



### Summary

*The Women, Peace and Security agenda in Africa stems from the UNSC S/RES/1325 and nine other landmark UNSC resolutions on women, peace and security which provide a framework for women's participation in conflict resolution, peacekeeping, and peace-building. The resolutions attempt to ensure that women's rights in conflict zones are protected and that war crimes against women are prosecuted. They also call for more women in conflict mediation, peace talks, and security forces - in overseeing cease-fires and in peace-building institutions. What is the state of the WPS agenda in Africa and how has it been impacted by global developments such as the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia-Ukraine war and the climate change crisis? This paper tries to answer these questions and argues that these global occurrences have destabilizing effects on the lives of women and the activities and actions undertaken to effectively implement the WPS agenda in Africa and ends with some policy suggestions aimed at addressing these challenges.*

### Impact Of Global Developments on the Women Peace And Security Agenda in Africa

*Prof. Christopher Isike*

*Prof. Nkechika Ibe*

#### INTRODUCTION

The Windhoek Declaration in May 2000 gave momentum to the adoption of the Women, Peace and Security agenda by the United Nations Security Council through its landmark Resolution 1325 (2000). The crux of the agenda is to drive focus on promoting the rights and interests of women in peace and security issues while protecting them as well. Following the adoption of Resolution 1325, the UNSC has since adopted nine other women, peace, and security resolutions: 1820 (2008), 1888 (2008), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), 2467 (2019), and 2493 (2019). These resolutions provide a global framework for women's participation in conflict resolution, peacekeeping\*, peacebuilding, and the mainstreaming of women into leadership and management in camps for displaced people, and in the distribution of resources for recovery. They also ensure that women's rights in conflict zones are protected and that war crimes against women are prosecuted. In essence, the inclusion of women in the UN Peace and Security agenda is an attempt to deconstruct the gender roles attributed to women in the society and to create opportunities to ensure more inclusive and robust peace and conflict resolution processes. While some of the resolutions focused on women's active participation in security and peace, others focused on addressing the prevention of women from being victims of conflict-related sexual violence. Meanwhile, new paradigms have emerged to incorporate the need for inclusivity in post-conflict recovery, reintegration and resettlement of women, girls, and children.

Concurrently, the WPS agenda is founded on four pillars – Prevention, Participation, Protection and Relief and Recovery. These pillars are the foundation on which actions around actualizing the agenda are taken and/or implemented, recommendations are made, policies are formed and sharpened, and impact is measured. Member states that have adopted these resolutions and contextualized the UN WPS action plan often unpack these pillars and create frameworks to further narrow interventions and domesticate activities and programs.



\* For example, UN 2028 targets for women in security forces for peacekeeping are: 15% women serving in military contingents and 25% for military observers and staff officers.



**29 September 2022**

The WPS agenda is founded on four pillars – Prevention, Participation, Protection and Relief and Recovery. These pillars are the foundation on which actions around actualizing the agenda are taken and/or implemented, recommendations are made, policies are formed and sharpened, and impact is measured.

Africa has consistently developed regulatory norms, policies and frameworks at the continental and regional level that spotlight the importance of women's participation and protection in peace and conflict issues\*. The African Union (AU) through its Peace and Security Council (PSC) has mapped out instruments and principles for handling women issues in conflict situation while also adopting global commitments such as the UNSCR 1325 to ensure proper implementation of the WPS agenda. For example, building on the 4 pillars of the WPS (prevention, participation, relief and recovery), the AU has adopted the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEGA), the Maputo Protocol, AU Strategy on Gender and Women's Empowerment (2019) designed to help efforts to promote the WPS agenda and improve its implementation, and above all, Agenda 2063 (Aspiration 6 specifically recognizes the centrality of women in Africa's development). A critical framework worth mentioning is the AU Continental Results Framework (CRF) for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the WPS agenda in Africa. This is important given the major challenge of implementation which hampers the many laudable policy frameworks of the AU, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and national governments generally. The CRF capitalizes on the reforms of laws, policies and institutions currently occurring in the

\* For example, there are 14 instruments at the continental level and over 28 instruments at regional level.

context of Agenda 2063 for Africa's transformation. It complements the agenda's efforts, specifically in gender, peace, and security, by providing a means for monitoring and reporting on how specific gender goals and actions under different aspirations are being implemented. It will therefore catalyze the implementation of the WPS Agenda in Africa, not only by providing an accountability tool, but also by incentivizing AU member states and RECs. In addition, the framework does contribute to data collection and informs peace and security decisions in the continent.

