WOMEN AND THE SYRIAN CONFLICT: THE GENEVA TALKS AND AN
INSIGHT FROM TURKEY

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ABSTRACT

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Within the focus of women and the Syrian conflict, this thesis aims to analyse the Syrian peace process, specifically the Geneva Talks from 2012 – 2016. Here the work of Syrian women's civil society is central, as the effectiveness of their avid efforts to bolster their position within the peace negotiations is evaluated. Thus, in line with a gender perspective, the issue of how women can navigate male institutionalism within processes of peace is considered. What's more, how women are impacted by war and what role they can play in peace are paramount questions asked. Furthermore, within a small scale study with participants in Ankara, field research reflects upon perceptions of peace and the Geneva Talks from interviewees who are both professionally and personally engaged with the Syrian refugee context in Turkey. Accordingly, the specific challenges of displacement are also looked at. Finally, the analysis of the Geneva Talks and the interpretations of these peace negotiations from field research are brought together within a broader outlook towards peacebuilding.

Key words: Syria, Geneva Talks, Women, Refugee

ÖZ

KADINLAR VE SURİYE'DEKİ ÇATIŞMA: CENEVRE MÜZAKERELERİ VE TÜRKİYE'DEN YAPILAN BİR ANALİZ

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İşbu tez, kadınlar ve Suriye'deki çatışma odağında, özellikle 2012-2016 yılları arasında gerçekleştirilen Cenevre Müzakereleri ile Suriye'deki barış sürecinin analizini yapmayı hedeflemektedir. Suriyeli kadınların sivil toplum çalışmaları merkeze alınmış olup, söz konusu barış görüşmelerinde, kadınların kendi konumlarını güçlendirmek için sarf ettikleri azami çabanın etkinliği değerlendirilmektedir. Nitekim, cinsiyet üzerine temellendirilmiş yaklaşım bağlamında, kadınların erkek hegemonyasını, söz konusu barış süreci içinde nasıl kontrol ve idare edebileceği konuları değerlendirilmektedir. Bunun yanında, kadınların savaştan nasıl etkilendiği ve barış sürecinde üstlenebilecekleri rollerin neler olduğu sorularının yanıtları aranmaktadır. Ayrıca, Ankara'dan katılımcıların yer aldığı küçük ölçekli bir çalışma çerçevesinde, Türkiye'deki Suriyeli sığınmacılar ile gerek profesyonel gerekse kişisel ilişki kuran kişiler ile görüşmeler yapılmış olup, işbu tez kapsamında yapılan bu alan araştırması ile, barış görüşmeleri ve Cenevre Müzakerelerinin toplumda oluşturduğu algı gözler önüne serilmektedir. Bu çerçevede, göç etmenin neden

olduğu zorluklara da değinilmektedir. Son olarak, "barışın inşası" genel başlığı altında, bu defa Cenevre Müzakereleri ve işbu tez kapsamında yapılan alan araştırması ile nasıl yorumlandığı gözler önüne serilen "barış görüşmeleri", geniş bir perspektif ile bir arada değerlendirilmektedir.

Anahter Kelimeler: Suriye, Cenevre Müzakereleri, Kadınlar, Mülteciler

DEDICATION

To all those who are feeling the effects of war, and to all those working to once again feel peace.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AWWP: Afghan Women's Writing Project

CEDAW: Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

CSSR: Civil Society Support Room

CR: Conflict Resolution

DDR: Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration

ISAF: International Security Assistance Force

FAFO: Norwegian Institute for Applied Science

GBV: Gender Based Violence

HNC: The High Negotiations Committee

INGO: International Non-Governmental Organisation

NATO: The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisations

PKK: Kurdistan Workers' Party

RUF: Revolutionary United Front

SWIPD: Syrian Women's Initiative for Peace and Democracy

TP: Temporary Protection

TRC: Turkish Red Crescent

UN: United Nations

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNOG: United Nations Office in Geneva

UNSC: United Nations Security Council

UNSMIS: United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria

VAW: Violence against Women

WAB: Women's Advisory Board

WCC: Women's Consultative Committee

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Setting the Question

In light of the continued conflict in Syria, the peace process has been a source of fundamental hope for ending of the harrowing scale of violence since 2012. I argue that a distinct feature of the efforts being made towards peace is the work and achievements made by Syrian Women, although the necessity for further multi-level empowerment is evident.

The choice of question is currently very relevant for several reasons. Firstly in regards to the ongoing tragedy of the Syrian conflict, further research focusing on attempts to reach a peaceful settlement is of the utmost priority. Due to the scale and duration of the conflict, the global reaching impacts reflect some of the most fundamental issues of modern time including proxy warfare, terrorism, and refugees, military and humanitarian intervention. Secondly, the contemporary timing of the topic provides an originality as there is currently limited academic analysis of the Geneva Talks[1]. Likewise, the necessity to intersect Peace Studies and Gender Studies in order to advocate women in conflict resolution has been part of institutional narratives. However, a more thorough manifestation of this discourse in a practical sense needs to be achieved, as well as a case by case application. Which is why I believe that the third reason of relevance is the necessity to promote the role of women with the Syrian peace process for not only

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[1] The Geneva Talks are a series of UN-backed peace negotiations focussed on ending the Syrian conflict held in 2012, 2014 and 2016 (the 2017 talks are still ongoing at the time of writing).

gender empowerment, but also for both the short-term success of the talks, as well as the long-term prosperity of the nation.

Thus the main component of my argument in this thesis is the advocacy of women within conflict resolution. By analysing the Geneva Talks, the clear dominance of masculinity shall certainly be criticised within the analysis, however the emerging current of the increasing role of women within the narrative as well as through practical measures is a promising trend. Most significantly, the intensive work by Syrian women's civil society, alongside responsive characters within the UN institution, in particular the Special Envoy for Syria Staffan De Mistura. It will be argued that the improvements made from 2012 to 2016 must continue and not relapse; furthermore they must be carried into the peacebuilding process. Furthermore, I fully encourage the empowerment of women within conflict resolution from a local to a global level, especially in a way which incorporates a multitude of voices which is why the choice to carry out primary research has been made in support of this notion of inclusivity. Consequently, how the Geneva Talks are interpreted by people who have been directly impacted by the Syrian conflict, either personally or through professional experiences, is a central element of the research agenda. However, as the research findings and analysis will reflect upon in further detail, the gap between the institutional level of the peace negotiations and perceptions from the field were significant. Which is why the development of ideas progressed to looking at this gap, and evaluating the reasons for this disconnect, whilst also considering the gender dimension.

In regards to the structure of the thesis; within Chapter 1 the Introduction, a brief background of the Syrian Conflict will be followed by the 1.3. Research Design and Method that will provide an account of the qualitative approach taken for both the primary and secondary aspects of the research. Then Chapter 2, the Theoretical Framework, gives an overview of how the hypothesis of the thesis can be located

within the wider academic debate, focussing on the intersection of Peace Studies and Gender Studies. In particular the challenge of writing about such a contemporary topic has been dealt with using certain research strategies to overcome gaps or unreliability in the available information. The thesis will then reach Chapter 3, Analysis of the Syrian Peace Process, in which the Geneva talks will be analysed in depth. The progression of the peace process from 2012, to 2014 and 2016 will be deconstructed, providing a textual evaluation that looks at the narrative and central themes. But especially considering the increasing role that women have played in both the delegations, civil society, and eventually in forming an Advisory Board. Then in Chapter 4, Exploring the Situation for Syrians in Ankara, primary data will be a central aspect as the interpretations of the peace process by those related to the Syrian conflict either through their nationality and/or their work with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) will be incorporated as part of a case study of the reality of views and the situation on the ground for Syrians in Ankara. Following the Geneva talk's analysis and discussion of primary sources, the thesis will explore the inclusion of these findings within future peacebuilding in Chapter 5, Looking Forward: How the Thesis's Findings can Inform Peacebuilding. Here the connections between the Geneva Talks and the field research shall be explored, in line with a suggested approach for incorporating gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding, before making the final conclusions.

Due to the enormity of the topic chosen and its immensely complex nature, the approach to this thesis inevitably has to be strict in committing to a particular focus and time frame. Thus, in Chapter Three, Analysis of the Geneva Talks, the role of women within the Geneva talks is the pivotal point of concern rather than other agreements and conferences towards peace although these will be touched upon in section 3.2. Outlining the Significant Events of the Peace Process. In Chapter 4, Exploring the Situation for Syrians in Ankara, the interview questions will provide a structure for discussion

but again within the case study as a whole the scope will be to examine the situations and perceptions of Syrians in Ankara. Here the bottom up approach of directly conducting both formal and informal interviews aims to provide perspectives of peace from those more directly impacted that will contrast to the more institutional level of the peace talks. Finally in Chapter 5, Looking Forward: How the Thesis's Findings can Inform Peacebuilding, the thesis starts to draw together its findings with peacebuilding in mind. Concerning the time frame, the end of the Geneva 2016 Intra Syrian Talks in April shall be the restriction, as to provide a completely up to date analysis would be never ending. However before delving into the details of the analysis, a background of the conflict is required in order to contextualise the peace process.

1.2. Women and the Progression of the Syrian Conflict

The conflict in Syria is arguably the deadliest of the 21st century in which a minimum of 250,000 Syrians have died and 11 million have been displaced (Al-Jazeera, 5th August, 2017). It can be described as a civil war, a complex political emergency and/or a global proxy war zone; but the fundamental characteristic is that the events in Syria are exceptional in their scale and international in their nature. In regards to the development of the conflict, it began in the context of the 2011 Arab Uprisings, where the town of Da'ra was the first to protest following the detention and torture of 15 boys who were caught writing graffiti in support of the regional demonstrations. Whilst the main reasons for the uprisings are of course debatable; most significant were the deprivation of freedoms under generations of dictatorship and lack of political adjustment, economic hardship resulting from neoliberal policies and crony capitalism, a demonstrative effect from the toppling of dictators in Tunisia and Egypt, a rise in Islamic movements, a severe drought and the way that the drought was poorly handled that had caused increased poverty and rural to urban migration (Harris, 2017).

Furthermore, the violent reaction of the regime deepened anger and depicted the presence of oppression throughout the country. As the peaceful protests spread, the response of the Assad regime became increasingly heavy handed in its use of live rounds of bullets against protesters which resulted in the killing of hundreds and detaining of many more (Human Rights Watch, 2015). The next response as people attempted to defend themselves was a rise of armed groups, such as the forming of the Free Syrian Army, made up of defectors of the military who formed one of opposition factions against the regime. Hence, the country shifted from a situation of uprising to that of civil war. It is important to note that these initial developments in 2011 were largely internal, thus the momentum of war that already existed was inflamed by external actors from late 2011-2012.

Although the protests did not initially have a sectarian character, the civil war exacerbated divisions that had been entrenched during the historical imperial context of artificial nation building (Hinnesbusch, 2002). However, as Phillips (2015) notes, Syrian identity should be described as semi-sectarian since the robustness of the national identity has prevailed in spite of the hardening of sectarian tensions within the conflict. Then as the conflict developed an increasingly international current, these sectarian or semi-sectarian tensions were exacerbated to include ethnic, regional, tribal and religious divides which are reflected in the increasingly global nature of the conflict. In support of the Alevite-minority regime, Russia, Iran and Hezbollah have taken opposing sides to the rebels who have support from Sunni majority states such as Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Then as the Islamic extremism reached a new scale with the emergence and rapid expansion of Daesh as well as its resources and foreign mobilisation, foreign intervention in the form of airstrikes and training local rebels increased by states such as the US in particular (Al-Jazeera, 5th August 2017).

The brutality of the violence has reached distressing levels that includes the indiscriminate targeting of civilians, as well as the use of chemical weapons and barrel bombs, and the systemic use of torture and kidnappings. Moreover the violence has from terrorist attacks outside of Syria, to foreign fighters collecting within Syria. Furthermore, as a result of the conflict the forced displacement of millions of Syrians has reached unprecedented levels (Human Rights Watch, 2015). The diversity and complexity of the opposition groups give the conflict a particularly intricate pattern of fighting. But the main opposition Free Syrian Army has declined somewhat in its strength, whereas Islamist-associated groups such as Daesh and the Al Nusra Front have made considerable gains. Additionally within the North-eastern territory, Kurdish groups have declared self-rule (Al-Jazeera, 5th August 2017). As can be seen in the map below in the Appendix of Illustrations, the break-up of territory portrays the complexity of groups on the ground (BBC, 11th May, 2015).

1.3. Research Design and Method

In regards to the research methodology of this thesis, the approach adopted is qualitative. As Ramsbotham and Woodhouse (2011) explain, the qualitative approach is argued to be favourable as it prioritises experiences rather than statistics which can create a hegemonic discourse. Accordingly, the secondary research carried out has chiefly been made of content and textual analysis. Academic sources have been widely utilised in providing in depth theoretical knowledge, in particular in the areas of Peace and Gender Studies. Whereas sources on the Syrian peace process itself have been made up of primary sources from the UN Geneva Office, including reports, resolutions, conferences, statements and transcripts. Here, the specific discourse was deconstructed to analyse the narrative emerging from the peace process. The contemporary and ongoing nature of the Syrian conflict meant that news articles were also relied upon; however these were

considered through a more careful lens due their more evident subjectivity. On the same note, the choice to limit the research to the end of the Intra-Syrian talks in April 2016 is to provide a practical scope in order to analyse the subsequent events in depth. The current nature of the chosen topic of the thesis has provided an extra challenge in sourcing reliable and up to date information, but likewise it makes the findings of the research more relevant.

Concerning primary sources in the form of field research, the data collected is in the form of verbal accounts within a natural setting. It is important to note that the geographical context of the research is Ankara, thus it is inevitable that certain distinct features of this urban capital emerge. On the other hand, many of the themes regarding Syrians, conflict resolution, gender and displacement transcend the scope of the case study. The purpose of this research is exploration, action, change and emancipation (Robson, 2011). Thus, the interviewee's interpretations of the Geneva Talks and perceptions on peace and displacement are explored, and incorporated in the analysis on peacebuilding.

The extent of the research will be small in scale, in the sense that eight people have been interviewed; however, these interviewees make up a broad demographic in regards to the mixture of nationalities, ethnicities, sects, sexes and backgrounds. Concerning sexes, there are five female and three male interviewees. Regarding nationality, two are non-Syrian and six are Syrian. And in terms of ethnicity, three have Kurdish ethnicity, two Arab, two Turkmen, and one Tajik. Additionally, from the eight, six have Sunni Muslim faith, one Shia Muslim faith, and one did not relate to any religion. The eight interviewees have been chosen in light of their engagement with the Syrian refugee context in Ankara, either based on personal and/or professional ties. For instance, six out the eight interviewees have Syrian nationality and are evidently unable to return to Syria at this time. However, from these six, four Syrian interviewees also have links

to NGO that help refugees in Ankara, either as volunteers, interns or employees. Accordingly, half have a mixture of professional and personal links to the Syrian refugee context in Ankara. Whereas, two of Syrian interviewees have only personal ties; and the two non-Syrian ties have only professional ties. But a prediction can be suggested that the interviewees will be impacted, at least to some extent, by the result of the Geneva Talks; in regard the kind of peace that emerges and how quickly it takes to reach.

A point to be made about the feminist nature of the research is that in accordance with the overall focus of the thesis, an active effort has been made to ensure that the research does not take on a generalised, double standard or an insensitive gender approach (Robson, 2011). Furthermore, due to the sensitive nature of the topic, the interviews have not been recorded, instead note taking was deemed preferable for making the participants more comfortable. This sensitivity is noteworthy again in regards to ethics; hence the approval of the ethic committee was granted prior to the interviews being carried out. A further delicacy that is more challenging to overcome but is important to note and reflect upon is my position as a researcher. Being a woman from the UK who is working on an academic project will inevitably have had an impact on how the field research developed[2]. It is difficult to measure if, and to what extent there was, distrust felt towards me, and if I was perceived as representing an international actor; yet it is certainly a factor to consider. Within the interviews, a degree of defensiveness shown by the one of the male Syrian interviewees in particular could be noticed when discussing his personal ties to the

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[2] This notion of how women in different societies perceive and are perceived by the 'other' is dealt with in more theoretical depth when considering oriental and occidental concepts within patriarchal frameworks in section 2.5. Contextualising GBV: The Danger of Positional Superiority.

conflict in terms of having chosen to not to fight. However, as will be discussed further in 4.3. Approaching the Field, when focussing on professional experiences with all the relevant interviewees, and when talking with the non-Syrian participants, the dialogue can be perceived as being comparatively more open. A further impression I felt was that when speaking with the female interviewees, especially when discussing issues like how marriages can be impacted by forced displacement, there was a more open connection in light of us both being women. So whether the interviewees felt a distance due to my background, or were more closed when the topic was uncomfortable for them, or when speaking with other women closeness due to my sex, or a combination; are all plausible suggestions.

In specific regard to the format of the primary research, a flexible design has been utilised to provide an informal framework for semi-structured interviews and focus groups (Robson, 2011). Whilst set research questions proved helpful in providing structure, the flexibility to focus more on certain topics or questions depending on the interviewee provided the opportunity to allow their experiences and opinions to flow more naturally. Consequently, the aim is to focus on the views of each participant rather than on myself who can be considered to be a guide presenting various open-ended questions that can be followed by further unprepared questions in order to present the reality of their situations (Robson, 2011). Further details regarding who was spoken to, where and how the data was analysed will be discussed more specifically in Chapter 4, section 4.1. Approaching the Field.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Locating Human Security within Security Studies

In order to argue that women should be central actors in Syrian conflict resolution in an inclusive and genuine way, a theoretical framework is necessary to ensure that this point has academic depth. Consequently, Security Studies was taken as a starting point before delving into more detail regarding the key literature on conflict resolution within of Peace and Gender studies. The concept of security is evidently of chief interest to Security Studies, in particular as debates continue regarding the normalised understanding of a militarised approach that takes the state as the referent object of security (Anderlini, 2007). However, this thesis takes the strong view that human security should be given increased priority as a theoretical approach.

Human security has grown since it was credited by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Canadian Government in the 1990's in the aftermath of the Cold War. The significance of this period is that it can be characterised as a time when intrastate insecurity was rife, not only from non-state actors but also from: 'economic decline, bad governance, health epidemic, environmental degradation, small arms, criminal activities and organised crime' (Anderlini, 2007, p11). Then in 2000, Kofi Annan the UN Secretary General outlined four aspects of human security that are: 'critical and pervasive threats, human rights, protection and building on people's strengths' (Anderlini, 2007, p11). Thus a central component of the human security approach is that the individual rather than the state is the referent object of security. From a narrow perspective, human security

is understood as lack of political violence and freedom from fear but from a broader viewpoint, human insecurity is considered to be under-development in the form of freedom from want. By moving away from a militaristic definition of security and simple economic indicators of development, the broader approach to human security looks at safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease and repression.

