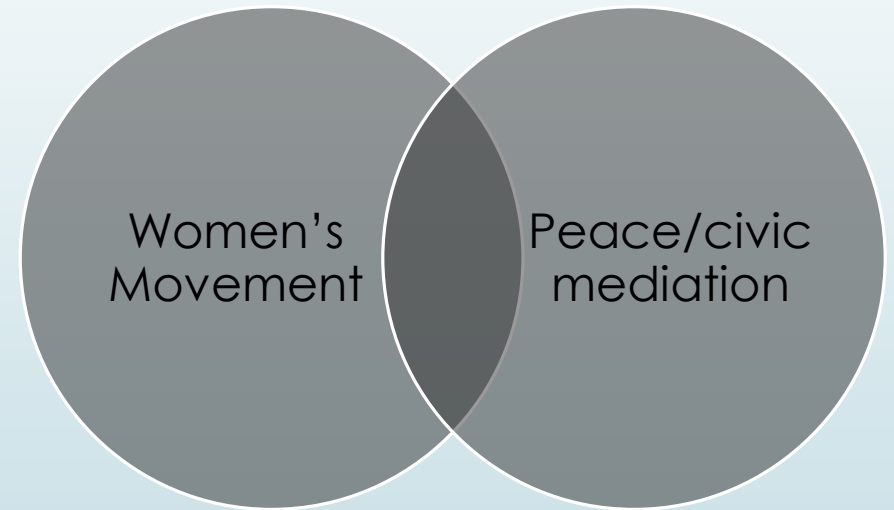
- ▶ UN Security Council Resolution 1325
- ▶ Emphasis on women's participation in peace processes
- ▶ Only recently attention paid to women as mediators and how they contributed to the overall landscape of peace and security.

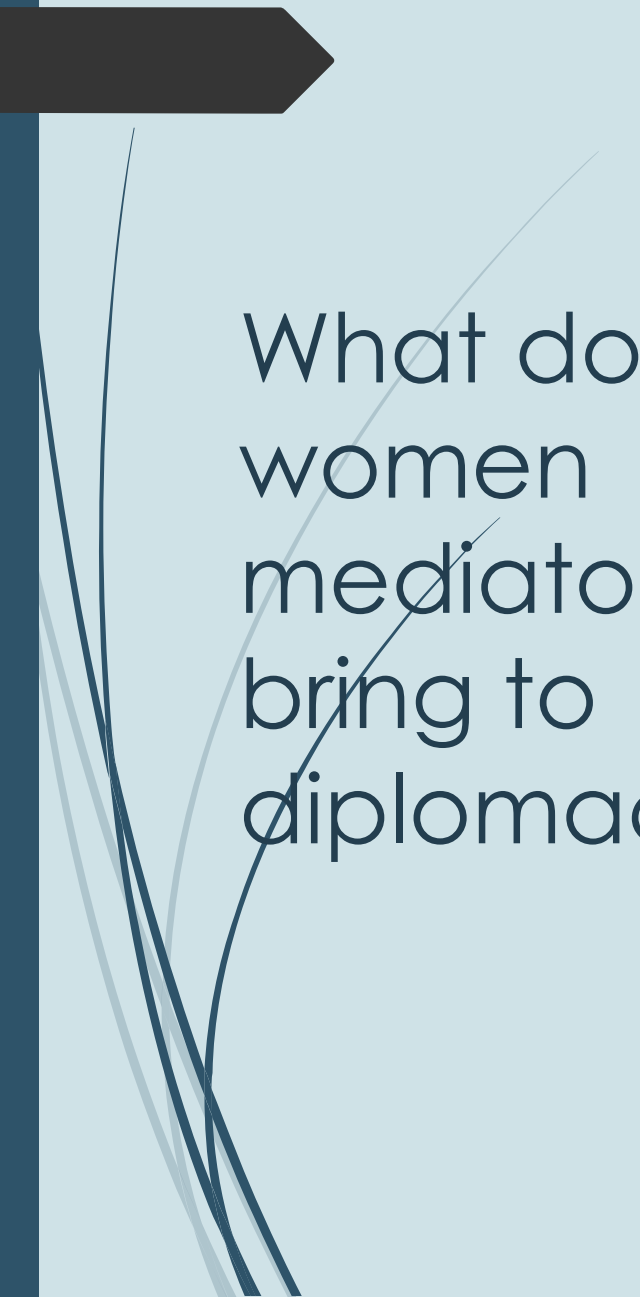
# The Northern Ireland Experience

- Story of NIWC well known



- Possible because of existence of grass roots women's movement
- In addition, strong presence of peacebuilding, civic mediation work





# What do women mediators bring to diplomacy?

## “Soft Ways of Doing Hard Things”

### 1. Relational Approaches:

- ▶ Listening/Empathy
- ▶ More attuned to emotion or unspoken words
- ▶ Prioritising listening to build trust

### 2. Non –political (?)

- ▶ Seen as non-threatening
- ▶ Not a competitor/not being ‘fit’ into the male pecking order
- ▶ Soft authority

### 3. Quietness as a strategic tool

- ▶ ‘I always hear two or three war stories quietly in the corner’
- ▶ “I learned how to sidle up to those difficult conversations in a gentler way”
- ▶ “I never wanted to be a big presence. I wanted to be a quiet presence”

### 4: Experience based knowledge

- ▶ engaging culturally sensitive and context specific knowledge
- ▶ Sensitivity to traditional gender roles

# Not just Northern/Ireland



# Women Mediators Networks



SOUTHEAST ASIAN NETWORK  
OF WOMEN PEACE  
NEGOTIATORS AND  
MEDIATORS



ARAB WOMEN MEDIATORS  
NETWORK

## NORDIC WOMEN MEDIATORS



**Women  
Mediators**


ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH

African Union 

FEMWISE-AFRICA



A Global Alliance of Regional  
Women Mediator Networks



The Role of  
Networks:  
Connecting  
the Local  
and the  
Global

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### 3 Cross Cutting Aims:

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Increasing the **visibility** of women mediators

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Developing capacity and skills of women in mediation

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Strengthen **inclusive** mediation and sustainable peace agreements



# Networks in Northern/Ireland?

- ▶ Remain informal
- ▶ Contributing something specific to both local and global approaches to conflict
- ▶ Well globally networked
- ▶ In a position to benefit more tangibly from global trends