At national levels, since 2000, over half of the AU members states (32) have developed National Action Plans (NAPs) which serve as blueprints for implementing the WPS agenda. Some of them such as Nigeria localized and adopted a 5-P priority model – prevention, participation, protection, promotion, and prosecution. These NAPs have evolved to become better structured with 88% of them now including a monitoring framework with indicators. They remain an important institutional tool for governments to outline policy commitments and action vital to long-term realization of the WPS agenda\*\*

However, there are several internal and external factors that challenge the WPS agenda in Africa. This paper focuses on the external/global developments that impact on the WPS in Africa. The global community is constantly evolving with new occurrences at every stage, and Africa as a region is often vulnerable to these occurrences given the development gap between the continent and the Global North for example. In the area of peace and security, some of these global occurrences often have destabilizing effects on the lives of women and the activities and actions undertaken to effectively implement the WPS agenda in Africa. It is therefore vital to highlight some of these global developments and further unpack how they have either undermined and or affected the implementation of the WPS agenda in Africa. The paper shall thereafter offer policy suggestions aimed at addressing these challenges.

\*\* See WPS Focal Point Network accessible in <https://wpsfocal-pointsnetwork.org>



**29 September 2022**

The global community is constantly evolving with new occurrences at every stage, and Africa as a region is often vulnerable to these occurrences given the development gap between the continent and the Global North for example. In the area of peace and security, some of these global occurrences often have destabilizing effects on the lives of women and the activities and actions undertaken to effectively implement the WPS agenda in Africa.

#### **GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS BETWEEN 2020-2022**

In the last three years, between 2020 and 2022, there are several global developments that have occurred, but we shall focus on three key ones that had direct negative impact on women's well-being and their peace and security agency in every region of the world but most especially in Africa where the feminization of poverty and inequality is mostly prevalent. These include the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war, and the climate change crisis.

#### **The COVID-19 pandemic**

The novel coronavirus disease COVID-19, which was first detected in Wuhan China, subsequently spread globally, and became the fifth documented pandemic to hit the world. In January 2020, the World Health Organization announced the outbreak of a deadly virus and declared a public health emergency around the world, urging leaders to take necessary steps to curtail it.

So many different countries grappled with the sudden turn of events as lockdowns and isolations became imminent and compulsory to curb the impact on the citizens. With the rise in cases in different parts of the world, economic, social, and political activities were stalled and health legislations became the priority for virtually all government and regional/continental institutions including the United Nations. The United Nations as a response in March 2020 rolled out US\$15 million for COVID-19 response. The most recent statistic on the pandemic shows over 646 million cases globally with 6.64 million deaths. As a global phenomenon, it destabilized global, regional, and national governance and undermined approaches towards building a sustainable world.

There was a gloomy prediction of a disproportionate number of COVID-19 fatalities in Africa considering the poor state of health infrastructure and service delivery in most countries in the continent. However, with 12,423,000 million reported infections and only 256,000 COVID-19 deaths as at the time of writing, Africa seems to have proved wrong the predictions of millions of deaths. Many factors, mostly undocumented, account for this but the proactiveness of the AU coupled with its established institutional commitment to regional public health enacted through the Africa Centre for Disease Control (ACDC). It developed a response through the Partnership to Accelerate COVID-19 Testing (PACT) to trace, test, and track the pandemic as it spread across the continent. None of these however prevented the harmful social, economic, and political effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the continent particularly during its first peak. For example, it caused a major disruption to people's lives and livelihoods, further exacerbating hunger, poverty and inequality (Reuters, 2022). The pandemic also threatened the milestones that have been achieved in different areas of development across different targets at both sub-regional and continental levels.