Within a context of war such as within present-day Syria, it is evident that the priority is to remove direct violence that is of course a necessity and pre-condition for efforts towards peace. Thus the view of security from a militaristic standpoint is clearly still relevant, however the point that must be emphasised is that human security must not be neglected (Cockburn, 2012). Human security must be considered within conflict resolution for the purpose of providing freedom from both want and fear for those affected by the conflict. An example of where human security has a practical appeal is within the context of peacebuilding, where Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) programmes that are focussed on systematically removing weapons can also include an approach that targets removing violence and the causes of violence more widely (Cockburn, 2012). By helping individuals rather than simply taking away guns which is not an effective strategy by itself in breaking the continuum of violence and militarisation that epitomise conflicts. Thus the Reintegration in DDR is of vital importance for durable peaceful solutions, and for the same purpose the focus on human security within security studies and conflict resolution efforts is in my opinion necessary.

2.2. Galtung's Understanding of Violence and Peace

Within Peace Studies, perhaps the most renowned figure is Johan Galtung (1964) and his conceptualisation of positive and negative peace that he originally coined within the 1964 founding edition of Journal of Peace Research. Here he developed existing ideas regarding

peace to expand the concept of violence. Most significantly he criticises the over-emphasis of direct, physical violence and underlines how it mutually reinforces structural violence. As Cockburn outlines,

> 'Forty years ago, Johan Galtung pointed out that social structures, particularly the system by which life chances (wealth, resources, services) are distributed in a population, can result in injury, sickness and death for those they disadvantage' (Cockburn, 2012, p255).

Prior to Galtung's innovative study, peace theory is was to some extent historically repetitive in the focus on themes of power monopoly versus power balancing, war alliances versus peace organisations, national sovereignty versus international interdependence. Thus Galtung's (1969) conceptualising of peace theory is significant in its challenge to these previously entrenched notions. As a result of this challenge, he forged a reputation as a founder and leader in peace research where his concepts have since become entrenched in Peace Studies.

Accordingly, several of his concepts shall be utilised throughout this thesis, including but not limited to, structural and direct violence; and positive and negative peace. More generally Galtung defines peace as the, 'presence of cooperation, freedom from fear and want, economic growth and development, absence of exploitation, equality, justice, freedom of action, pluralism, dynamism' (1967, p11). However, he deconstructs peace in more detail when he outlines how peace can be positive and/or negative. Whereas positive peace is described as the absence of structural violence, the 'integration of human society', peace generally by peaceful means, and the approach is general more optimistic and preventative (Galtung, 1969, p2). Negative peace on the other hand involves the 'absence of violence, absence of war', peace not always by peaceful means, and the approach can often be pessimistic and curative (Galtung, 1969, p2). To work towards a negative peace, peacekeeping and avoiding

further direct violence are aims; but for positive peace, peacebuilding by establishing better relations is necessary (Galtung, 1984). This distinction is thus extremely relevant within conflict resolution in such cases as Afghanistan and Syria, where the long-term goal of peace is fundamental. Consequently as Galtung argues, conflict resolution cannot be achieved with a zero-sum mentality as it is part of processes of social change that are made up of people's feelings and demands. Therefore the conflict of ideas is seen to be inevitable, however the violent representation of this is preventable[3] (Galtung, 1969). Following this argument, the conflict resolution literature has been shaped by Galtung's work and largely upholds that peace processes must have a holistic approach that contains a broad range of solution-orientated and is policy-directed aims (Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 2011).

A further cornerstone element of Galtung's theorising is his approach to the violence as a concept. Whether violence is physical or psychological, intended or unintended, perpetrated by an actor or a structure, if there is an object that is hurt, and whether it is manifest of latent are all aspects of Galtung's approach. But more specifically, differentiating between direct and structural violence is useful here. A criticism made by Galtung is that the focus on physical and direct violence can lead to a neglect of non-physical and structural violence. Here structural violence is understood as being natural and normative; it is the systematic prevention of opportunities through social, political and economic deprivation. It is directly linked to the concept of social justice but is broader in its scope of responsibility so more difficult to solve. Galtung (1969)

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[3] The approach to conflict resolution is of further significance when considering Galtung's (1969) argument that conflict can be a modus for positive change. The peace process itself is very significant in influencing whether the conflict will be considered to be destructive or productive (Deutsch, 1973). Evidently, all conflicts that involve a violent characteristic have destructive consequences, but the point made by Galtung (1969) and Deutsch (1973) is that if political and social change is achieved that reflects a development for the better from the initial root grievances, then it can be productive.

argues that the narrow conceptualisation of intended and physical violence must be expanded to include structural and indirect violence. Direct violence is described as being like a ripple or a wave, it is dynamic and can appear in the static 'tranquil waters' of structural violence that are silent and invisible (Galtung, 1969, p173). For example inequality and poverty are embedded in the status quo but must not be overlooked as direct and indirect violence are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. In order to tackle violence that is rooted in societal structures in which context actors generate direct violence, the concept of cultural violence is beneficial. In the 1990's Galtung expanded further to describe the concept of cultural violence, in which culture can be an instigator or a legitimiser of direct violence. Power is argued to influence positive and negative peace in the form of cultural, economic, military and political power. Such cycles of violence can be broken down by cultural peace that leads to structural and direct peace before positive peace is reached. Then when considering conflict resolution, the following quote depicts how these concepts of violence are applied to conflict resolution and can in turn transfer to peacebuilding strategies.

> 'We end direct violence by changing conflict behaviour, structural violence by removing structural contradictions and injustices, and cultural violence by changing attitudes' (Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 2011, p11).

2.3. Deconstructing Contemporary Peace Studies' Approaches to Conflict Resolution

Whilst Galtung's concepts are used as cornerstone theoretical points in this thesis, it is also necessary to contextualise contemporary Peace Studies. For instance, following the Cold War, the notion of the changing nature of conflict emerged as a dominant trend, in which the Syrian conflict can be located.

Authors such as Kaldor (1999) outline the trend away from traditional warfare into what is described as new wars, a phenomenon in which battles are no longer necessarily fought by combatants between states, but are de-territorialised and spill over to affect civilians to increasingly tragic degrees. Walensteen and Sollenberg (2001) have record that from 1989 to 2000, there have been 111 armed conflicts. By 2000, only 33 of these were active, suggesting a decrease in numbers; however the nature of the warfare is evermore multifaceted with a proliferation of actors with complex links with other actors at a regional level (Wallensteen and Sollenberg, 2001). Syria is a clear example of this trend, it can be described as a complex political emergency where the there is a myriad of actors involved, the public space is the battleground, the distinction between combatants and civilians is blurred, the respect of women, children and the elderly is neglected, and basic institutions of value are targeted (Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 1999). This shift from inter-state towards intra-state warfare must also be considered in more depth within conflict resolution. However, in reality, peace processes are designed for more traditional conflicts in which states fighting each other are represented on the whole by male national leaders (Anderlini, 2007). Evidently in light of the changing nature of conflict, the actors accessing peace process can no longer be limited to statesmen and military men. There is a necessity to adapt peace processes to be more inclusive of non-state actors, and furthermore I would agree with Anderlini (2007) that they also need to create considerably more space for both women and civil society. In response to the changing nature of warfare, the Peace Studies literature has too taken into account the need to adapt conflict resolution. As is argued by Loode (2011), due to the non-linear and unpredictable nature of warfare, conflict resolution must be flexible within a long-term goal but adaptable to short-term projects. Many criticisms within the contemporary conflict resolution literature highlight the problem of blueprint infrastructure and democracy being installed from outside as these are long processes of social evolution

from within; and the multi-causality nature of conflicts require more complex solutions (Lederach, 1997; Loode, 2011; Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 2011).

Hence, the approach to conflict resolution plays an important role and is thus controversial amongst experts in the field. The top-down versus bottom-up approach is a central point of debate raised by Lederach (1997) in answer to the question of, how to build the house of peace? Furthermore the involvements of external or internal mediators, at a local, national, regional, and international level are areas of dispute. I would argue that each conflict suits a varied combination of these approaches, which equates to multi-level peace-building. But especially for Syria, being such a protracted conflict, with multiple and evolving actors, goals, values and perceptions makes as well as an immensely deep collective memory of the brutality of the conflict; the peace process even more challenging and cannot be solved in one arena alone. The extent of the involvement of external actors each with their own agendas makes international political involvement likely. Whilst the peace negotiation does require an international element, and can benefit from external expertise; the danger is of external actors dictating settlements with a disregard for local and national actors (Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 1999). Thus alongside the discussion at Geneva, and due to the nature of the conflict deeply impacting Syrian society; the role of middle range leaders, local peace networks and reconciliation processes, problem solving workshops as a platform for wider members of society are also necessary (Lederach, 1997; Loode, 2011). This multi-level approach also compliments the argument that civil society can be an incredibly valuable asset in building peace, as mobilised and organised civil society organisation can manoeuvre and facilitate corroboration between the various levels.

2.4. Conceptualising GBV within Conflict Resolution

Within this section several main arguments are upheld, firstly that woman's issues regarding Gender Based Violence (GBV) can be understood as a continuum of structural and direct violence that escalates as a result of war and as such must be addressed in conflict resolution. Furthermore that GBV manifests in different and more extreme forms within and after conflict, for those in and fleeing the country. Accordingly in line with these currents of thought, how GBV should be prioritised within conflict resolution is another central belief.

First and foremost however, the meaning of GBV is important to note. It can be defined as 'violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately', including sexual violence, physical violence, emotional and psychological violence, harmful traditional practices and socio-economic violence (CEDAW, in IRIN, 2004). Hence the direct and structural nature of GBV and how these intersect are significant; as authors such as Mernissi (2009, p206) highlight the 'illumination of the structural dissymmetry that runs all through and conditions the entire fabric of social and individual life.' Likewise, Kelly (1998) suggests that the violence facing women must be considered as a continuum, where the range and extent of violence is inter-connected and non-linear. Thus there is not only one direct perpetrator, but a wider system of structural violence where all are complicit to some degree (Kelly, 1998). Whilst these concepts can be said to be evident at a universal level, GBV clearly escalates during times of war since both during and within post-conflict situations women are systematically exposed to escalated violence. Women are far too often treated as the spoils of war and as strategic tools within it, in regards to rape being used for the purpose of humiliating the opposition (Cockburn, 2012). Moreover, following the end of the conflict, there is often a trend of increased domestic

violence resulting from men's experience of war. Thus war and peace time are in a continuum.

It is consequently here that the intersection of Gender Studies and Peace Studies is both evident and necessary, and where the argument of this thesis begins to gain more focus as it asks how GBV should be considered within conflict resolution. Authors within Gender Studies have focussed on this topic, for instance Kandiyoti (2016) looks at the political nature of GBV that manifests as traditional privatised violence, within conflict contexts and state violence. Furthermore, Kandiyoti (2016) coins the term "masculine restoration" to describe the trend of increased threats facing women in situations where traditional forums for masculinity such as decision-making and employment are deprived. As a result of the uncertain environment and weakening of male power, he responds by re-asserting his authority over women, which, in practice can result in restricting liberty and violent treatment. It is possible to highlight this trend within displaced communities where refugee men have had their traditional means of power removed. Furthermore, conflict creates further violence at a physical direct level as well as increasing structural tensions such as lack of access of basic needs. Within these situations, traditional forms of negotiation between men and women can shift and patriarchy can both be reinforced but also broken down, as women may be forced into situation of survival sex but can also become the head of the household. Thus the changing nature of gender roles within conflict is another important theme. The post-conflict literature in particular looks at this issue of gender roles following war, a fundamental question asked by Cohn and Enloe (2003) is: how does masculine privilege become re-enshrined in political culture following war? Again real life examples have had an effect in shaping the discourse on these academic debates, one example is the problems in integrating women following the conflict in Sierra Leone in the 1990's. Issues facing women following the war, who had been in a large majority of cases been forcibly recruited by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council

(RUF) included; war time babies, social taboos regarding forced sexual relations outside of marriage, lack of specific health services and psycho-social support for survivors of sexual violence, missed education and rejection by former communities (Marks, 2015). Moreover, women were categorised as solely victims of the war, when in the new wars situation that Kaldor (1999) explains, the lines between victim and perpetrator/civilian and combatant are extremely blurred. Especially in regards to women, who take on both fighting roles as well as positions arranging wartime logistics, carrying bombs, supplies and messages, hiding fighters and gathering intelligence (McKay, 2005; Abdo, 1994). However, in spite of the multitude of active roles that women take on during conflicts, they are often perceived as being passive victims. What's more post-war voices tend to be predominantly masculine, but there is a distinct need to prioritise feminine voices also and make space for them within post-war outcomes. For example, within reconciliation processes there is often the bias of mainly men giving evidence which inevitably shapes the narrative of the conflict in a gendered light (Bouatta, 1994).

Evidently, a central element of tackling structural violence is eliminating GBV and empowering women. Thus in line with the core argument of this thesis, it is vital that women are included in conflict resolution. Including a gender perspective reflects a paradigm shift with the field conflict resolution. As Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, (2011, p306) outline, these four steps focus on the engendering conflict resolution:

> '1) Making women visible agents of change in conflict resolution'. 2) 'Removing male bias in conflict resolution data collection and empirical research'. 3) 'Rethinking conflict resolution theory to take gender into account'. 4) 'Incorporating gender into conflict resolution policy making and practice'.

The focus must be on the promotion of women as actors with agency within peace processes rather than solely victims. Notwithstanding the

need to continue to focus on protecting women in conflict by prioritising mechanisms to combat sexual violence for instance. It is consequently of vital importance to implement resolutions such as 1325 (Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 2011). However, gender mainstreaming must move beyond a discourse level and be put into action in order to effectively overcome the 'gender blind' nature of conflict resolution that will be considered alongside resolution 1325 in more depth in section 2.6 below (Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 2011, p305).

2.5. Contextualising GBV: The Danger of Positional Superiority

In regards to the relevant feminist literature, there are several key arguments that are important to take into account when analysing not only the work of Syrian women's civil society but in particular in the approach to field work. A central issue is how as a researcher one approaches their analysis, taking into account their own background and the situation that they are delving into. At this point, an original argument made by Lazreg (1988) is useful, which is that the relationship between women in different societies can be symbolised by Oriental and Occidental themes that depict surface image stereotypes about the 'other' women which has the effect of preventing a more in depth feminist discussion. On the same note, Nader (1989, p324) asks the key question of 'how could images of women in other cultures act a control to women in one's own society'. Thus there is a subordination of women in both Eastern and Western societies, but superiority from both sides consider the 'other' women to be in a worse situation. This US-THEM dichotomy is effectively an identity construction that reproduces cultural aggression and distracts from advocating against patriarchy in both societies. The outlined dynamic between women in different societies is argued by Nader (1989) to represent mutual positional superiority, as there is a static image of Western women as inferior and as being associated with a more

generalised Western power dominance and degradation of moral values.

However there is a power imbalance between the East and West broadly speaking, resulting from hegemonic power relations whereby values are universalised and reproduced by intellectual elites to create a perceived true discourse. Thus there is a knowledge imposition by the West resulting from its access to media, culture and technology in a direction that is not reversible (Nader, 1989). Mernissi explores the impact of these Western influences on identity, in particular in the context of Islamic revival from the 1980's onwards in which she draws the link between Muslim identity construction and rejection of Western culture. Especially as a result of rapid developments in technology and consumerism, cultural exports such as fashion and television politicise cultural boundaries. As a result of these developments, two currents can be identified as being problematic. The first is that rejections of feminist ideas for being seen to be Western which can have the effect of making them somehow taboo (Abu-Lughod, 1988). And secondly there is often an over-focus on cultural symbols such as the veil which are perpetuated in a reductionist manner to portray lack of agency. Thus a situation occurs where women in the 'other' society are perceived as being in need of saviour. However Abu-Lughod (1988) makes the very convincing point that when there is a positional power relationship; who is saving who, from what and to what?

An example where these issues are dealt with more specifically is by a study made by Fernandes (2017). Here a project by Afghan Women's Writing Project (AWWP) in Afghanistan is analysed for the purpose of considering storytelling as a form of soft power, but in which themes of gendered Orientalism, positional superiority and colonial feminism are raised. The core idea of AWWP is to provide a platform for Afghan women to speak independently through workshops and not through the voices of men or the media. Their stories are then made available via the internet for the purpose of creating a dialogue between societies

and providing an authentic voice. Whilst the project certainly is well-intended and focusses on an important issue of women's voices in and after conflict, the criticisms made by Fernandes are convincing. For instance, whilst the aim is for authenticity and lack of mediation of the storytelling, there is inevitably a degree of framing in terms of the choices of which workshops, writers, and funding are involved. Furthermore, AWWP portrays itself as giving a voice to silent and hidden Afghan women, however this approach in itself is revealing of positional superiority and cultural stereotyping, as Fernandes describes, 'an Orientalist construction' (p5, 2017). Rather than change being initiated externally, it must be generated from within. Furthermore, the efforts of women's resistance through various forms throughout the years of conflict can be overlooked by presenting Afghan women as silent. Some examples include women facing considerable harm to continue teaching and distributing education materials in secret (Fernandes, 2007). Other factors to consider are the funding, audience and participants of this project. The influence of funding is indicative as the project is linked to part of the wider US operation in Afghanistan and as such following the US withdrawal in 2014, 75% of the State Department's funding for the project was cut. Thus within the stories, there is a clear lack of opinions that are critical of the US operation. Also one must consider the audience of the stories, who are generally white, middle class, Western women. In addition the question of how representative the project is also important, as being a workshop held in English; by and large, the participants will be literate and from urban, middle class backgrounds. The details of the context of the workshops are thus very relevant, which ties into a wider point regarding the necessity to contextualise. As Abu-Lughod (2013) argues, without contextualising the stories, the problems faced by the women could be assumed to be cultural based. Hence by presenting traditional culture to be static and a cause for gendered violence, the factors of: external military intervention, war economy impacting social relations, poverty and class dynamics can be overlooked (Abu-Lughod,

2013: Kandiyoti, 2012). Consequently, a perception can be drawn of Afghan culture as backward and Western style freedoms being the aspiration. This picture is misguided not only for representing positional superiority, but because it has the effect of Western women gratifying their own circumstances which they perceive as being free in contrast to Afghan women, but by doing this they can stop challenging patriarchy and exploitation in Western society. Overall the criticisms made by Fernandes (2017) are helpful not only for analysis of the AWWP project, but the lessons learnt can be considered by others. Thus as researchers, it is vital to approach analysis and field-work from a position that does not homogenise the 'others' suffering and perhaps most significantly to contextualise (Mohanty, 1984, 2003). As storytelling and the aim of giving a platform for authentic voices is highly important, but as Fernades concludes about the AWWP project;

> 'The pain and suffering endured by Afghan women and men deserves to be heard, but we need a critical, complex, and contextualized storytelling that interrogates its material and historical conditions' (Fernandes, 2017, p22).