#### **The Russia - Ukraine war**

As the world was trying to wriggle itself out of one of the deadliest pandemics ever recorded, it got plunged into a war



29 September 2022

by Russia's invasion of Ukraine with both far-reaching political and economic consequences for the globe. On 24 February 2022, Russian forces invaded an relatively unprepared Ukraine after several months of intelligence gathering and warning by the United States intelligence on the body language and activities of the Russian military. Russian president, Vladimir Putin authorized a 'special military operation' against Ukraine and this was coming after 8 years of annexing and occupying Crimea.

In justifying Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Putin stated that it is an attempt to 'demilitarize and de-nazify Ukraine and end the alleged genocide of Russians in Ukrainian territory'.

This war has strained diplomatic relations between Russia and the rest of the western world reminiscent of cold war bipolar divisions which has pitched the world between either the US and its western allies on one hand, and Russia and its allies on the other. This implies that the conflict has broader consequences for future cooperation between the Western world especially the United States and western European states on critical issues such as arms control, cybersecurity, nuclear nonproliferation, global economic stability, energy security, counterterrorism, and political solutions in Syria, Libya, and elsewhere. Additionally, the consistent sanctions by world leaders increasingly isolated Russia and resultantly destabilized global energy. For instance, the Nord Stream gas project were halted and import of oil from Russia by countries who trade with them were stalled. This has pushed Russia to seek stronger ties with countries willing to partner with them, such as China. It was also a strategic collaboration to form as an opposition to the west.

The war has also aggravated existing global food crisis, global humanitarian crisis and widespread economic downturn for virtually all economies of the world. It also hindered distribution of much needed aid as military operations and violence intensifies.

### **Climate change and climate insecurity**

Climate change is experienced by people in diverse ways. Climate change phenomenon has over the years been identified as capable of affecting global health, ability to grow

food, housing, safety and work. Some people such as those living in small island nations and other developing countries are disproportionately vulnerable to climate impacts. Conditions such as sea-level rise and saltwater intrusion have advanced to the point where whole communities have had to relocate, and protracted droughts are putting people at risk of famine. In the future, the number of "climate refugees" is expected to rise.

In 2018, the United Nations Secretary General described climate change as an existential risk. This implies that it is a threat to human's and ecosystem survival. It is pertinent to say that the climate change crisis threatens human security. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has identified the four pathways to climate insecurity. These includes livelihood insecurity, migration, tactics of armed groups, and exploitation of elites. Each of these pathways indicate the danger of insecurity posed by climate change at different levels of existence and social interaction.

### **IMPACT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY IN AFRICA**

According to the UN, inequalities are widening across the globe thanks to the "cascading global crises" that includes the pandemic, violent conflict, and climate change, along with the backlash against women's sexual and reproductive rights that have pushed back the recent, limited gains on gender equity. It estimates that at the current rate, it will take about 300 years to reach the SDG5 targets reiterating that "the longer it takes to reverse this trend, the more it will cost us all" (UN News, 2022).

A cursory overview of the three global developments identified with regards to their impact on women and girls in Africa indicate they have contributed to undermine the development and achievement of different frameworks and commitments of nation states in promoting gender equality and actualizing the WPS agenda. In trying to grapple with the fall outs of the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war in Ukraine for example, most governments in the continent were not mindful of the gender implications of hard lockdowns which affected livelihoods and created new social



29 September 2022

challenges. As discussed in the following sections, the challenges thrown up by managing these global developments impacted the implementation of the WPS. To what extent was the agenda undermined and how can it be resolved?

#### **Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the WPS agenda**

To properly understand the impact of COVID-19 on the implementation of the WPS agenda, attention must be placed on the pillars of the agenda and how different components of society – economic, socio-political and health – were heavily affected by the pandemic.

#### ***Economic Impact***

Given the nature of the pandemic, the response and intervention were predominantly isolationist given the lockdown measures which reduced human contact and interactions significantly. This ran counter to the core of WPS agenda, which is to promote participation, protect, prevent, and ensure recovery in all spheres of human existence including the economy. For example, on participation, most women became economically insecure and heavily dependent because of the drastic lockdowns and isolation measures. According to the IMF (2021), the gender inequities of the COVID-19 pandemic in Africa follow different paths but almost always end up the same; women suffer disproportionate economic harm from the pandemic.