2.6. Analysing Masculine Institutionalism: Where are the women?

Part of the relevance of this thesis's focus on evaluating the extent to which women are being included in the Syrian peace process is due to the underlying fact that too often women are overlooked. As is clear in the examples below of the Israel-Palestine accord, and being utilised for foreign policy purpose like in the case of Afghanistan. Therefore, whilst steps towards increased participation have been taken at an institutional, policy level; there are still fundamental flaws in practice and in the institutions themselves.

Cohn and Enloe (2003, p1190) focus on this point as they criticise institutions such as the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for being a 'male preserve' in which gender mainstreaming is spoken about

but not understood or acted upon. In asking how masculinity operates, the notion of masculinised cultures arises (Enloe, 2003). And within this culture of masculinity at an institutional level, the narratives that emerge stipulate their own logic and consequent policy reality (Shepard, 2008). As Vayrynen (2004) discuses, the discourse that emerges from institutions such as the UN has 'status and currency' (p126) that in turn becomes perceived as truth. One example being women as victims, this binary categorisation perpetuates a passive image of women that neglects their agency and identity. The solution to these problems is the increased inclusion of women. The question of 'where are the women'? (Cohn and Enloe, 2003, p1194) which is central theme throughout Enloe's work, as well as the question of 'who speaks?' (Shepard, 2008, p397); must be asked throughout the peace process to ensure that the women are both present and active participants. Anderlini (2007) makes the convincing argument that the fundamental flaws in the structure of peace processes is that women generally do not hold high-level positions in politics and decision-making. Thus the structures of power and the extent to which women are incorporated are more complex than simply misogyny. These above mentioned patriarchal obstacles are prevalent not only in institutions and peace processes, but more generally with systems of power that become more dominant in time of war as patriarchy tends to be perpetuated violently (Cokckburn, 2003). Enloe discusses how women's power is undermined as their invisibility in decision-making is naturalised; she states that 'the national political arena is dominated by men but allows women some select access' (Enloe, in Kandiyoti, 1996, p109). Here the term coined by Kandiyoti, patriarchal bargaining, can be effectively applied. It is defined as the dynamic where 'women strategize within a concrete set of constraints' (Kandiyoti, 1988, p274). Kandiyoti makes the point of the term patriarchy often being utilised too generally as referring to male dominance without contextualising class, caste and ethnicity. As such

women are negotiating from a weaker power position not only due to their gender, but their backgrounds intersecting with their gender.

This point is extremely relevant to consider in regards to conflict resolution, as highlighted by Sharoni (1996) in her analysis of the 1993 Israeli-Palestinian Accord in which it is argued that a masculine peace is reached. Militarised masculinity[4] is evident in the discourse and actors of the Accords, in particular it is clear that the male figures have been prioritised and emphasised selectively. Female figures and organisations are side-lined on the political periphery as they are not included in the centre of the two military conflicting sides. Women and women's issues were excluded from both the official and unofficial negotiations. Furthermore, the actions of female figures striving for peace have been overlooked by the media. One example being the work of Marianne Heiberg who was a scholar at the Norwegian Institute for Applied Science (FAFO), working on living conditions in the Occupied Territories, whose role in connecting key Palestinians and Israeli's to her husband the Norwegian Foreign Minister and her boss the Director of FAFO, was absolutely instrumental. It was however, the Foreign Minister who received much of the credit for mediating the Accords, her role on the other hand in orchestrating the negotiations is not well known (Sharoni, 1996). The undermining of the roles of women in this example illustrates the problem of women normatively being excluded from political power, which is why policy improvements made at an institutional level must be held accountable and applied across cases.

Accordingly, breaking down binary categories for the purpose of including women within conflict resolution is an essential element that has been considered within the Peace Studies literature, but needs to be applied across more cases and in more depth. Within conflict

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[4] Masculinity as defined by Higate and Henry (2004) is made up of identity process and performance, behaviour, attitudes and practises, value systems, historical narratives, discourse and power structures. They argue that the military is the epitome of masculinity, it is an 'exemplary masculine institution' that socialises soldiers as such.

resolution at an institutional level there has also been a turning point within narrative at the UN for instance that has translated into policy reality. The 2000 UNSC resolution 1325 is a landmark that advocated (Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 2011, p314):

> 'Fuller representation of women in peace negotiations and in the highest offices of the UN and for the incorporation of gender perspectives in peacebuilding, peacekeeping and conflict prevention activities'.

Consequently, the concept of gender mainstreaming has become well-used within UN agencies. A central notion that is enshrined in 1325 is the participation of women in conflict resolution. And the fact that this idea is entrenched within a UNSC resolution gives a solid foundation for the continued advocacy of inclusion of women. However, the extent to which this manifests as a genuine reality with operations and across UN policy is questionable. As Anderlini (2007) has argued, 1325 is not enforceable, meaning that non-compliance is consequently not penalised; thus women's rights are still far too often deprioritised in relation to "hard" security topics. Furthermore, in order to analyse the effectiveness of 1325 as a tool for gender empowerment, it must be considered within the context of a practical example.

Cockburn does this very convincingly in her arguments criticising The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as a masculine institution that has utilised and shaped resolution 1325 for its own power seeking agendas. Cockburn states assertively that 'the resolution is left hostage to co-option by militarist states and military institutions for military purposes' (2001, p8). NATO would argue that they have put resolution 1325 into practise through their International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operation in Afghanistan. For instance NATO did provide gender awareness training to their teams prior to deployment and gender sensitivity to their soldiers, as well as Female Engagement Teams and gender field experts. The criticism that Cockburn makes is that although these aforementioned efforts to implicate 1325 are

credible, her fundamental issues are with NATO as an organisation and its war in Afghanistan that was legitimised by rhetoric on the liberation of women. Consequently, it is important to reconsider the details of 1325, as it does not call for military approaches such as deploying more female soldiers. Furthermore, the problem with an organisation such as NATO that is inherently a masculine institution is that its approach to security justifies militarisation. So again to the point made earlier in Section 2.1, the broadening of security definitions to include human security is necessary. The justifications made for interventionism made by NATO but in particular by the Bush Administration is an important detail in the Afghanistan example. The complex reality of external powers involving themselves in another state's affairs is simplified by the rhetoric of the Bush Administration's 2001 invasion that involved the stated emancipation of women and combating of terrorism (Kandiyoti, 2007). Having focussed on Afghanistan, Kandiyoti (2006) became more critical of the institutional mainstreaming of gender in development policy as she argues the 2001 intervention being invoked as a humanitarian was a disguise for self-serving, global power games. Cockburn and Kandiyoti's criticisms of the intervention are certainly justified when evaluating how conflict resolution was approached.

Thus is it important to consider the 'gendered subtexts' of institutional discourse (Kandiyoti, 2006). The geostrategic interests and neoliberal agendas within a war on terror narrative manifested as extremely top-down and externally imposed fast track state building. At a surface level, the functioning of the new regime was portrayed as reflecting a successful operation. However the reality was that Bush's 'exit strategy' did not portray the power balances on the ground (Rubin, 2006, p184), as the de jure power of the state is contradicted by the de facto power of local warlords, traditional harmful practices and most significantly the Taliban. A relevant problem outlined by Kandiyoti (2006, p1352) is when gender mainstreaming becomes a 'technocratic exercise' that by virtue of being donor-led fails to prioritise local need

and demands. Consequently, Afghanistan as an example cannot be characterised as being 'gender blind', rather it exemplifies the complexities of implementing gender policies that can easily be manipulated by power-seeking, militaristic agendas. Furthermore, this example is pertinent to the debate on the nature of peace as in Afghanistan the removal of warfare did not equate to a stable and peaceful environment.

The Afghanistan example is useful for those analysing Syria, but it seems that in regards to the Syrian conflict and peace process, there is currently is severe gap in the literature in considering the role that women should play in peacebuilding. There is a growing amount of coverage by journalists advocating women's participation, however this is still not mainstream and is limited with academic fields. Consequently, the central focus of this thesis will be bringing these themes together to analyse the role that women are playing in the Syrian Peace Process by analysing the Geneva talks from 2012 to 2016 before considering via primary research the various interpretations of these developments on the ground and how they should be included into peacebuilding strategies.

CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS OF THE SYRIAN PEACE PROCESS

3.1. What are the Geneva Talks?

The Geneva Talks are a series of ongoing conferences held in 2012, 2014, and 2016[5]. Backed by the United Nations (UN), they are significant as the main efforts being made towards negotiating a peace to the Syrian conflict. A key characteristic is that they are being held at an international level, which is both reflective of the global reaching impacts of the conflict as well as the number of external actors involved directly and indirectly in the fighting. Furthermore, the nature of the talks being negotiated by national and intergovernmental representatives, with the exception of the Syrian opposition delegation from 2014, reflects a limited platform for local actors. Presently, the conflict in Syria is still ongoing reflecting the evident failure of the Geneva Talks to produce a durable peace; however the more subtle developments shall be explored throughout this chapter, in particular in regards to a gender perspective. But firstly to provide a brief overview of the three sets of talks in 2012, 2014 and 2016.

Geneva 1, also known as the action group conference, was held in Geneva on the 30th June 2012. Instigated by Kofi Annan, who at that time was the UN Special Envoy for Peace, and including: the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the League of Arab States, the Foreign Ministers of China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States, Turkey, Iraq, Kuwait and Qatar, and the European Union High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy

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[5] Geneva 2017 is currently still underway at the time of writing so presently is not part of the analysis.

(Final Communique, 2012, p1). The final result of the conference was the production of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) supported Final Communique peace plan, also referred to as the Geneva Communique. Significantly, it was this point that there was an agreement on a transitional governing body that would have full executive powers. Pressure for Assad to have no future pressed was applied in particular by the US, but debated by Russia who insisted it be the decision of the Syrian people (Meo, 2012). Furthermore, whilst the aforementioned diplomats were pleased with the outcome, it is noteworthy that Syrian representatives were not present.

Then on the 22nd – 31st January 2014, Geneva 2 commenced in Montreux and Geneva. These UN-backed negotiations set a precedent in bringing together Syrian members of both the regime and the main opposition bloc, the Syrian National Coalition. The regime's representatives were led by Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem, whilst the opposition were led by the president of the Syrian National Coalition, Ahmad Jarba (Atassi, 2014). The format of these negotiations involved closed-door discussions between the new UN-Arab League Special Representative for Syria, Lahkdar Brahimi, and the two Syrian parties. But also the countries that were invited to attend the talks, and give speeches in the first day open conference include: Algeria, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Norway, Oman, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States (Atassi, 2014). Another significant factor was the initial invitation from UN Secretary General Banki-Moon for the major ally of the Assad-regime, Iran, to join. However, following Iran's acceptance, the Syrian National Coalition announced that would not attend if Iran were included. Furthermore, Iran refused to endorse the Geneva Communique and its call for a transitional government, thus the invitation to Iran was rescinded (BBC, 2014). The efforts by Russian and US diplomats in particular

are noteworthy in the achievement of bringing Syrian warring parties together for discussion. However, despite this positive development, the aim to come to an understanding regarding the implementation failed and no agreement was reached.

Geneva 3 was formally announced to begin on the 1st February 2016, but the current UN Special Envoy for Syria, Staffan De-Mistura, postponed them until the 3rd February due to the ongoing violence and lack of humanitarian aid. The format of these negotiations were a series of talks that continued in a second round on the 14th – 24th March, and then a conclusive third round on the 13th – 27th April 2016 which is where the analysis of the Talks in this thesis reaches its scope. Following the failure of Geneva 2, the objectives for Geneva 3 were less ambitious and more focussed on long-term discussions. Hence there was no face-to-face meeting between the regime and the opposition. Furthermore, it proved difficult to persuade the opposition, now made up of the Higher Negotiation Committee (HNC), to attend until the very last moment (Atassi, 2016). The complex mixture of opposition forces within the HNC is reflective of the fractured nature of the war in Syria more generally in which there are over 1,000 opposition groups, drawing criticism of a gap between the political representatives and the military actors on the ground. Furthermore, a lack of representation from Kurdish groups was a controversial aspect of their formation following pressure from Turkey to exclude any actors linked to the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) (Carnegie, 2016). Overall, De Mistura's flexible approach to conflict management in a context where the fighting is ongoing is deserves credit, unfortunately the outcome was again unsuccessful and the conflict continues (Carnegie, 2016). Presently, efforts are being made towards Geneva 4, but the results of these are still being played out.

In regard to the method of analysing the Talks, the sources of information were largely found from the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) website which publishes the events of the intra-Syrian

talks. Although, as a result of the varying formats of discussion, varying sources were available. For instance, transcripts and videos of the talk's press conferences were consistently available for all of the talks, whereas video material of the conference itself was obtainable only for the open discussions of Geneva 2. Moreover, official UNSC and UNOG resolutions, agreements, transcripts, mediator reports and summaries, and press statements have been utilised for the analysis. As well as various news coverage of the talks, however these sources have been depended on far less that the UNOG information. In order to simplify the multitude of events and key documents, the following time-line has been comprised to reflect what I believe to be the key dates of the peace process as is relevant to this thesis, again based on information provided by UNOG.

3.2. Outlining the Significant Events of the Syrian Peace Process

A brief summary of the timeline of the Syrian peace process (UNOG, 2016):

16th March 2012: Joint UN-Arab League Special Envoy for Syria, Kofi Annan, launches a six-point peace plan.

14th April 2012: UNSC resolution 2042.

21st April 2012: UNSC resolution 2043.

30th June 2012: Geneva 1 convenes, Geneva Communique drafted.

17th August 2012: Lahkdar Brahimi appointed the new UN-Arab League Special Envoy for Syria following the resignation of Kofi Annan.

22nd – 31st January 2014: Geneva 11 Conference, no agreement.

10th July 2014: Staffan de Mistura appointed the new UN-Arab League Special Envoy for Syria following the resignation of Lakdar Brahimi.

May – July 2015: Staffan de Mistura organises Geneva Consultations.

14th November 2015: Vienna Statements.

18th December 2015: UNSC resolution 2254.

1st February 2016: Geneva 111 Intra-Syrian Talks first round formally start but are suspended on the 3rd February due to continued fighting

22nd February 2016: Cessation of Hostilities agreed in Munich.

26th February 2016: UNSC resolution 2268.

14th – 24th March 2016: Geneva 111 Intra-Syrian Talks second round is held.

24th March 2016: Paper on Points of Commonalties.

April 2016: UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs announces that there are approximately 13.5 million Syrians in need.

13th- 27th April 2016: Geneva 111 Intra-Syrian Talks round three is held, summary and work plan produced.

As can be seen within the timeline, alongside the Geneva talks there are a few other key agreements that must be considered. The November 2015 Vienna Statements were produced following a meeting arranged in Vienna between foreign ministers of 20 countries, in which the need for the Syrian government and opposition to begin formal political talks by the target date of 1st January 2016 were agreed upon (UNOG, 2016). Then in February 2016, the Cessation of Hostilities was established by foreign ministers of Russia and the US (UNOG, 2016). It can be noted that neither of these documents make a single reference to including a gender approach nor mention women as actors. Likewise, the UNSC resolutions on Syria tend not to mainstream gender into their discourse. Resolution 2042 allows a team of 30 unarmed military observers to Syria, and resolution 2043 authorises the formation of the United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS). Resolution 2268 endorses the Cessation of Hostilities agreement, and in turn fails

to make any reference to women (UNOG, 2016) However, resolution 2254 does highlight gender as it encourages 'the meaningful participation of women in the UN-facilitated political process for Syria' (UNOG, 2015). Whilst this statement makes a positive difference from the total lack of mention in the aforementioned resolutions, it can still be criticised for being brief and vague especially in comparison to the other points listed that on whole can be considered paragraphs in contrast to these 14 words focussed at women. Therefore, in contrast to the commitments made under resolution 1325 to prioritise women in conflict resolution; these resolutions, the Vienna Statements and Cessation of Hostilities at least on Syria fail to reach the stated pledges of gender mainstreaming.

3.3. Geneva 1 and the Geneva Communique

Geneva 1, albeit brief and without the meeting of the competing factions, is best known for producing a landmark in the peace process, the Geneva Communique. Based on Annan's six point peace plan that aimed to initiate a ceasefire (UNOG, 2012), the Geneva Communique is a foundation for the future talks. Whilst the focus is on ending the fighting, as there must be a removal of direct violence to establish a negative peace before durable peacebuilding can be achieved, there are also references to longer term plans for establishing a positive peace (Galtung, 1969). The Geneva Communique refers to assuring the 'safety of all within an atmosphere of stability and calm' in which context 'vulnerable groups are protected' (UNOG, 2012). It does not provide details as to who these groups are considered to be, rather takes a more general humanitarian tone. Freedom, equality and human rights are certainly themes that run throughout the agreement; again the language used is relatively generalised and non-committal but references to reforming legal structures and reconciliation are positive signs of a long-term focus alongside the short-term goals (Geneva Communique, 2012). Perhaps the most contentious point that

is agreed upon and that marks a significant step of progress in the peace process is the agreed establishment of a transitional body with full executive powers within a political solution to the conflict (Geneva Communique, 2012). In regards to women, as with resolution 2254, there is a line directed towards them, but it is very brief in relation to all of the other points made. On the other hand, an inclusion of women within such a landmark document is important as the Geneva Communique forms the basis of the rest of the peace process. It is stated that, 'women must be fully represented in all aspects of the transition' (UNOG, 2012). The emphasis on the total inclusion of women at each stage and element of the transition is promising, as it moves beyond limited assurances to involve women as a merely symbolic token.

3.4. The Participation of Women's Civil Society Organisations: A Fight for a Seat at the Table

I will test how this commitment to incorporate women within the Geneva Communique transfers to the political reality of the rest of the peace process as Geneva 2 and 3 are analysed. But first, the actions of Syrian women's civil society groups in between Geneva 1 and 11 will be looked at. Throughout the peace process, women have been actively working to increase their role. As Loode (2011) has argued, the multilevel approach that promotes local partnership and the principle of inclusivity is crucial within conflict resolution. As such, the intensive efforts of civil society can be applauded in this aspect. In late 2013 a concerted move to corroborate the activities of various women's civil society groups was made for the purpose of establishing a clearer place for them within Geneva 2. Groups such as the Syrian Women's Network, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the Women's Democracy Network, the International Civil Society Action Network, Karama and Code Pink came together alongside UN Women for this purpose as they established the Syrian Women's Initiative for

Peace and Democracy (SWIPD) (Leimbach, 2013). These groups at this point were focussed on advocating for a seat 'at the table' rather than 'in the corridors' in Geneva 2 (Leimbach, 2013, p2). For instance they suggested that a senior female mediator to be included at the same level as the then UN Special Envoy for Syria Brahimi. In the words of Dr Abigal Ruane, a consultant for the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (Leimbach, 2013, p2):

> 'At present, the future Syria is being negotiated with the warring factions without the presence of women. A narrative of power is taking place instead, which ignored the Security Council Resolutions on women peace and security and the evidence of past failures where this pattern has been followed'.

Consequently, a two day conference organised by UN Women and the Netherlands to promote the women's participation in the peace process was held 10 days before Geneva 2 commenced. Brahimi joined the opening session of the conference in support of their efforts and accepted their concluding Outcome Statement. During the conference he stated that (PassBlue, 2014, p2):

> 'This meeting conveys to both parties that will sit together at the negotiating table the importance of listening to the voices of Syrian women and incorporating women as a key player in the efforts leading to a peaceful resolution of the Syrian crises'.

The women involved came together from a variety of backgrounds across a wide range of civil society in order to formalise their demands. Their Outcome Statement prioritised a cessation of violence and for the Geneva Communique to be adopted; for those who have been arbitrarily detained to be released; for sieges to be lifted and humanitarian aid let through; for an immediate ceasefire; for the authorisation by the UNSC for peacekeepers; for measures to end Gender Based Violence (GBV) with gender sensitive policies; for the expulsion of foreign fighters; to assure freedom of movement; to ensure the return and compensation of refugees; to end the recruitment of

child soldiers; to lift economic sanctions; to reinstate civil law; to protect structures such as infrastructure; to secure official records; to reform security institutions; and to bring justice (PassBlue, 2014). Furthermore, within the peace process itself the conference argued for women's civil society representative to be observers as well as a Syrian gender advisor. In addition, the Syrian women's capacity should be built up further, whilst simultaneously providing protection for women who are participating. And lastly, this Outcome Statement should be adopted by the mediation team.

Following this conference, a few days prior to the start date of the Geneva 2 talks, three civil society representatives participated in a closed meeting with the UNSC to discuss how women could be more meaningfully included in the peace process and post-conflict transition period. They demanded that a contingent of women's civil society be involved and that there should be a minimum requirement of 30% women on each negotiating body, and lastly that gender should be mainstreamed throughout the process and outcome (Butler, 2014). A pertinent point made by one Syrian woman concerning the necessity to implement resolution 1325 was directed at the ambassadors in this closed meeting is highlighted by her quote, 'Do not leave your resolutions in a drawer, they do not deserve only lip service' (Butler, 2014, p2).

However, in spite of this, and the other efforts of civil society, representatives from women's civil society were not included in the Geneva 2 talks and the 30% requirement was not met, (even at the opening statements made on the first day) (Butler, 2014). Although the efforts of these women were, and continue to be, extremely meaningful and relevant, the advice from the Outcome Statement is yet to be fully utilised. Thus, in response to the question 'where are the women?' posed more theoretically by Enloe (Cohn and Enloe, 2003, p1194); they were evidently not sufficiently present at Geneva 1 or 2. Whilst the movement itself and response by certain actors and institutions such

as UN Women, Brahimi and the Netherlands are indeed promising signs of improvement, the reality of seats at the table in the talks requires progress. The extent that gender mainstreaming was included throughout Geneva 2 will be subsequently examined; but at the point of the start of Geneva 2, the inclusion of women in conflict resolution was not looking successful.

3.5. Geneva 2 and the Exclusion of Syrian Women's Civil Society

During the 22nd to the 31st January 2014, the Geneva 11 talks were held in Montreux and Geneva with the intention of bringing the regime and opposition together in order to agree on how to implement the Geneva Communique. The first day consisted of opening statements made by representatives from various countries, as well as from the two Syrian delegations. But as has been mentioned, Syrian women's civil society was not allowed the opportunity to speak (Butler, 2014). Their lack of invitation is a point of criticism made by several country representatives. The UK Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs at the time, William Hague, stated that the UK would have liked to have seen these women's civil society groups at the meeting since there is no durable solution without the inclusion of women (UN Webcast, 2014). Ms Catherine Ashton, the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, made the additional argument that women across Syrian and civil society must be a core part of the transitional period and. Although Bank Moon mentioned that; 'You can count on us that women will be a part of the peace process' (UN Webcast, 2014).

It was a focal point of reproach that the civil society groups were not invited. This was most strongly argued, perhaps, by the Netherlands delegation representative, Frans Timmermans, who advocated these groups must have a seat at the table. Having met that week with the civil society groups, Timmermans spoke on their behalf to emphasise

that women did not bring war, but that they can bring a durable peace. Other country representatives from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Greece, Belgium and Luxemburg also raised arguments regarding the participation of women; with the Vice President of Brazil claiming that a fundamental element of the peace process is combatting GBV (UN Webcast, 2014). As well as these points made about women, the other main themes that characterise the narrative of the opening statements are the use of indiscriminate violence such as barrel bombs and inhumane strategies like starvation as a weapon of war; that the only viable solution is political and that President Assad cannot remain in power; and on the international impact of terrorism, foreign mercenaries and the refugee crisis (UN Webcast, 2014).

As the talks between the two Syrian delegations began, the emphasis on women made during the opening statements certainly declined. There were women present however on each side of the talks. The opposition had two women, Suhair Atassi and Nour al-Amir, within the negotiating delegation; and three women, Rima Fleihan, Nagham Ghadri and Yisser Bittar, on the supporting technical team. Whereas the regime had two women, Bouthaina Shaaban and Luna Shabal in its delegation (Butler, 2014). Whilst these numbers do not reflect the 30% target, it does show a degree of inclusion. Whether this inclusion of women on the delegations impacted the discussion having a gender perspective is difficult to prove since these meetings were closed. But it raises the question of presence versus substance. It is not to imply that the women on the delegations must be bound to speak up on women's issues, rather the political nature and aims of the delegation is likely to be the priority over the consideration of the central current of the talks[6] through a gender perspective. This is where the role of

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[6] The central currents of the talks included: the creating a humanitarian corridor for aid to be delivered; the deteriorating situation in Homs; terrorism; the release of prisoners; external actors and weapons; and the political transition and interpretations of the Geneva Communique.

independent civil society can be useful, for the purpose of promoting gender equality within conflict resolution, since they are not tied to a political delegation.

When examining the use of discourse within the Geneva Talks, a culture of masculinity can be identified. For example, Brahimi refers to 'Syrian brothers from both sides' (UNOG, 2014) being present at the talks. This lack of indication towards the women involved is by no means intended as an exclusionary mechanism, rather it can be considered as a casual phrase of endearment. However, when examining the use of language it becomes evident that masculinity is the dominant mode of relations. Furthermore, where women are referred to within the transcripts, it is to reflect upon their situation as victims. Usually within the phrase 'women and children', very rarely as independent active actors. Again this binary categorisation is dangerous as it reinforces a perception of women in war as passive.

Thus the narrative that emerged from the opening statements made by various country representatives did focus of how women should be further included within the pace process and how the lack of invitation for Syrian women's civil society was an unfortunate, missed opportunity. However, throughout closed door negotiations between the two Syria parties mediated by Brahimi, the narrative shifted away from this attention concerning women. Consequently in comparison to Geneva 1, there has been an improvement in the promotion of women in conflict resolution. But this is still failing at this point at the end of Geneva 11 to reflect a reality in the main political discussion, of the proposals of gender mainstreaming and equal participation set out in resolutions such as 1325, the commitment to fully represent women in the transition as outlined in the Geneva Communique, or their meaningful participation that was reinforced by resolution 2254 (UNOG, 2016). Certainly, the Syrian women's civil society groups were critical of Geneva 11's failure to include women more and in its unsuccessful outcome of the talks breaking down after 9 days (Butler,

2014). As a result of the talks, Brahimi resigned and was replaced by De Mistura whose commitment to women's participation in the peace process has been exemplary as will be successively discussed.

3.6. The Establishment of the Women's Advisory Board

A cornerstone action under De Mistura as the new UN Special Envoy for Syria was the establishment of the Women's Advisory Board (WAB). The board consists of 12 civil society representatives and can be considered as a breakthrough in entrenching the role of women in the Syrian peace process. Although they will not take part directly in the closed meetings between the regime and opposition, it does provide a real platform for representing women (Gambale, 2016). The board's responsibilities will be to advise the Special Envoy, to consult regularly alongside further peace talks, it will provide advice and options to add to the conflict resolution agenda, provide creative solutions, utilise civil society skills and mainstream a gender perspective (UNOG, 2016). In a statement made by UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, she praises the founding of the WAB as she states that (UNOG, 2016):

> 'The Women's Advisory Board has a unique and vital role that no one else can play. In order to create long lasting peace, society as a whole has to be represented. The inclusion of women in the Syrian peace talks finally allows plans to be made that hold the seeds of a sustainable solution'.

A central principle of the WAB is inclusivity, accordingly the positions and background of the 12 representatives are very varied. There are supporters of the regime, the opposition and Kurdish groups, as well as secular and religious women (Gambale, 2016). Furthermore, the WAB represents a link between the international level negotiations and local level peace efforts. Although its members have received criticism of tokenism and even physical threats. A more credible critique of the

WAB is made by the Syrian Feminist Lobby who stated their fears that women would be categorised as peacemakers, neglecting other active roles they play such as being political and human rights activists. The Syrian Feminist Lobby made the further reproach that the WAB does not represent a significant portion of society, hence can only shed light on their own personal views (Gambale, 2016). However, the fact that women from the opposing sides of this polarised conflict are able to work together on one board for a shared purpose is reflective of more representation and cooperation than any other element of the peace process. The point the WAB make is that they have the freedom of being from independent civil society organisations so are not limited in their capacity to advocate on gender issues, as was the restriction on women participating directly in the talks on each delegation. The discussions that the WAB as well as other Syrian women civil society groups have with De Mistura are a part of the Geneva Consultations that coincide with the broader efforts towards peace at the UN Geneva Office. For example on the 5th June, Deputy Envoy Ramzy Ezzeldine Ramzy met with representatives from the Union of Syriac Women to discuss humanitarian needs and political solutions. Then on the 18th June, Ramzy met with the Syrian Feminist Lobby to discuss women's rights in correlation to the situation on the ground in Syria (UNOG, 2016). Furthermore, the emphasis on women in conflict resolution under De Mistura's charge of the Syrian peace process is again evident when looking at the discourse of his briefing the UNSC on the situation in Syria. Unlike the previous narratives that have either neglected or simply touched upon the issue of women's participation and needs, De Mistura has advocated women's agency in his statement below (UNOG, 2016):

> 'We met remarkable Syrian women in our Geneva Consultations who have been given us often the most powerful concept and analysis we have heard'.

Portraying how the WAB established in corroboration with De Mistura marks a turning point for women in the peace process where their position is one a genuine participation.

3.7. Geneva 3 Creates Space for a Gender Perspective

Geneva 3 refers to the Intra-Syrian talks that formally began on the 1st February 2016, but this first round was suspended just two days later due to continued fighting and prevented access for humanitarian aid (UNOG, 2016). The second round commenced on the 14th March with the intention of negotiating how the transitional governing body would be formed within a six month period. Then finally the third round, which shall be the scope of analysis, finished on the 27th April having established a summary and a work plan (UNOG, 2016).

There are several key differences that characterise Geneva 3, as has been mentioned the UN Special Envoy for Syria De Mistura being a firm advocate for women's rights and participation has played a significant role in mainstreaming gender. Additionally, the establishment of the WAB to consult De Mistura is another momentous achievement in bringing women actively into conflict resolution. A clear example of De Mistura prioritising not only women but civil society more broadly is by creating space for their discussions alongside the main negotiations, through the establishment of the Civil Society Support Room (CSSR). Furthermore, a positive development within the opposition's delegation has been an increased promotion of women's involvement. Following the founding of The High Negotiations Committee (HNC) in December 2015 to represent the opposition, the advocates of women's increased role were disappointed at the initial 6% representation. However, in response to this low percentage the HNC's Women's Consultative Committee (WCC) was established (Gambale, 2016). Miriam Jalabi, a member of the WCC, argues that as a result of the Committee the papers that are produced by the HNC

now include a gender perspective. In addition she emphasises the significance of symbolism (in Gambale, 2015, p10):

> 'I think even just the mere physical presence of women in Geneva right now is making it more of a nominal attitude to have women there all the time. We are going to be there, you're not going to get rid of use. We're not coming as a separate entity. We are a part of this'.

This emphasis on women is evident also in the discourse of De Mistura, who ahead of the start of the first round of the talks in a press conference outlined the necessity for women to be heard in Geneva 3. In particular, he focussed on the contentious issue of invitations as he implied this to be a mistake made in Geneva 2. Thus he stressed that inclusivity would be a central element of Geneva 3. His passion on this topic is clear from a statement he made to the press (UNOG, 2016):

> 'The invitations will clearly want to be also addressed to women and civil society. I've made a point, and the Secretary-General has been extremely clear on that, whatever list of various delegations want to come, we will make sure that there is a substantial presence of women to advise me and make sure that we are in the right position regarding the future of Syria of which there are 51 per cent, at least, of them in Syria'.

The priority that De Mistura gives to women in the peace process does represent an improvement on the previous two Special Envoy's. Although they too were advocates of women's rights and participation, there is a clear progression under De Mistura. For example within Annan's Six Point Peace Plan, there is no reference to the need to promote the inclusion of women. And within the discourse of Geneva 2, women were not actively promoted as agents, rather as passive victims of the conflict. Specifically, where Brahimi indicated the 'Syrian brothers' in the negotiations, De Mistura refers to 'my brother, my sister' (UNOG, 2014: UNOG 2016). Furthermore, within the detail of the use of language, De Mistura subtly emphasises the priority of

women as he lists them first before men, 'you women, men and children of Syria' (UNOG, 2016). Although only a nuance, this delicate shift away from the binary categorisation of "women and children", marks a noteworthy move in the narrative on gender. The narrative however is not the only positive development, actions during the peace process are also progressive as De Mistura formally invites Syrian women and civil society representatives, and reiterates the standing of the WAB in the peace process as well as several other women's organisations that will be given an opportunity to contribute (UNOG, 2016). The chance to share recommendations will be organised via a rotary mechanism with various civil society groups to ensure widespread participation. Furthermore, the WAB and civil society organisations shall be provided with a Support Room for the purpose of guaranteeing a work space to facilitate their contribution to the peace process (UNOG, 2016).

Likewise as each round of the Intra-Syrian talks occurred, the inclusion of women continued to materialise in both meetings and in discourse. For example on the 5th February De Mistura met with the WAB; and then on the 27th February in his address to the UNSC he praised the participation of Syrian women for their 'remarkable contribution to our work' (UNOG, 2016). In addition, De Mistura happily reported that UN Women have supported the position of a gender advisor to his office. Hence, it is evident that this mainstreaming of gender has moved beyond a rhetorical level within the peace process. There is a welcomed repetition of his continued referral to the efforts and necessity of women in De Mistura's press encounter and press briefing on the 14th March following the meeting with the Syrian Arab Republic delegation, then again on the 18th and 22nd March after he met with the WAB, and in his press conferences on the 24th March and 22nd April. Geneva 3 has thus gone further in discussing peace from a gender perspective as when issues such as the new constitution are debated, the guaranteeing of women's rights and representation at each stage of the transition are reinforced (UNOG,

2016). Although overall the Intra-Syrian talks still have an extraordinarily long way to go in achieving peace in Syria, there are positive developments that directly correlate with the efforts of the WAB. In De Mistura's words (UNOG, 2016):

> 'I met them (WAB) because they have constantly very good advice, really, genuinely good advice, but not only, they have also been very active in attempting, and to a certain degree succeeding in building a bridge between the various women of the different delegations'.

By the end of the third round, the Work Plan aims within a planned time frame of six months to create a trustworthy and non-sectarian governance, a process and schedule to draft the new constitution, and the continued support for free and fair election. The intended aim to discuss political transition and governance has been achieved as these related agendas have been accepted by each side (UNOG, 2016). Within the Mediator's Summary, the Commonalities on Political Transition provide a lengthy list of agreed notions including the equality of rights and representation of women. Furthermore, within the annex on Fundamental Issues for a Viable Transition, the requirement of practical consideration of how to operationalise each parties' commitments to women is highlighted. Finally, as the peace process progresses, the consultations between the Special Envoy and the WAB and other civil society organisations will continue. It is important to note that their presence and focus on gender specific issues are in themselves achievements and improvements from earlier stages of the peace talks. However the ambiguity of the language used in press statements to explain their accomplishments is indicative of the fact that they are working behind closed doors, thus the specific content of the WAB meetings are unavailable for analysis. Thus the institutionalising of a place for women and civil society through the WAB and also the CSSR, and the fact that they are from represent vary opinions as regime, opposition and Kurdish group supporters are the indications of their achievements.

Overall, it is clear that there has been a gradual improvement throughout the Geneva talks from 2012 to 2016 regarding the participation of women. In particular, the efforts of Syrian women's civil society and later the WAB in collaboration with De Mistura have resulted in the embodiment of gender mainstreaming rhetoric as practical achievements. However, how these successes are interpreted on the ground will now be considered through a case study focus as the reality of the gendered outcomes of war is analysed.

CHAPTER 4

EXPLORING THE SITUATION FOR SYRIANS IN ANKARA

4.1. An Insight into the Turkish Refugee Context

The purpose of this chapter is to consider how the Geneva Talks, are viewed from field research by those affected by the conflict, through their personal and/or professional experiences working with Syrian refugees in Ankara. The comparison of the problems identified at an institutional level and the reality for, in this case study Syrians in Ankara will be discussed. How the participants interpret and perceive the peace process will be a central element of this chapter, thus the information from first-hand interviews will prove invaluable. But it is firstly necessary to explain and analyse the context and central issues for refugees in Turkey. In light of the mass level of forced displacement in Syria since 2011, Turkey has been forced to adapt its refugee regime, as will be dealt with from a legal perspective in the following section 4.2. Defining the Refugee Context in Turkey in Legal Terms. This current section however, aims to provide an insight into Turkey as a context for Syrian refugees by locating this case within the academic literature, before approaching the analysis of the field research

Turkey is, as Sert (2014, p159) succinctly puts it, 'located at the crossroads of regions in turmoil'[7]. Alongside Jordan and Lebanon, Turkey has become one of the main recipients of refugees fleeing the war (Jessen, 2013). However, Turkey, unlike the other host countries, has upheld its position in leading the management of providing refuge

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[7]Turkey's geographical location is in a difficult position regarding its large borders with neighbouring countries such as Iran, Iraq and Syria, from which refugees flee with an intention of seeking safe haven via Turkey's European borders. Furthermore, the position of Turkey's borders and the large movement of unregistered people creates insecurity concerning trafficking (Ozden, 2013).

for Syrians (Jessen, 2013). The Turkish Government therefore, and not the UNHCR, is dominant in conducting Registration, Refugee Status Determination and Resettlement activities (Sert, 2014). In terms of financial input for Syrians from the Turkish Government, the number is estimated at 9 billion since 2011 (Yavcan, 2016). What's more, significant resources have been required to build and maintain the 22 refugee camps which are described by Jessen (2013, p3) as being[8]:

> 'Aesthetically built, generally safe and well-guarded, and boast amenities from centrally-located laundromats to flat screen TVs in residents' homes; every stakeholder interviewed reported that, physically, these camps were "the best they had ever seen"'.