The costs of the pandemic for women are not limited to lost income. They also cascade onto their children, harming future generations. There were more women working as caregivers but were not actively involved in robust economic activities. While this is same for men at the time, the existing economic realities and disproportionate income became even more glaring and further aggravating vulnerability of women to economic insecurity. As more women became economically vulnerable, they also became vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence (S/GBV) because their economic vulnerability made them more dependent on their partners. This compromises the prevention dimension projected by resolution 1325 and the prevention pillar of the WPS.

The costs of the pandemic for women are not limited to lost income. They also cascade onto their children, harming future generations. There were more women working as caregivers but were not actively involved in robust economic activities. While this is same for men at the time, the existing economic realities and disproportionate income became even more glaring and further aggravating vulnerability of women to economic insecurity.

#### ***Socio-political impact***

With the doors shut and streets deserted, advocacy that strengthens the discourse on the need to align the pillars of the agenda in governance and social activities were hindered. Most African women, especially those living in the rural/low-income areas were heavily disconnected from accessing relevant information and contributing to the socio-political discourse. Focus was mainly shifted to navigating survival for their families.

Poor access to technologically driven communication tools equally undermined the ability to reach out to more women during the pandemic and galvanize effort towards eradicating their plight as the spread intensifies. In this way, COVID isolation measures became a tool for disenfranchisement.

Even though women were on the front lines in the fight against the pandemic as essential workers and leading organizations for peace, security and development like the African Women Leaders Network (AWLN), and working with the UN and AU to develop policies, strategies and guidelines



29 September 2022

for C-19 gender-responsive actions <sup>Osland20 AU20 UNPK22 POT121</sup>. Yet, women were excluded from decision making processes as regards COVID-19 response and recovery

### **Health impact and Gender-based violence**

Being a global health emergency, the COVID-19 pandemic was a huge drawback to protection of women from violence and other forms of crimes against them. The isolation and lockdowns led to more women's vulnerability to cases of sexual violence and abuse. There was drastic increase in the number of gender-based violence cases being reported. According to the UN Women's survey in 13 countries, nearly 1 in 2 women reported that they or someone they know have experienced violence during the pandemic. It has been categorized as a pandemic in a pandemic.

Sexual and gender-based violence prior to the pandemic was already a global issue that has drawn attention and has resulted in conventions such as the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and against women. However, covid driven economic and social instability and inequality has aggravated the occurrence of gender-based violence on women. It has also heightened the risk of child/early marriages, female genital mutilation, domestic abuse and all forms of unsafe/harmful practices against women.

In a nutshell, the COVID-19 pandemic led to the following which affected inclusive and sustainable peacebuilding:

- ✓ Increased dependency of women because of loss of jobs and means of livelihood.
- ✓ Increased cases of GBV, undermining the ability of most women to speak up or effectively contribute to the society in any productive way.
- ✓ Increased poverty, creating room for crime in local communities and violence which further endangers the lives of women in the society.
- ✓ Increased vulnerability of women to transactional sexual intercourse, thereby exposing them to more dangers and harmful practices.

- ✓ Reduced the engagement level between the CSO and their communities as human interactions have been affected and most engagement done virtually.
- ✓ Exclusion of women in decision making processes as regards COVID-19 response and recovery.

### **Impact of Russia-Ukraine war on the WPS in Africa**

The Russia-Ukraine war gave impetus to a myriad of global issues that have continued to plague regional/national governments. In Africa, the war has exacerbated an existing food crisis with consequences for economic activities. Also, US and EU sanctions on Russia have led to a shortage of supply oil and gas products with a corresponding increase in the global energy demand and oil and gas price. Like in Africa and elsewhere, this also shot up the cost of living and eroded the purchasing power of most African families.

More so, as rising inflation persists and economic indices shows a huge food shortage, energy crisis, import/export challenges, hike in oil price, there is a decline in government spending on the implementation of several development initiatives which fall within the WPS agenda. This has resulted in a slow delivery process that lacks measurable impacts.

### **Impact of climate change on WPS agenda**

The climate change issues in Africa has led to so many crisis and communal conflicts. The drought in the north and loss of vegetation for most nomads in countries like Nigeria, Niger, Chad has led to their consistent movement to other communities and states in search of food for their animals.