Jessen (2013) in her comprehensive evaluation through a gender lens of how the needs of Syrians in camps in Turkey are addressed has identified the following findings. In addition to the positive view that the camps are generally well-built and that food security and education have been organised well with sufficient resources. She also criticises the emphasis on hard security and physical infrastructure leaves softer security issues such as psychosocial support and maternal healthcare deprioritised. The status of Syrians as temporary guests is argued as being preventative for long term integration. Moreover, the needs of GBV survivors have not been effectively met which she argues endangers the likelihood of marginalisation. And lastly Jessen (2013) makes the very valid point that there is a considerable lack of knowledge of the urban Syrian population. Here an important fact must be highlighted, as the number of persons outside the camps is estimated at 90%. Although in the urban areas, there is not the same assistance as in the camps, there is more freedom of movement and accessibility (Yavcan, 2016). However, both inside and outside the camps, the issue of poor integration is still prevalent, and is a contributing instigator for Syrians making the perilous journey from Turkey to other European countries (Yavcan, 2016).

Difficulties for Syrians to find employment and integrate into the labour market through legal means are a significant challenge. Provisions have been made for access to health, education and some social services; but as Yavcan (2016) argues, there is not an established or well-formed route to legally access the labour market. Although there are legal provisions for Syrians to receive work permits, in practice, access to the legal market illegally is more common for survival. Specifically, the regulation in January 2016 that allows Syrian refugees to apply for work permits has had limited results. As Human Rights Watch has indicated, by the end of 2016, work permits had been issued to just 0.5% of the Syrians registered as refugees in Turkey. Furthermore, after registering, they must wait for six months before being able to apply for a work permit, and when they do, they must work in the area that they applied for protection and must have be sponsored by an employer (Frelick, Human Rights Watch, 2017).

As a result, unemployment and the cost of living in Turkey are both higher as there is more cheap-labour from Syrians who are willing to work for less than the local Turkish population (JRS, 2014). In a survey conducted by Yavcan (2016) with 330 respondents as part of a needs assessment for the International Red Cross, the Red Crescent Federation and the Turkish Red Crescent; it was identified that in order to find employment, it was absolutely required to know Turkish. Hence, language barriers are a clear obstacle for Syrians being able to integrate into the labour market. Furthermore the language barrier is also an issue not only as is it a basic survival skill, but also for societal integration and cohesion. The problems of unemployment, language barriers and lack of integration also contribute to the figure of 40% of Syrian children are not attending school, as especially in urban areas, the economic hardship for families means that families either can't afford to send the children, or need the income from child labour (Frelick, Human Rights Watch, 2017).

Tension towards Syrians in Turkey has been shown to have increased as the conflict has continued and numbers of Syrians entering Turkey escalated. For instance, Transatlantic Trends (2014, p2) have surveyed that 42% of Turkish respondents said there the number of immigrants in Turkey are 'too many'. This percentage is almost double in contrast to the previous year, 2013, in which 25% had that response. Moreover, 66% of the response about Turkey's refugee policies suggested that they are not restrictive enough, the same percentage thought that immigrants have integrated poorly (Transatlantic Trends, 2014). Some reasons for poor integration can be located in the effects that such a large influx of people has on infrastructure, as the capacity of hospitals are tested by the increase of numbers; and the price of rent and food have risen (JRS, 2014). The impact is challenging for both Turks, who must deal with these very real bearings and most particularly to Syrians, who do not have sufficient protection from exploitation.

There are two possible long term scenarios suggested by Sert (2014) in regards to the large and increasing number of Syrians seeking refuge in Turkey. The first scenario takes place if the situation in Syrian reaches a settlement, and the Syrians are repatriated. The second scenario is considered in the case of a settlement not being reached, which may result in the integration of Syrians in Turkey through naturalisation as is set out in the Turkish citizenship law (Law 5901, 2009) (Sert, 2014). Considering that from the literature, perhaps the most significant and repetitive issue to emerge is poor integration, the scenario of naturalisation is especially challenging. Kirisci and Ferris (2015) have argued that the best long term solution has to be the end of violent conflict, but since this is still a far off reality, in the meantime suggest that increased burden sharing amongst the international community is essential, and will aid Turkey's ability to maintain its open door policy and facilitate integration.

4.2. Defining the Refugee Context in Turkey in Legal Terms

As is highlighted in the most recent (July, 2017) United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) data on the refugee context in Turkey, there are currently an estimated 3,106,932 million Syrian refugees who are registered. It is important to note the correct terminology at this point, as legally Syrians are not actually refugees, they are persons under temporary protection (TP). Turkey, as a party to the 1951 Convention on Refugees and the 1967 Protocol is bound under customary law, to principles such as non-refoulement. However, it retains the geographical limitation of the 1951 Convention which bizarrely means that only Europeans can be considered refugees, as was relevant to the post-World War Two context of the Convention (UNHCR, 2006). Consequently, non-European asylum seekers are coined as being 'conditional refugees' whereas Syrians are under 'subsidiary protection' since the 2014 Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP, 2014). Under international refugee law, a situation in which people are displaced "en masse" creates a possible short-term solution by treating all members of that group as a category rather than on a case by case basis. Consequently in Turkey, all Syrians have received an open door policy in which they are benefactors of protection within a temporary time frame. This notion that Syrians are 'guests' who are protected, under charitable rather than a rights based act is pertinent to the cynical sentiments amongst some members of the Turkish public that resources are being directed away from Turkish people in need. Under TP, Syrians are entitled to: health services, basic financial aid if necessary in the form of shelters for example; education at a primary and secondary school level as well as in some cases exemption from university fees. Whilst this policy is a reflection of a welcoming attitude in Turkey, as the conflict in Syria has progressed and the number arriving has escalated, the tensions highlighted by the academic literature (Jessen 2013, Sert 2014, Yavcan

2016, Erdogan 2014, Kirisci and Ferris 2015) at a societal level have inevitably grown.

4.3. Conceptualising Gender Based Violence within Situations of Forced Displacement

In regards to GBV, refugees are much more likely to be victims than those in a stable, home environment. During the conflict, in flight from it and in asylum countries; GBV is a continual threat facing a large proportion of women and girls (UNHCR, 2006). Notwithstanding the impacts on men and boys also. Although the effects of conflict intersect with and escalate risks faced by women in particular, as such there is no gender-neutral war seeing that women are disproportionately targeted. Within situations of displacement, women are more likely to have limited access to basic rights such as food, shelter, health services, education and documentation (UNHCR, 2006). What's more, threat from sexual violence is especially high as it is a widespread characteristic of contemporary conflict and its aftermath. As a result of GBV in the form of (UNHCR, 2006, p11):

> 'Rape, forced impregnation, forced abortion, trafficking, sexual slavery, and the intentional spread of sexually transmitted infection'.

Women are in particularly need of protection. Although a criticism from the gender analysis of the conflict resolution literature was not to exclusively categorise women as victims, this is not mean that specific vulnerabilities that they face do not exist.

Thus in order to understand how women are at risk within displacement settings, the nature of the violence that they face must be conceptualised. As has been outlined above, there is an increased threat of sexual violence that would be termed by Galtung (1969) to be direct. But as Kelly (1998) highlights, the necessity to understand violence as a continuum is clear as direct violence is inter-related and

mutually reinforcing with structural violence. The manifestation of this continuum plays out in both the public and private spheres as traditional privatised violence, violence under conflict conditions and state endorsed violence all work to entrench patriarchy (Kandiyoti, 2016). A characteristic of forced displacement is an unstable environment in which traditional modes of power are disrupted. In this context what Kandiyoti (2016) terms a masculine restoration can be observed where authority is exerted over women in both violent and non-violent ways to a larger degree to compensate for the restrictions on male power in environments of insecurity. In this scenario, women can be at a higher risk of GBV, however the breakdown of traditional means of power can also have an impact on deconstructing entrenched gender roles which can in turn have an empowering effect on women (Hanmer, 1996). The reality of this empowerment is still extremely challenging though, as female headed households may reflect a shift in power dynamics and gender roles, but having to navigate the challenges of displacement that are often exacerbated by poverty are deeply demanding on women. Consequently, how violence against refugee women manifests must be seen as being both direct and indirect. Hence despite the removal from the country of conflict, there is still not a situation of positive peace as structural violence is particularly ripe for those who have been forcible displaced and are seeking protection.

The perceptions of these issues by individuals living in Ankara who have been impacted by the Syrian conflict in various way will now be discussed in order to incorporate a primary approach to the institutional peace process analysis and theoretical considerations.

4.4. Approaching the Field

The aim of this primary research has been to conduct both formal and informal interviews to provide a bottom up approach that incorporates

perspectives from a small scale study of people who have been affected by the Syrian conflict. The eight interviewees[9] can be grouped into three categories: two non-Syrian nationals who work and intern for refugee Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) and International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGO's) in Ankara, four Syrian nationals who work or volunteer for refugee NGO's and INGO's in Ankara, and two Syrian nationals who do not work or volunteer and live in Ankara. The location of the interviews were all in Ankara[10] but the specific places varied from the homes of the interviewees, meeting in cafes, the office of one of the NGO's, and via skype; and the time length on average was one hour. It is important to note a point regarding confidentiality, as the names of both the interviewees and their respective NGO's and INGO's will not be disclosed. What's more, due to the sensitivity of the topic, the interviews were not recorded and the data was taken via note-taking. The data was then analysed using a Thematic-Coding approach, whereby parts of the data were coded meaning they were identified as being of potential interest, then similar codes were drawn into a theme, which then was considered more broadly as being part of a network (Robson, 2011).

Concerning the interviewee categories outlined above, a further point must be reinforced regarding the term refugee, and the reason why the term Syrian-national has instead been deemed more appropriate for this research. As has been outlined in section 4.1., Defining the Refugee Context in Turkey in Legal Terms, Syrians come under the same legal category in Turkey of Temporary Protection as they are treated as a group rather than as individuals, regardless of whether they arrived in Turkey before the conflict as students or workers, or of their financial or work status. Therefore, the fact that they cannot

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[9] The ages of the interviewees ranged from 20-50 years old and the breakdown of gender is 5 female and 3 male interviewees.
[10] Although the location of the field research is restricted to Ankara, the wider environment of Turkey being such a large refugee hosting country is very relevant. Moreover, Turkey can be considered as an intersectional point within the broader refugee context on a global scale.

safely return to Syria indicates that they are displaced, however this does not necessarily mean that they are in a vulnerable situation as refugees. On the other hand, many of the challenges faced by refugees does apply to all Syrians in Turkey in regards to discrimination, restricted freedom of movement and access to the legal rights of foreigners more broadly. By treating an entire nationality as one category legally brings both the availability of certain rights that are set out under temporary protection, but also removes rights that would apply for foreigners of other nationalities. For example, two of the Syrian interviewees who now work for an INGO had come to Ankara before the conflict as students, but due to the outbreak of war were unable to return, thus their previous legal status as foreign students changed as their student residence permits expired and their only choice to stay legally was under Temporary Protection. Hence legally they are treated in the category of Syrians fleeing war "en masse" and do face discrimination as a result of this association, however the details of their experience and integration in Turkey is undermined by the label refugee. Although two of the Syrian participants fit this label more clearly, having fled Syria after the conflict broke out and having since been granted Temporary Protection; another interviewee fled the war but was able to travel here on a tourist visa, so has the right of Temporary Protection as a Syrian but also doesn't fit the category by virtue of being a tourist. In brief, the policy of legally categorising a nationality as one unit inevitably loses the nuance of the individual's experience, which is why the labels of Syrian and non-Syrian nationals are more suitable.

4.5. Perceptions of Peace from Interview Participants in Ankara

The interview questions asked followed a similar structure, focusing on interpretations of the peace process, and the impact that the conflict had based on their personal and professional experiences in Ankara. This mixture between professional and personal experiences regarding

the Syrian conflict and the effects of forced displacement within the context of Ankara proved highly interesting as the research was carried out. All of the interviewees who have professional ties to NGO's or INGO's were more comfortable at first discussing their work, however this initial focus then shifted as the interviews progressed and their personal and professional experiences began intertwine. The two non-Syrian nationals were the most at ease and comfortable in their answers, due most likely to their relative emotional distance in contrast to the Syrian nationals who were more directly influenced. Whereas the two Syrian nationals who were not working were the most closed in their responses.

Perhaps one of the central findings was the lack of information and engagement that all of the interviewees had regarding the peace process, in particular the Geneva Talks. The overriding view of the peace process was that it was evidently failing, and that discussions in Geneva were so far from the realities of war and displacement that they were not worth following. Thus, one conclusion would certainly be a sense of despondency towards the current talks. One example where this is evident is from a male Syrian national, who volunteers for an NGO, is aged 22 and is of Turkmen ethnicity; he believed that 'peace is nowhere near us', and that the role of external actors in the conflict more broadly meant there was not the required prioritising of the Syrian people. In a similar tone, a female, non-Syrian interviewee, who is aged 24 and is a Turkish national, working for an INGO, commented that she has no trust in stability being brought to Syria or in fact the Middle East. Likewise, the two male, Syrian nationals, who are aged 27 and 31, of Kurdish ethnicity, and are both working for INGO's, had similar distrust that when peace is agreed upon, it will not uphold. These responses indicate not only a negative view of the conflict resolution efforts, but a lack of detailed information concerning the specifics of the various talks that have been ongoing. Therefore, another sweeping finding, has been that the perceptions of peace have been extremely abstract, and framed in the long term. It was not viewed

as a tangible reality, rather a distanced and idealist hope. Another response by a female, Syrian national, who is aged 49 and of Arab ethnicity, working for an NGO, when asked about the peace process was simply to avoid answering, and instead to give a vague reply that 'the opinions really vary about peace'. Here, however, it seemed that the interviewee was wary of discussing the politics of competing alliances in the conflict so moved on quickly from this topic to that of her work with the NGO. As with the peace process more generally, the specific developments of Syrian women's civil society groups within the Geneva Talks was not a topic that was known about by any of the interviewees. In fact the only occasion this question was able to produce a lengthy response was where the interviewee had their own view of what civil society was. One interviewee who is female, a non-Syrian national, aged 24 and of Turkish nationality, working for an INGO gave a noteworthy response, as she highlighted an example of a women called Fatima Alebat who is a Syrian women active with her 7 year old daughter on twitter in communicating from Aleppo to thousands worldwide. In the interviewee's words; 'Fatima is an example of civil society. Women like her can bring peace, she is a peacebuilder.' However the work of organised civil society groups was not known about.

When discussing whether women's issues and gendered experiences of war should be topics of concern in the peace process, the perceptions were mixed and did not seem to follow any pattern. A comparison can be made between the views of the two female, non-Syrian nationals in the same category of being professionally linked to NGO's and INGO's. The first interviewee who is aged 23 and of Tajikistani nationality felt very strongly that during the first stages of conflict resolution, the focus should not be on GBV and women's rights, rather on social and welfare rights for all. She argued that; 'men and children also have been affected, not only women', so firstly attention should be paid to finding a common peace for all. Whereas the second interviewee, aged 24 and of Turkish nationality, had a contrasting view, stating strongly

that women's issues such as Violence Against Women (VAW) must be prioritised as; 'the worst way to oppress a person is by sexually humiliating them'. As has been expressed, these questions concerning the peace process, civil society and women's issues in the peace process, were across all of the interviews the areas that were met with the shortest responses and least engagement. Instead, the experiences and situations displacement within Ankara were dominant throughout each interview. Hence, this further finding of focus being on current circumstances rather than what was perceived as a distanced peace process proved to be the common outlook.

Consequently, as the attention shifts to interpretations of displacement in Ankara, the data has been more suitable for nuanced analysis. For instance, several key themes emerged throughout the different interviews that are illustrative of some of challenges of displacement including not limited to; education, child labour, early marriage, domestic violence, housing conditions, exploitative employment, poverty, harassment and integration. In terms of education, the issue of the upmost concern has been displaced children's schooling having been disrupted by war. Thus one of NGO's primary task was on increasing access to education for Syrian children in Ankara, by addressing some of the main obstacles which include distance, poverty and harassment on the road. One example given was of stones being thrown at the children as they travelled to the school and even on one occasion a knife being pulled out. This NGO plans to assist in arranging a transport possibility to and from some of the schools to provide an incentive and security for the purpose of increasing education, and consequently the interrelated theme of integration in Turkish society. Another of their strategies was awareness and assistance in registering to schools, which are available across Turkey and are free. But one notable attitude has been that the situation of displacement is only considered as temporary, so parents and children can feel despondent about local schools, which is an attitude challenged by the NGO's and INGO's who outline the fact that there is

no guarantee of resettlement and the best way for displaced children to continue a normal lifestyle and to integrate is through schools. Furthermore education also intersects with the themes or child labour and early marriage, as across the interviews with both non-Syrian and Syrian interviewees linked to NGO's and INGO's, the trend was highlighted of children generally above the age of 10 being less likely to go to school. Poverty and lack of integration, or what Galtung (1969) would term negative peace, increased the likelihood that the boys would start work and the girls would be kept at home in order to be kept safe and often there would be cases of early marriage.

The issue of employment, and its impacts on gender dynamics within households has also been a significant theme. On the whole, displaced Syrian women in Ankara were unlikely to be working, based on the accounts of all of the interviewees. However, in cases where the household was either single headed or very poor, women would find jobs such as cleaning or filling cigarettes. One Syrian, female interviewee who is of Arab ethnicity and is aged 49, volunteering with an NGO gave the following account regarding women and employment;

> '99% (of women) are at home, unless they are very poor then they do jobs like cleaning and filling cigarettes. The problem is that the husbands can't find jobs, and the women are not allowed, so the children work. Plus the employers don't give them the wages that they deserve. But Syrians really want to learn.'

Furthermore, there was a resounding similarity in the responses of the interviewees about the topic of whether prostitution had become a risk in light of the displacement setting. The answer was that public prostitution was definitely not common amongst Syrian women, and that even if they had lost almost everything in their lives, they recalled a strong self-commitment to maintaining their honour. For instance, when asked whether prostitution was an issue facing Syrian women in Ankara, the non-Syrian, female who is working for an INGO interviewee who is of Turkish nationality and is aged 24 responded as such;

'No actually it's not, since they are in such a difficult situation and they lost so much, but what they have is their honour so they don't'.

However, there was an example of sexual commodification in the private sphere that was highlighted by a non-Syrian interviewee who was interning for a NGO who explained a trend where a wealthy Turkish man would 'help' the family of a single headed household financially, if say the daughter had a relationship or married him. Whilst the notion of prostitution was seen as incredibly taboo, such cases of exploitation in survival conditions were considered differently. Another finding was that in the cases where women had been working in Turkey, where they had not been in Syria, there had been a shift in gender roles as the women had more economic independence. One example given by a Syrian, male interviewee who is 22, of Turkmen ethnicity and volunteers with an NGO, is of his sister who is now living and working in Istanbul where she has more space to live her life than before the conflict. Another female Syrian interviewee of Kurdish ethnicity, who does not work, and is aged 21 explained in a similar sense that in spite of the difficult scenario of living in a different country away from her family, she has more independence.

One of the INGO's focussed on providing training courses for Syrian women in activities such as handicrafts, tailoring, community engagement and art therapy for this same purpose of providing empowerment opportunities as well as psychosocial support. Interestingly, the training courses were chiefly directed at women, indicating a broader gap in the opportunities for displaced men which has interrelated effects on gender dynamics. For instance, three of the NGO linked interviewees referred to the same problem of men being unable to find work, leading to a decline in their traditional authority as providers for the family. Where work was available in fields such as seasonal agricultural work, construction or factories; the labour conditions were described as being very poor in the sense that the work was affecting their health and the pay was both very low and

sometimes not given at all. In addition, the consequence of lack of work for a husband proved to be extremely negative for the wife and children, who faced a higher risk of domestic violence as a result of his unemployment as well as the psychological trauma of fleeing war. Again across the interviews, this issue of increased domestic violence as a direct result of the conditions of displacement was common. Poor housing conditions seemed to exacerbate the risk of VAW in particular, as up to ten people sharing one house, especially when the men could not work was described as being a contributing factor to women being at risk. And in the examples where domestic violence was not an issue, the circumstance of unemployment and poor shared housing conditions had a detrimental impact on couple's marriages. One of the Syrian, female interviewees of Arab ethnicity, who does not work, was at that time suffering from violent abuse from her husband. She explained that only since fleeing Syria had her husband become violent towards her. As a result she was seeking assistance from a NGO since she has two young children, she herself was the same age as me at twenty three years old and she had no other support system in Ankara. She intended divorcing her husband but was fearful that her children would be taken from her to an institution as she had no work. She planned to find work as a cleaner, but due to the ages of her children being just four and five years old, she was distressed about her options. The NGO was providing her with clothes and shoes for the children, as well as legal counselling from a lawyer about divorce. Here it is evident how the obstacles of displacement intersect as education, child labour, early marriage, domestic violence, housing conditions, exploitative employment, poverty, harassment and integration reinforce one another.

Integration was a theme that emerged when discussing the interpretations of peace in post-war Syria. As has been highlighted, in regards to perceptions of peace itself, the term was taken in a distinctively long-term and abstract way. Consequently, this topic of future peace and the reconstruction of Syria proved to be more

engaging than the topic of the ongoing peace talks. Concerning the role of women in peacebuilding, the overwhelming consensus was positive and encouraging of the idea that women should actively help shape the peace prospects of Syria. Two of the interviewees, one Syrian male, aged 31 of Kurdish ethnicity, and one non-Syrian national who is female, aged 23, and of Tajikistani nationality, who both worked for NGO's, represented the same idea that women had become more empowered as a result of the experiences of war in regards to them having had to flee war and adapt to a new country under strenuous conditions; and the impact that these had on disrupting patterns of patriarchy in their families and reshaping gender roles. The other non-Syrian interviewee who is aged 24, female and a Turkish national commented that:

> 'I think that Syrian women are so strong, they really went through a lot. They have seen the worst, the death of their families, and they lost everything. In comparison we are weak actually, since they are so strong.'

Here the clear respect and faith that the interviewee had in Syrian women rebuilding peace following her professional experience helping refugees Ankara is evident. In a similar tone, a female, Syrian national interviewee of Arab nationality, aged 49, who works for a NGO expressed that the extent of hardship that Syrian women had been through meant their capacity for survival was immense. She added that;

> 'Their main concern is for their safety. They can accept anything because of safety. Bombs have totally destroyed their homes, they have no compensation and they can't manage with the government; but they thank god they are safe. Some do want to want to rebuild Syria, others are more integrated in Turkey.'

Thus, the sense from several of these interviewees was that regarding Syrian women specifically, their experiences give them a strength and a capacity that is necessary in rebuilding Syria. However, these

opinions are related to Syrian women's ability, but not their will, to become involved in the reconstruction of a post-war Syria. Whether or not Syrians, both men and women, wanted to return to Syria once the war finishes is a topic that was met with much more mixed results in which integration as a theme is pivotal. The same Syrian-national interviewee, who is female, aged 49 and of Arab ethnicity and is working for a NGO said that she would want to return as although her husband had passed away, Syria is still her place of language and culture, and since she has a wealthy background, there was something waiting for her; thus she felt integrated in Syria. Whereas another Syrian-national, who is male, aged 22 and of Turkmen ethnicity, volunteering for a NGO thought that many Syrians had become integrated in Turkish society, and felt that they had rights in Turkey. Moreover, many men had fled from military conscription and feared the consequence of that if they were to return. The average opinion across the interviews however was that if the war finished, Syrians would want to return despite the fact that they would have to 'start from scratch'. One pertinent example was given by a non-Syrian female interviewee, aged 23, and from Tajikistan, interning for a NGO who in an anecdote of a conversation with a Syrian woman reported that the woman expressed fervently that as soon as she receives the call that the war is over, she will go at once and even if she must stay under a broken roof, will rebuild her house and her society. Amongst the comments about rebuilding Syria and prospects of future peace, the responses were passionate and there were undertones of hope, but within a frame of distanced idea that could not be conceived as more than that whilst the present fighting continued.

4.6. A Reflection on Primary Research

Overall the findings from the primary research provided a unique and deeper insight into views about peace and war, and the impact that displacement has on people. From a theoretical perspective, the

continuum of direct and structural violence that are exacerbated by poverty, and masculine restoration that is heightened by displacement, and gendered experiences of war. These were evident from the professional and personal experiences that have been discussed. But in reflection of the process of field work, one moral dilemma that I encountered when doing primary research was the notion of gathering up examples as data for analysis and theoretical observation; when in fact the aforementioned data is an individual's tragic experience. Thus as a researcher, the very purpose of your academic production becomes questionable. However, a conclusion that I drew in light of these quandaries was the importance of the motivation of research being for action, emancipation and change. For this reason the concept of peacebuilding has been a keen feature of the thesis, as the lessons that can be drawn upon from theoretical analysis and the primary experiences of people who have been directly impacted; are invaluable in consideration of developments towards peace. Subsequently, the following chapter will consider peacebuilding in light of the learnt perceptions of peace by the participants of this field research in Ankara.

CHAPTER 5

LOOKING FORWARD: HOW THE THESIS'S FINDINGS CAN INFORM PEACEBUILDING

5.1. Examining the Connections between the Geneva Talks and Perceptions from the Field

A central aspect of the research agenda of this thesis was to not only evaluate the Geneva Talks, but also to understand how the talks are interpreted. Thus many of the interview questions within the field research emanated from this notion. From the analysis of the Geneva Talks, I argue that there has been a gradual improvement regarding the participation of women. In particular, the efforts of Syrian women's civil society and the establishment of the Women's Advisory Board (WAB), have resulted in the embodiment of gender mainstreaming rhetoric as practical achievements, albeit at an institutional level. However, a key finding that was evaluated from the interviews was the general sense of disengagement, and very often little or no knowledge of the Geneva Talks or the role that women are playing within them. Therefore, a significant result is that the Geneva Talks have thus far failed to inform perceptions from the field. So the gap between the two is noteworthy. Accordingly, the question arises of why there is gap, and then also what this gap reveals about the nature of conflict resolution more broadly. Furthermore, what can be understood from these findings in terms of a gender perspective?

One reason that can be identified for this gap is how the interviewees viewed peace more broadly speaking. By and large, all efforts towards peace were perceived to be evidently failing which coincided with the longer term, more abstract idea about peace. Subsequently, another

reason for the gap is that the interviewees were more concerned about the current conditions of displacement in which so many Syrians are living. More specifically, the following topics were prevalent: education, child labour, early marriage, domestic violence, housing conditions, exploitative employment, poverty, harassment and integration. Therefore a conclusion that can be drawn is that the gap between Geneva Talks and the interpretations of the talks by interview participants is telling of the disconnect between institutional narratives and everyday realities of conflict and displacement. Here, a more far-reaching criticism can be made about the nature of conflict resolution often being top-down (Anderlini, 2007). This is particularly dangerous in Syria where there is myriad of external actors involved in multiple proxy conflicts that have interests in the outcome of peace. So the local narratives are at a heightened, and unfortunately, very likely possibility of been drowned out.

Regarding the necessity for a gender dimension, whilst within the Geneva Talks there have been achievements in terms of an increase in women's participation and a place for civil society to have a platform; the achievements have not gone far enough. There must be a trickle-down effect from achievements of women's increased role in the peace negotiations. As Cockburn (2012) has argued, the narrative on gender in peace negotiations must translate on the ground in a tangible form. So that the platform for women in conflict resolution at local, national and/or international levels are encouraged and solidified in practice. The previously highlighted argument that women must be engaged in a genuine way, and not as tokens, is still relevant. But this goes further, when considering the topics highlighted from the field research that should be raised, underlining women's experiences of war. At this point the gap between the talks themselves and the perceptions of the talks is concerning, as the realities of war from a bottom up perspective can inform and improve the quality of the peace process. Like Kelly (1998) has highlighted, Gender Based Violence (GBV) manifests in more extreme forms not only within, but also after a conflict situation.

Thus within peacebuilding, the field research and local voices in general, can be informative of why a gender dimension is important. As was understood from the interviews, within situations of societal disruption, such as conflict and displacement, traditional power mechanisms are also disturbed. The interviewee's experience of access to power along gender lines, in the context of Ankara, correspond with Kaniyoti's (2016) concept of masculine restoration[11]. The link can be highlighted between men struggling to reach power channels and subsequently compensate by enforcing power through other means, which often manifests as a spectrum of violence towards women. This surge of male power assertion in contexts of conflict and displacement can therefore be raised as a reason why a gender dimension is increasingly a necessity. And why it is essential for more space to be created for women's experiences of war to be considered as factors when negotiating and building peace.

5.2. Suggestions for a Gender Mainstreamed Peacebuilding Approach

Gender being a cornerstone focus of this thesis, it is poignant to consider how findings from the analysis of the Geneva Talks and the field research can contribute to strategies for peacebuilding and the mainstreaming of gender within conflict resolution.

5.2.1. Lessons from Geneva

Firstly, there are several points understood from the development of the Geneva Talks and highlighted by Syrian Women's Civil Society Groups that are relevant to apply to peacebuilding strategies. Regarding a gender perspective at an institutional level, the

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[11] Further details of Kandiyoti's (2016) concept of masculine restoration can be found in the literature review, 2.4. Conceptualising GBV within Conflict Resolution.

commitments made to women in key agreements including the Geneva Communique, United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution 2254 and 1325 should be implemented. The pledges to include women within conflict resolution have international consensus and must be upheld. In particular the Geneva Communique's assurance of women's participation has been a centre-point of Syrian Women's Civil Society's work to achieve a greater voice within the Geneva talks. Moreover, it has been accepted by the opposing delegations and is a fundamental point of agreeance of the peace process as a whole (UNOG, 2016). It is necessary that such promises manifest as a practical reality and not as mere rhetoric.

Moreover, without the agendas of international actors interfering, the peace talks must continue in an inclusive way that incorporates a gender perspective. The international community can aid this process further by building on the current Geneva Office's stance of inviting women's civil society organisations. This can be practically facilitated by removing strict visa regulations that prevent members from attending peace talks. Furthermore, the safety of individuals participating in the talks must be ensured. Training opportunities for women ahead of the negotiations can assist in capacity-building whilst imposed 30% quotas in each delegation will ensure representation. However female participation should reflect agency and not tokenism. Thus, there should be women included in the delegations, committees and decision making; as well as the creation of space for women to mobilise and operate. In addition, it is advised that gender equality experts be on mediation teams. Alongside the international level peace talks, local and regional peace initiatives must be encouraged. Likewise, local leaders and peacebuilders should be given a platform in order to ensure a multi-level conflict resolution that is not imposed in a top-down manner (Badeal, 2015). Moreover, the priority should be the protection and rights of the Syrian people, and how best to reconstruct Syria with this as a priority rather than international power games dictating the future of Syria.

Furthermore, as Galtung (1964) has suggested, to break down structures of violence, there must first be the removal of threats from direct, physical violence. Hence, for peacebuilding strategies to reach their full potential, an immediate ceasefire and the delivery of humanitarian aid needs to be established. The reason why an effective and durable ceasefire is challenging is due the deeply fragmented nature of the opposition reflecting a divided society, which is why it is an essential requirement that international actors to stop arming the warring parties (Badeal, 2015). However, ensuring safety from physical violence is not enough, as the definition of security must include the concept of human security. This means that freedom from poverty and basic rights to food, shelter and health care are ensured in a way that guarantees equal access for women (Cupples, 2005).

Open access for women should also extend in the political sphere in the reform of political institutions. Durable change results from, 'political leadership, deep societal shifts, and authentic women leaders at the national level' (Anderlini, 2007, p145). Hence female political participation is vital in the peace process and transition period, within state institutions and decision making throughout the country. Practically this requires advocacy campaigns and quotas, as well as gender committees to be established during the transition period especially due to the immediate post-conflict opportunity for women to gain political power, but also danger for a return to pre-conflict norms of entrenched patriarchy (Badeal, 2015).

As well as opportunities in basic needs and decision making, it is essential to enshrine human's rights within legal reforms to the constitution that should not discriminate on grounds on gender, religion, race or ethnicity. Due the norm of post-conflict situations pushing for a return of stability, the breakdown of patriarchy and empowerment of women during the period of conflict can often be neglected as stability is sought as a return to tradition in the form of patriarchal practices (Anderlini, 2007). Thus the notion of a new social

contract in which gender equality is normalised, social capital is built and democratic norms encouraged to develop for the purpose of overcoming cycles of violence (Badeal, 2015). The right to participate in decision making and have equal access to resources must be ensured by guaranteeing just property rights, employment without discrimination and freedom from violence. Taking note in particular of where discrimination regarding gender intersects with factors such as displacement and the increased challenges that it brings (Zuckerberg and Greenberg, 2005)

5.2.2. Lessons from the Field

Secondly, emanating from the field research, from the experiences of in particular Syrians in Ankara, but also considering displacement trends more widely. It can be suggested that short and long term needs should be covered both in the stage of peace negotiations, and for durable solutions regarding peacebuilding. Accordingly, civil society should be encouraged at all levels, whilst the interviewees generally were not aware of the work of the Syrian women's civil society groups in the peace negotiations, there were other thoughts of women in civil society. For instance, the example highlighted by one interviewee of the women advocating for awareness in Aleppo (Fatima Alebat) with her 7 year old daughter communicating to thousands worldwide. The platform for civil society should not be limited to an international institutional level, but can also be promoted locally and nationally. Especially when considering that the link between a robust civil society and an effective representation of the people is significant and can be considered a vital democratic norm. Likewise smaller civil society groups may require training, financial and technical support bearing in mind that many of these groups have emerged under conflict conditions. In addition, the sensitive and often taboo nature of gender inequality means that expertise from more experienced group is required to implement gender mainstreaming measures (Whitbread,

2005). Consequently, cooperation between civil society groups at multiple levels is necessary for the purpose of expanding, working on group projects, pooling knowledge, skills and resources, and most importantly encouraging more women to become involved (Badeal, 2015).

An area that the field research identified as being an imperative for the interviewees was education. Displacement having disrupted schooling and the long term impacts that this will have is essential to consider when rebuilding a peaceful society. In Ankara, the obstacles raised for education include distance and safety in accessing schools, poverty, language and cultural barriers, and the sense that the situation if temporary. Although significant efforts have been made by the Turkish authorities and NGOs/INGOs to combat these issues, for instance all schools and state universities are free for Syrians. Yet, disrupted schooling is still a major concern. In particular in cases where as alternatives to school, child labour and early marriage escalate as trends. Therefore, within peacebuilding, immediate measures should be adopted to prioritise education. Taking into account the varied experiences in different countries' education systems that will require an integration (Badeal, 2015). Alongside education, training and skills based learning opportunities can develop capacity building which in turn can contribute to livelihood restoration, social reconciliation, psycho-social care and well-being (Ahmed, 2005). Likewise, employment is a major factor for ensuring social harmony. As seen in the experiences of displacement, the lack of employment options can often lead to social in cohesion which sometimes manifests in violent forms. For both men and women, employment that is free from exploitation is consequently essential in providing human security and the ability to access basic needs. Where Syrian women in Ankara were not able to provide for their families, they were more likely to engage in sexual commodification in the private sphere, although public prostitution was regarded as being uncommon and taboo. On this note, measures to assist integration at community levels, as conflict and

displacement escalate subject areas, such as survival sex and war time babies that may be considered cause for societal isolation (McKay, 2005). In view of that, more societal awareness is required about peacebuilding, gender stereotypes, gendered experiences of war, and victims of GBV. Gender stereotypes need to be addressed, such as pressures on men to adopt an identity of assertive masculinity, whilst women are categorised as being victims and/or mothers (Whitbread, 2005).

Furthermore, for many of those who fled the war as refugees, their return will be dependent on a genuine power shift away from the current regime and guarantee of a government that upholds its responsibility to protect all of its people. From the primary research, the fear of return was indicated to for men who had escaped conscription in the military or other armed groups. At the same time however, justice and reconciliation mechanisms must be considered. The rights and protection of the people should of course be guaranteed, and to do this restorative and retributive justice mechanisms need to be developed for the country to move on. This is evidently an extremely difficult task when the fighting has been so widespread. Yet, in line with international standards of human rights, the worst perpetrators of violence should be investigated and held accountable. Within reconciliation processes, a gender sensitive approach is essential to assist in trauma counselling and reintegration (Badeal, 2015). More specifically, GBV trials must also be sensitive with medical and psycho-social support, and preferably work in collaboration with civil society. It is important that in light of the inevitable lack of documentation throughout the war years, justice initiatives and humanitarian groups focus on collecting available evidence and witness statements in order to facilitate post-war justice and reconciliation.

Overall, it is evident that peacebuilding in Syria will be immensely hard, and at this point the fighting is still ongoing. But it is not

impossible, and like other countries that have faced extreme conditions of violence, such as Rwanda and Afghanistan, peacebuilding strategies at some point will be applied. And when they are, they should be approached in a way that priorities the Syrian people and not the agendas of international actors. Thus, human security is essential in building a durable peaceful societal that is characterised by integration and not in cohesion. To do so, women and their experiences of war must not be undermined. And a gender perspective towards peacebuilding must have not only institutional achievements, but should demonstrate in practical forms.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The aim of the present study was to examine via a qualitative approach the extent to which women are included in the peace process in Syria. The crux of the central hypothesis is in favour of women in conflict resolution whereby it is advocated that greater empowerment positively correlates with successful peacebuilding. Ultimately, within the tragedy of the Syrian conflict, a genuine peaceful environment can only be reached by adopting an inclusive approach to conflict resolution. Thus, the gradual increase of women's participation in the Geneva talks sheds a positive light on the overall tone of the thesis, although the undoubted necessity to continue and escalate the role that women play is vital in reaching an end to the conflict.

The academic fields that were selected to theoretically analyse the peace process are by and large Peace Studies and Gender Studies. The changing nature of warfare in which the Syrian conflict is situated has influenced the literature that addresses contemporary conflict resolution. Within this, the intersection with a gender perspective is where the central point of evaluation lies. Hence, theoretical considerations from each discipline have been utilised to deconstruct the peace process in Syria. Most pertinently, conceptualisations of violence being both direct and structural and peace being positive and negative by Galtung (1969). Furthermore, the notion of gender mainstreaming was central to the hypothesis as the various agreements, documents, transcripts and statements linked to the Geneva talks from 2012 to 2016 were examined in depth. The findings of this analysis has shown that there is a gradual improvement in the mainstreaming of gender that progressively improves as a direct result

of the efforts of Syrian women's civil society organisations. Whilst the majority of resolutions on Syria (2042, 2043, 2268), and agreements made externally to the Geneva office (Vienna Statements and Cessation of Hostilities), do not actively promote the role of women in conflict resolution; the cornerstone Geneva Communique on which the subsequent negotiations are based, as well as resolution 2254, do advocate their participation. There is a clear development from the Geneva talks in 2012 and 2014 where women's civil society representatives were not invited, to the talks in 2016 where they were not only formally recipients of invitations but also had established a Women's Advisory Board (WAB) that conferred directly with the UN Special Envoy for Syria. This position being held by Staffan De Mistura following the resignation of Lahkdar Brahimi due to the failure to sustain agreement in the 2014 talks, has made a significant difference to the prioritising of gender issues and the participation of women.

As the results of the investigation into the texts of the Geneva talks have highlighted, the narrative emerging in 2015 and 2016 is certainly more inclusive of a gender approach than the previous years. Moreover, the improvements made to promote the role of women in conflict resolution have had practical manifestations as well as rhetorical weight. Alongside the work of the WAB, the delegations have created a larger space for women to participate. In particular the opposition who have established their own women's consultative committee. Furthermore, the number of meetings between the office of the UN Special Envoy for Syria and a multitude of Syrian women's civil society groups is proof of the augmented prioritising of women. Additionally, there are now gender advisors involved in the peace process and although the target to impose a 30% minimum female quota on each delegation has yet to manifest. Evidently, although there has been a trend over the chosen time frame of evaluation of increased participation, this positive improvement does not disguise the fact that there is still a clear gender inequality in regards to conflict resolution.

Hence, it is of great importance that efforts to include women are not only kept up but intensified. Especially when taking into account the reality of the consequences of the conflict for those involved, as has been highlighted by the primary data collected. However, in order to effectively involve women in conflict resolution at multiple levels, the gap between institutional narratives on peace within the negotiations and the daily realities of conflict and displacement must be bridged. Consequently, the impacts the violence and the resulting forced displacement must be incorporated into peacebuilding strategies. In order to consider the enormity of the peacebuilding task in Syria, the experiences and perceptions of Syrians themselves must have a platform. The enshrining of women's rights within a new social contract in Syria is paramount as the transition period toward peace is an opportune time to entrench gender equality norms such as women's participation in decision-making.

Thus, further work is needed to be done as the Syrian peace process develops for the momentum of the improvements made by and large as a result of civil society efforts are continued. Notwithstanding the scope of this thesis to examine specifically the Geneva talks up until April 2016, this research has provided an original analysis of the developments of women's participation in the Syrian peace process via textual analysis, theoretical considerations, primary sources, and as a result of these findings has provided policy recommendations. Further research might explore in more depth the workings of the distinct civil society organisations as well as larger surveys concerning the opinions and experiences of Syrian women to incorporate into gender policies. The approach of intersecting Peace Studies and Gender Studies should also be undertaken to explore within other case studies the role of women in conflict resolution.

Overall this focus on the need to empower women within peace processes at the point of political negotiations, throughout the transition periods and within longer-term peace building strategies, is

fiercely advocated for by the this thesis. If women are neglected in conflict resolution, then the ability to achieve a durable, positive peace in post-conflict environments will be severely limited. Thus for effective peacebuilding and for the broader combating of gender inequality, the participation of women in conflict resolution is unequivocally required.

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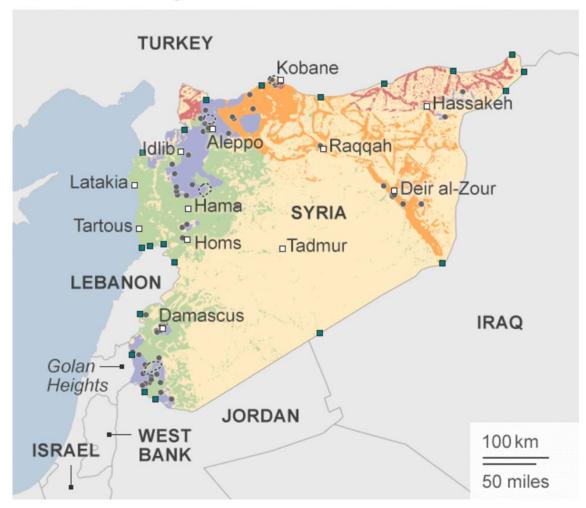
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APPENDICIES

A. ILLUSTRATIONS

- 1. Map of territory in Syria (BBC News, 2015).

- 2. Women's civil society conference in the Netherlands (UN Women, 2014).

- 3. Opening statements at Geneva 11 (UNOG, 2014).

- 4. Women's Advisory Board in Geneva (PassBlue, 2016).

- 5. Staffan De Mistura in Geneva (Yahoo-News, 2015).

- 6. Syrian women and girls in Ankara (New York Times, 2014).

 - 7. Peacebuilding (Voice Compassion Education, 2016).

B. TURKISH SUMMARY/TÜRKIYE ÖZET

Giriş

Suriye'de devam eden çatışmalar[12] göz önünde bulundurulduğunda barış süreci, 2012'den beri süregelen ve yürek burkan bir ölçekte seyreden şiddetin sona erdirilmesine yönelik başlıca umut kaynağı olmuştur. İleride farklı düzeylerde güçlendirme yapılması tartışmasız bir şekilde gerekli gözükse de Suriyeli kadınların çalışmaları ve kazanımlarının, barışa yönelik sarf edilen çabalar konusunda ayırt edici bir özelliği olduğu kanaatindeyim. Dolayısıyla, bu tez çalışmasının ana tartışma konusu; çatışmaların çözümlenmesinde yer alan kadınların desteklenmesidir. Bu çalışmada Cenevre'deki Suriye görüşmeleri incelenerek erkeklik kavramının egemenliği üzerinde durulacaktır ancak uygulanabilir önlemler ile kadınların anlatıdaki artan rolünün yeni yeni yaygınlık kazanıyor olması ümit veren bir gelişmedir. En başta, Birleşmiş Milletler (BM) kurumlarındaki duyarlı kişilerin, özellikle de BM Suriye Özel Temsilcisi Staffan De Mistura'nın ve Suriyeli kadınlardan oluşan sivil toplumun yoğun çalışmalarına değinilecektir. 2012 ve 2016 yılları arası kaydedilen gelişmelerin sürdürülmesi ve ileriye yönelik adımlar atılması gereklidir. Bu gelişmelerin bölgede barışın inşası sürecinde gerçekleştirilmesi gerektiği savunulacaktır.

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[12] En az 250,000 Suriyelinin yaşamını yitirdiği ve 11 milyonunun ise yerlerinden edildiği Suriye'deki çatışma, 21. yy'ın muhtemelen en kanlı olayıdır (Al-Jazeera, 24 Austos 2017). Bu çatışma, bir iç savaş olarak ya da küresel boyutta aracılı bir savaş alanı olarak tanımlanabilmektedir ancak ana özelliği Suriye'deki olayların boyut olarak ve uluslararası doğası bakımından bir istisna olmasıdır.

Cenevre'deki Görüşmelerde Neler Yaşandı?

Kısa vadede muhalif grupların ve rejimlerin temsilcilerini ortak paydada buluşturup aralarında ateşkes yapılmasını, uzun vadede ise siyasi bir çözüme varılmasını hedefleyen BM destekli barış müzakereleri 2012'den bu yana ara verilmeksizin devam etmiştir (Atassi, 2014). Görüşmeler, çatışmaya gitgide daha fazla dâhil olan dış güçleri yansıtan uluslararası bir karaktere sahiptir. Bu durum, başlıca muhalif tarafların buluşmasını teşvik eden ABD ve Rusya örneğinde olmak üzere yakın zamanda Astana'da gerçekleştirilen Rusya, Türkiye ve İran'ın desteklediği görüşmeler ve Suudi Arabistan'ın ev sahipliği yaptığı Suriyeli muhalif grupları hedef alan Riyad Konferansı gibi diğer görüşmelerde de gözlemlenmiştir. Esad'ın düşürülmesi konusunda anlaşmaya varılamaması, tarafların ateşkeslere uymaması, kuşatma taktiklerinin yumuşatılamaması gibi başlıca sorunlar dolayısıyla şimdiye kadar yapılan görüşmelerin amacına ulaşamadığı açıkça görülmektedir. Bunun yanı sıra, muhaliflerin kendi aralarında da bölünmüş durumda olması, siyasi temsilciler arasındaki mesafe ve bölgedeki askeri durum da başlıca engellerden birkaçıdır (Carnegie, 2016). Diğer bir yandan, muhalif tarafların görüşmelere katılması olumlu sinyaller vermektedir. Bu çalışmam özellikle de 2012'den 2016'ya kadar devam eden Cenevre'deki görüşmelerde elde edilen gelişmeler ile hâlâ gerçekleşmekte olan 2017'deki gelişmeler üzerinde duracaktır.

Kadınların Dâhil Edilmesi Neden Önemli?

Bu çalışmanın ana konusu, kapsamlı bir yol izlenerek çatışmaların çözümlenme sürecine kadınların dâhil edilmesinin desteklenmesidir. Sivil toplumda, farklı geçmişlerden gelen ve siyasi görüşleri değişkenlik gösteren kadınların kendi seslerini duyurabilmek ve sorunun

çözümüne bir toplumsal cinsiyet perspektifi kazandırmak amacıyla yorulmak bilmeden nasıl beraber çalıştıklarını gözlemledim. Pozitif barış için gerçekçi adımlar atılırken doğrudan şiddetin bir tehdit oluşturmayacağına katılmaktayım (Galtung, 1969, 1984) ancak ilk aşamalardan itibaren çatışmanın çözümlenme sürecine kadınlar dâhil edilmelidir ve bu katılımın, geçiş hükümeti ve barış inşası gibi konularda hem süreç boyunca hem de karar verme yetkisinin bir sonraki aşamalarına kadar sürdürülmesi gerekmektedir. Ancak kadınlar hâlâ sıklıkla savaş ganimeti olarak veya savaş esnasında kullanılabilecek stratejik araçlar olarak görülmekteyken toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı savaş deneyimleri, artan toplumsal cinsiyete karşı şiddet[13] riski, hem çatışma boyunca hem de çatışma sonrası doğrudan ve yapısal şiddetin devamlılığı göz ardı edilmemesi gereken sorunlardır (Kelly, 1998; Cockburn, 2012). Aynı zamanda, zorla yerlerinden edilen insanların güvenlikleri garanti altına alınmazken temel ihtiyaçları ve hakları da dış etkenlere karşı savunmasızdır. Böylesi istikrarsız durumlarda aile içi şiddet olasılığı da artmaktadır (Kandiyoti, 2012). Savaş zamanı kadınların pasif mağdur oldukları varsayılmaktadır ancak bu basmakalıp görüş hatalıdır zira kadınlar savaşçı olmaktan tutun da hanehalkı sorumlusu ve barış adına yapılan müzakerelerde sahip oldukları nice görevlere kadar pek çok farklı rollerde aktif bir şekilde savaşın bir parçası olmuşlardır.

Cenevre-1, 2012

Eylem Grubu Konferansı olarak da bilinen Birinci Suriye Konulu Cenevre Konferansı 2012 yılının Haziran ayında Cenevre'de düzenlenmiştir. 2012'nin BM ve Arap Birliği'nin Suriye Özel Temsilcisi Kofi Annan'ın teşvikiyle yapılan konferans Cenevre Bildirisi'nin

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[13] Toplumsal Cinsiyete Dayalı Şiddet (GBV), "sırf kadın olduğu için ya da toplumsal cinsiyetinden ötürü kadınlar orantısız bir şekilde daha fazla etkilendiği için direkt olarak bir kadını hedef alan şiddet olayı olarak tanımlanabilir." Bu şiddet olaylarının kapsamına ise cinsel şiddet, fiziksel şiddet, duygusal ve psikolojik şiddet, zarar verici gelenekler ve sosyokültürel şiddet girmektedir (CEDAW, IRIN, 2004).

yayımlanmasıyla sonuçlanmıştır. Bu bildiride, tam yürütme yetkisi olan bir geçiş hükümeti üzerinde anlaşmaya varılmıştır ve Esad'ın bu hükümette yerinin olmadığı özellikle ABD hükümeti tarafından açıklansa da Rusya bu konunun tartışmalı olduğunu bildirmiştir (UNOG, 2012). Yabancı diplomatlar sonuç bildirisinden memnun olsa da Suriyeli temsilcilerin ve sivil toplumun bu bildiride yer almaması dikkate değer bir durumdur. Kadınların sürece dâhil edilmesi açısından, Cenevre Bildirisi'nde yalnızca tek bir maddeye atıfta bulunulmuştur: *"kadınların geçiş sürecinin tüm safhalarında tam anlamıyla temsil edilmeleri gerekmektedir,"* (Cenevre Bildirisi, 2012). Bir yandan, bu madde diğerlerine kıyasla oldukça kısadır. Diğer bir yandan ise kadınların böylesi önemli bir belgeye dâhil edilmesi mühimdir zira Cenevre Bildirisi barış sürecinin devamı açısından bir temel oluşturmaktadır. Kadınların sürece katılımı için verilen vaat dikkate değerdir ancak bu vaadin sözde kalıp kalmayacağı ise araştırmanın kilit noktasıdır. Toplumsal cinsiyetin anlatının bir parçası olarak yer alması olumlu bir gelişme olsa da vaat edilenler hayata geçirilmelidir. 2254 numaralı ilke kararı hariç, Suriye için Kofi Annan Barış Planı, Viyana bildirileri, "ateşkes" (cessation of hostilities), 2042, 2043 ve 2268 numaralı ilke kararları da dâhil olmak üzere Suriye'ye ilişkin diğer anlaşmaların ve ilke kararlarının çoğunda toplumsal cinsiyet politikaları işlenmemiş ve hatta kadınların sürece dâhil edilmesinin bahsi bile geçmemiştir. Bu sebeple, Birinci Suriye Konulu Cenevre Konferansı, kadınları hedef alan Cenevre Bildirisi'ndeki tek bir madde hariç kadınların sürece dâhil edilmesi konusunda oldukça yetersiz kalmıştır.

Cenevre-2, 2014

Daha sonra ise 2014 yılının Ocak ayında İkinci Suriye Konulu Cenevre Konferansı başlamıştır. Bu konferans, rejimin temsilcilerinin ve ana muhalefet bloğu olan Suriye Muhalif ve Devrimci Güçler Ulusal Koalisyonu'nun (SMDK) bir araya gelmesi açısından bir örnek

oluşturmuştur. Bu görüşmeler, yeni Birleşmiş Milletler (BM) ve Arap Birliği Suriye Özel Temsilcisi Lahdar Brahimi ve iki Suriye partisi arasındaki basına kapalı sohbetleri de içermektedir (UNOG, 2014). 2013'ün sonlarına doğru gerçekleşen bu görüşmelerin öncesinde, çeşitli kadın sivil toplum örgütlerinin kadın haklarını korumak amacıyla İkinci Suriye Konulu Cenevre Görüşmeleri'nde kendilerine daha net bir yer ayrılması amacıyla düzenledikleri etkinlikleri destekleyen ortak bir adım atılmıştır. 50'den fazla kadın, Suriyeli Kadınlar Barış ve Demokrasi Girişimi'ni (SWIPD) oluşturmak için bir araya gelmiştir. Suriyeli Kadınlar Topluluğu (SWN), Barış ve Özgürlük için Uluslararası Kadın Birliği (WILPF), Kadınların Demokrasi Ağı (WDN), Uluslararası Sivil Toplum Eylem Ağı (ICAN), Karama ve Pembe Kod (Barış yanlısı kadınlar) gibi gruplar BM Kadın Birimi'nin yanısıra bu amaçla bir araya gelmişlerdir (Leimbach, 2013). BM Kadın Birimi ve Hollanda öncülüğünde düzenlenen Cenevre-2 Konferansı başlamadan önce yapılan ve iki gün süren konferansı takiben bir Sonuç Bildirgesi yayımlanmıştır. Kadın sivil toplum temsilcilerinin gözlemci, cinsiyet çalışmaları danışmanı olarak ve BM Suriye Özel Temsilcisi ile aynı derecede bir kadın arabulucu olarak görev almaları için ve Suriyeli kadınların kapasitesini ileriye yönelik artırmak ve katılımcı kadınları korumak amacıyla yapılan talepler bildirilmiştir. Keyfi tutuklanmış hükümlülerin tahliyesi, kuşatmaların kaldırılması ve insani yardıma geçiş izni verilmesi gibi konularda Birleşmiş Milletler Güvenlik Konseyi yeterince açıklama yapmamıştır. Bu konferansı takiben üç sivil toplum kuruluşu temsilcisi Birleşmiş Milletler Güvenlik Konseyi'nin de katılımıyla basına kapalı bir toplantı düzenlemişlerdir ve barış süreci ile çatışma sonrası geçiş dönemine kadınların nasıl daha anlamlı bir biçimde dâhil edilebileceği tartışılmıştır. Kadın sivil toplum kuruluşlarından oluşan bir birliğin sürece dâhil edilmesi ve müzakere eden organların her birinin en az yüzde 30'unun kadın olması zorunluluğu getirilmesi ve son olarak da süreç boyunca ve sonuçta uygulanacak politikalarda toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği sağlanması konusunda taleplerde bulunmuşlardır

(Leimbach, 2013). Buna ve sivil toplumun diğer çabalarına rağmen kadın sivil toplum örgütlerinin temsilcileri İkinci Suriye Konulu Cenevre Görüşmeleri'ne davet edilmemişlerdir, yüzde 30 katılım zorunluluğu ise açılış konuşmalarının yapıldığı ilk günde bile uygulanmamıştır ve bu durum pek çok ülkenin yaptığı açılış konuşmalarında bir madde olarak dile getirilmiştir (UN Webcast, 2014). Kadın sivil toplum örgütlerinin dâhil edilmemesine rağmen görüşmelerin farklı taraflarında kadınlar yer almışlardır. Müzakere eden delegasyonun bünyesinde muhalef tarafında iki kadın bulunmaktadır ve üç kadın da teknik destek takımında yer almaktadır. Delegasyonun rejim yanlıları tarafında ise iki kadın bulunmaktadır. Bu sayılar yüzde 30'luk hedefi yansıtmasa da kadınların sınırlı sayıda da olsa katılımda bulunduğunu göstermektedir (Passblue, 2014). Ancak bu kadınlar, cinsiyetlerine dayalı sorunların çözümünde sivil toplumun sürece katılımının gerekli olacağını savunmak yerine her iki tarafın görüşlerini temsilen orada bulunmaktadır. Görüşmelerde kadınların sorunları yerine tartışılan temel konular ise; insani yardımın ulaştırılması için bir koridor yapılması, Humus'un kötüye giden durumu, terörism, mahkûmların serbest bırakılması, dış aktörler ve silahlar, siyasi geçiş ve Cenevre Bildirisi'nin yorumlarıdır. Ayrıca metinlerde kadınlara atıfta bulunulan maddede ise kadınların durumları mağdur statüsünde yansıtılmıştır. Genellikle *"kadınlar ve çocuklar"* ifadesinde (UNOG, 2014) bu durum görülür ve çok nadir olarak kadınlar bağımsız ve aktif aktörler olarak gösterilir. Bu ikili kategorilendirme, kadınların savaşta pasif bir rol üstlendiği algısını güçlendirdiğinden tehlikelidir. Bu yüzden İkinci Suriye Konulu Cenevre Görüşmeleri çatışmalara seferber olan kadın sivil toplum örgütlerini davet etmekte başarısız olmuştur. Her delegasyonda birkaç kadın olmasına rağmen çoğunlukla bu kadınlar mağduriyetleriyle ön plana çıkmışlardır. Daha sonra ise dokuz gün süren görüşmelerin ardından Brahimi görevini De Mistura'ya devretmiştir.

Cenevre-3, 2016

Süregelen şiddet olayları ve insani yardımın yetersizliği sebebiyle ertelenmesinin ardından gerçekleşen Üçüncü Suriye Konulu Cenevre Görüşmeleri 2016 yılının Şubat ayında yapılan görüşmelerden oluşan bir seridir. İkinci Suriye Konulu Cenevre Görüşmeleri'nin başarısız geçmesinin ardından, Üçüncü Suriye Konulu Cenevre Görüşmeleri uzun süreli tartışmalara odaklanmıştır. Bu görüşmeler kapsamında rejim ve artık Yüksek Müzakere Komitesi'nden oluşan muhalelefet arasında yüz yüze bir müzakere gerçekleşmemiştir zira Komite son ana kadar görüşmelere katılmayı reddetmiştir. Kadınların sürece dâhil edilmesinin sıkı savunucusu olan De Mistura, Üçüncü Cenevre Görüşmeleri'nde toplumsal cinsiyet perspektifine politikalarda daha fazla yer ayrılmasını sağlayan önemli bir aktör olmuştur. De Mistura döneminde temel olarak yapılan eylemlerin başında Kadın Danışma Kurulu'nun açılması gelmektedir (UNOG, 2016). Kurulda 12 sivil toplum temsilcisi bulunmaktadır ve bu temsilcilerin 6'sı Suriyeli Kadınlar Barış ve Demokrasi Girişimi'nin üyesidir. Kadın Danışma Kurulu farklı fikirlere sahip insanlar oluşmaktadır. Bazı kişiler rejim yanlısıyken bazıları muhalif kesimdendir ve bazıları ise Kürt grupları destekler. Suriye'deki barış sürecinde kadınların rolündeki bu artış bile büyük bir ilerleme olarak sayılmaktadır. Bu durum barış sürecinde karşılıklı diyaloğun oluşturulması konusunda daha yaygın bir biçimde hemfikir olunduğunda bir arada çalışan karşıt taraflardaki kadınların çalışmalarına bir örnek oluşturur (Gambale, 2016). Kurul, rejim ve muhalafet arasında yapılan basına kapalı toplantılara direkt olarak katılamasa da kadınların temsili için gerçek bir platform sağlar. Suriye Özel Temsilcisi'ne tavsiyede bulunmak, barış görüşmelerinin ilerlemesini sağlamanın yanısıra düzenli olarak istişarede bulunmak Kurul'un sorumluluları arasındadır. Ayrıca çatışma çözümü ajandasına eklemek üzere tavsiye ve seçenekler sağlayacak, yaratıcı

sonuçlar üretecek, sivil toplum yeteneklerini kullanacak ve toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğini politikalarda yaygınlaştıracaktır. De Mistura yönetimi altında ise, sivil toplum kuruluşlarının temel müzakerelere katılımın yanısıra tartışmalar da yapması için Sivil Toplum Destek Odası'nda bir yer ayrılmıştır. Muhalefet delegasyonundaki olumlu bir gelişme ise, ilk olarak yalnızca yüzde 6 kadın temsilcinin sağlanmasının ardından kadınların katılımının teşvikinde bir artış yaşanmasıdır. Ancak Yüksek Müzakere Komitesi'ndeki düşük katılıma yapılan eleştirilere karşılık olarak Kadın Danışma Komitesi kurulmuştur ve ileriki geçiş yönetim kurulunun yüzde 30'unun kadın olması gerektiğine dair vaatte bulunulmuştur (Gambale, 2016). Benzer şekilde Suriye konulu görüşmelerinin her turunda, kadınların sürece dâhil edilmesi hem toplantılarda hem de söylemde gerçekleşmeye devam etmektedir. De Mistura ve Kadın Dayanışma Kurulu arasında çok sayıda görüşme gerçekleşmiştir ve De Mistura'nın Birleşmiş Milletler Güvenlik Konseyi'ne hitaben yaptığı konuşmasında Suriyeli kadınları *"çalışmamıza olan üstün katkılarından ötürü"* ifadesini kullanarak tebrik etmiştir (UNOG, 2016) ve ofisindeki cinsiyet çalışmaları danışmanı olarak sahip olduğu pozisyonu kuvvetlendirmiştir. Barış sürecinde toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğini sağlamak için uygulanacak politikaların nasıl eyleme dönüştürüldüğüne dair bir örnek olarak şu verilebilir: Üçüncü Cenevre Görüşmeleri'nin üçüncü turunun sonuna doğru sunulan Arabulucu'nun Özeti, hakların eşitliği, kadınların temsili üzerine görüşleri ve tarafların kadınlara yönelik vaatlerinin nasıl eyleme geçireceklerine dair pratik düşüncelerin gerekliliğini konu edinmiştir. Görüşmelerin sonunda bildirilen genel hedefler; planlanan 18 aylık zaman dilimi içerisinde güvenilir ve tek bir mezhebe dayalı olmayan bir yönetim sistemine geçilmesini, yeni anayasayı oluşturmak için bir süreç ve program oluşturulmasını ve özgür bir ortamda adil bir seçim yapılması için desteklerin sürdürülmesi gerektiğini özetlemiştir. Kısacası, cinsiyet karşıtlığına son veren politikaların hem anlatıda hem de pratikte daha ön plana getirilmesi ve kadın sivil toplum örgütlerine hem Kadın Danışma Kurulu hem de Sivil Toplum Destek Odası

aracılığıyla daha fazla olanak tanınması sayesinde Üçüncü Cenevre Görüşmeleri'nin sonuna doğru –özellikle Birinci ve İkinci Cenevre Görüşmeleri ile kıyaslandığında- gerçek bir ilerleme kaydedildiğini görmekteyiz.

Cenevre'deki Suriye Konulu Görüşmelerin Analizi

Geriye oldukça ciddi zorluklar ve şimdiye kadar yapılan görüşmelerde dile getirilmiş eleştiriler kalmıştır. Yeni bir hükümet kurmak için biçilen 18 aylık müddet son derece iyimser bir süredir. Seçim planlarını konuşmak kolaydır ancak bu planlar nasıl kaynak bulunacağını ya da gerekli siyasi iradenin nasıl oluşturulacağını açıklamamaktadır. Siyasi bir kuruluş olarak gücü, üye devletlerinin siyasi iradelerine bağlı olan BM'den kaynaklanabilecek sorunlar bu hesaba katılmaz bile. Dahası, sivilleri hedef alan bombardımanların devam etmesi ve muhalefet ile rejimin ortak bir paydada buluşamaması yaşanan zorlukların yalnızca tek bir yüzünü ortaya koymaktadır. Ancak kadın sivil toplum örgütlerinin ilerlemeleri dikkatle incelendiğinde 2012'den 2016'ya kadar devam eden Cenevre Görüşmeleri'nde gitgide daha büyük gelişmelerin kat edildiği görülmektedir. Kadınlara sunulan vaatlerin sadece sözde kalıp eyleme geçirilmemesi ve savaş sonrasında barış süreci boyunca elde edilen kazanımların hak ettiği değeri görmemesi bir tehlike oluştururken öte yandan bu noktada uygulamada başarılar elde edilmiştir. Özellikle, Suriyeli kadınların sivil kadın örgütlerinin ortaklaşa çabaları, De Mistura'nın desteği, Kadın Danışma Kurulu'nun ve Sivil Toplum Destek Odası'nın kurulması bu başarılara örnek olarak verilebilir. Bu başarılar, barış sürecinde sivil topluma ayrılan yerin genişletildiğini göstermektedir. Aynı zamanda bu durum kadınların ne kadar da farklı ve çeşitli kesimlerden geldiğini ve rejim/muhalefet ya da Kürt grupların destekçisi olarak da siyasi düşüncelerinin çeşitliliğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu farklılık hem aşılması gereken zorluklara sebep

olurken hem de kadınların birlikte çalışabilmeyi başarmasıyla daha farklı alanlarda uzlaşmaya varılmasını sağlamaktadır.

Birincil Kaynak Araştırması: Barış Algısı

Araştırmalarımın bir bölümü Ankara'daki Suriyeli erkek ve kadınlarla yapılan röportajları içermektedir. Birincil araştırmanın amacı; Suriye'deki çatışmadan etkilenen insanlar üzerinde küçük ölçekte bir çalışma yapmak ve bu çalışmada insanların bakış açılarına yer veren resmi ve gayri resmî röportajlar düzenlemek ve tümevarımsal bir yaklaşım sağlamaktır. Röportaj yapılan sekiz kişi şu şekilde üç gruba ayrılabilir: Suriye vatandaşı olmayan fakat Ankara'daki mültecilere yönelik uluslararası ve ulusal sivil toplum kuruluşlarında çalışan ve staj yapan iki kişi, Suriye vatandaşı olan ve Ankara'daki mültecilere yönelik uluslararası ve ulusal sivil toplum kuruluşlarında çalışan veya gönüllü olarak yer bulan dört kişi, ve Suriye vatandaşı olup Ankara'da yaşayan fakat herhangi bir gönüllülük hareketinde bulunmayan ve çalışmayan iki kişi. Kendilerine barış sürecini nasıl algıladıklarına yönelik sorduğum sorulardan sonra elde ettiğim birkaç ilginç bulguya dikkat çekmek isterim. İlk nokta, röportaj yapılan kişilerin tamamının Cenevre Görüşmelerine tamamen ilgisiz durumda olmalarıdır. Bu kişiler, söz konusu görüşmelerin gerçeklerden çok uzak olarak yürütüldüğünü, görüşmelerdeki önceliğin Suriyeli insanların hayatları değil uluslararası siyasi manevralar olduğunu düşünmekteydiler. Çoğunluğu görüşmelerde yaşanan gelişmeleri takip etmediği için kadın sivil toplum örgütlerinin çalışmalarından da haberdar değildi. Bunun yerine daha çok kendi tecrübeleri hakkında konuşmaya istekliydiler; en çok da Ankara'da zorla yerlerinden edilmeleri, aynı anda çok kişinin birlikte yaşadığı evlerdeki yaşam şartlarına dair problemler, eğitim fırsatı bulunamaması, işsizlik, emek sömürüsü yapılan işler, ayrımcılık ve entegrasyon gibi konularda kendi deneyimlerini paylaşmışlardır. Barış; bu kişiler için geleceğe dair uzun vadeli, soyut ve idealist bir fikir olarak görülmekte olduğu için odak noktaları zaten

inanç duymadıkları barış sürecinden çok kendi günlük hayatlarıydı. Birincil araştırmadan elde ettiğim bir diğer sonuç ise eyleme geçme, özgürlük ve değişim gibi konularda araştırmanın sağladığı motivasyonun önemidir (Robson, 2011). Teorik analizlerden ve olaylardan doğrudan etkilenen insanların birincil tecrübelerinden çıkarılabilecek dersler, barışa yönelik gelişmeler göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, paha biçilemez bir öneme sahip olduğu için, barış inşası bu tezin ağırlık noktalarından birisi olmuştur.

İleriki Adımlar: Barışın İnşası Sürecinde Cinsiyet Ayrımına Karşı Bir Yaklaşım

Kadınların barış görüşmelerinde yer alması gerekliliği hem geçiş süreci için hem de savaş sonrası dönem için geçerlidir. Yani barışın inşası sürecinde cinsiyetler arası ayrıma karşı bir yaklaşım benimsenmesi oldukça önemlidir. Bu yüzden uluslararası aktörlerin müdahalesine dayalı bir gündem olmaksızın, barış görüşmeleri kadınların da katkıda bulunduğu bir ortamda yürütülmelidir (Walensteen, 2015). Uluslararası toplum da, Cenevre Ofisinin kadınların sivil toplum kuruluşlarını davet etmek yönündeki tutumuna dayanarak bu sürece katkıda bulunabilir. Üyelerin barış görüşmelerine katılmasına engel teşkil eden katı vize düzenlemelerinin kaldırılmasıyla süreç kolaylaştırılabilir. Bunun yanı sıra, görüşmelere katılan bireylerin güvenliği sağlanmalı ve her delegasyonda %30 kontenjan ayrılması uygulamasıyla belirli bir temsil oranının yakalanması teminat altına alınırken görüşmelerin öncesinde kadınlara yönelik eğitim imkânlarının sağlanması ile kapasite geliştirme sürecine de katkıda bulunulabilir. Ancak kadınların katılımı yapay bir gösterişten ibaret olmamalı, gerçek temsil anlamına gelmelidir. Dolayısıyla kadınlar delegasyonlarda, komitelerde ve karar alım mekanizmalarında kendilerine yer bulmalı ve yine kadınların harekete geçip çalışma yapabileceği alanlar açılmalıdır. Bunlara ek olarak arabulucu heyetlerde cinsiyet eşitliği uzmanlarının bulunması da tavsiye

edilmektedir. Uluslararası düzeydeki barış görüşmelerinin yanı sıra, kadınların işin dışında bırakılmayıp aktif olarak dâhil edileceği yerel ve bölgesel barış girişimleri de teşvik edilmelidir (Badeal, 2015). Genel olarak, barış sürecindeki öncelikli konular Suriye halkının haklarının ve güvenliğinin sağlanması ve Suriye'nin geleceğinin uluslararası güç oyunlarının bir parçası olarak belirlenmesi yerine bu temeller üzerine nasıl en iyi şekilde tekrar kurulabileceğinin belirlenmesidir.

Sonuç

Bu çalışmanın amacı, kadınların Suriye'deki barış sürecine ne kadar dâhil olabildiğini nitel bir yaklaşımla incelemektir. Ana hipotezimin en önemli noktası, çatışma çözümü sürecine kadınların tarafından bakmaktır ve böylelikle başarılı bir barış inşasının daha büyük boyutta güçlendirme yapılmasıyla ilişkili olduğu savunulmaktadır. Sonuç olarak Suriye meselesinde gerçek anlamda barışçıl bir ortama ancak sorunun çözümü için kapsayıcı bir yaklaşım benimsenmesi ile ulaşılabilecektir. Bu meselenin çözümünde kadınların rolünün artarak devam etmesi kesinlikle gerekli olsa da, kadınların Cenevre Görüşmelerine olan katılımının düzenli bir şekilde artışı tezin genel duruşuna olumlu anlamda katkıda bulunmaktadır. Bu yüzden kadınların bu meseleye dâhil edilmesi yönünde sarf edilen çabaların devam ettirilmesi ve daha da artırılması oldukça önemlidir; özellikle de, birincil kaynaklardan toplanan verilerde belirtildiği üzere, bu meselenin bir şekilde içinde olanlar için sonuçları göz önünde bulundurulduğunda. Dolayısıyla, şiddetin etkileri ve bunun bir sonucu olarak ortaya çıkan zorla yerinden etme hadiseleri, barış inşa etme stratejileri bünyesine dâhil edilmelidir. Suriye'de barışın sağlanmasının büyük önemini değerlendirmek için kendi algılayışları ve kendi tecrübeleriyle Suriyelilerin bir platforma sahip olması gerekliliği açıkça ortadadır. Barışın sağlanması yolundaki bu geçiş sürecinin, kadınların karar alım mekanizmalarında yer alması gibi çeşitli cinsiyet eşitliği standartlarının sağlamlaştırılması için oldukça

uygun bir zaman olmasından dolayı, Suriye'de oluşacak yeni bir topum sözleşmesi içerisinde kadın haklarına gereken özenin gösterilmesi oldukça büyük önem arz etmektedir.

C. TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

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