The climate change issues in Africa has led to so many crisis and communal conflicts. The drought in the north and loss of vegetation for most nomads in countries like Nigeria, Niger, Chad has led to their consistent movement to other



29 September 2022

communities and states in search of food for their animals.

In terms of climate change, because of its high exposure and vulnerability to climate hazards, 1/3 of the people considered most at risk in the world live in Africa, especially in the Sahel, Lake Chad Basin, the Horn and Southern Africa where the drivers of violence are exacerbated as climate change exposes and exploits existing vulnerabilities. All of the largest UN African missions are in climate change hotspots, including South Sudan, Mali, the DRC, CAR, Sudan and Somalia <sup>ISS21 SIPRI21</sup> The increased strain on peace operation have a negative effect on the WPS agenda <sup>Osland20</sup>. In Nigeria, the case of the Fulani herders and farmers clash is a typical example of the climate change impact on local communities. These clashes often result to severe fatalities and counter-attack leading to displacement of people from their homes. At the centre of these challenges are the women and their dependents. The climate change consequences also lead to women's loss of their means of livelihood, vulnerability to attacks and radicalization, and equally loss of their own lives.

Women are also the most vulnerable to climate change since they make up the majority (60-80%) of the rainfed smallholder farms <sup>MG22</sup> that will experience more droughts, more floods and greater water stress with higher temperatures impacting working hours, productivity and crop yields <sup>AFDB22 MGI15</sup>

Water stress has increased with climate change and the pandemic has intensified hardships for women living below the poverty line because without safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and menstrual hygiene facilities at home or in public place, women and girls have more challenges to lead safe, productive, healthy lives. Women tend to be the ones most responsible for water supply, sanitation and health in their communities, and yet in 2020 only around 30% of African countries were actively pursuing gender mainstreaming in water resources management <sup>UN20 UN21</sup>

Transition to green energy initiatives will likely impact 200,000 jobs and risk \$20 billion in revenues that could

undermine future growth in Africa due to a heavy dependence on commodities and extraction as exports become less competitive <sup>MGI15</sup>

In sum, the impact of climate change could be pointed as.

- ✓ Increased violent conflict such as the farmers and Fulani herder's crisis in different part of the country, with women vulnerable and at the receiving end of these crisis with little or no compensation and/or access to relief
- ✓ Increased displacement of women and girls/children because of climate related security risks.
- ✓ Food insecurity driven partially by climate change also affects the quality of life of most women and girls and increases their vulnerability to violence both on their body and within their environment.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

The crux of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war and the climate change crisis on the WPS agenda in Africa is that it is feminized. Women are indeed at the receiving end of feminization of poverty and exclusion from key decision-making structures caused by these global developments and these in turn impact the implementation of the WPS agenda in Africa. Therefore, to strengthen the WPS agenda in the continent, it is critical to address gaps in women's participation, representation, and empowerment as well as in research on gender issues. Some suggestions in this regard include the need for the AU, as the continental governance body in Africa to:

- ✓ Create policy frameworks that focus on formalizing women's peacebuilding efforts. This could be by establishing an institution or agency that oversees and coordinates women's peacebuilding activities, efforts, and documentation of result.
- ✓ Earmark and enlarge funds allocated specifically to WPS to at least 15% of peace and security funding while ensuring transparency to track and monitor expenditures on WPS-related initiatives every year consistently with special attention to post-conflict regions <sup>MGI15 WPSFPN22</sup>



29 September 2022

- ✓ Develop resilience strategies that center on local solutions are needed to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change <sup>AA21</sup> These include community awareness-building and sensitization along with legal reforms to give women access to land.
- ✓ Support more legislation, compliance and strong consequences (see UNSCR 2467) to control the proliferations of small arms especially in conflict areas where women and children of all genders are the most vulnerable. More physical, and emotional support for victims such as efforts to reduce stigmatization and improve access to health services, and rape kits as well as emergency contraception <sup>MGI15 WPSEPN22 POT121</sup>
- ✓ Commission research on the social understanding of gender and how it informs and strengthens all stages of the peace process, and for governments to implement more gender policies to address the participation of women in decision-making positions <sup>MGI15 WPSEPN22</sup>
- ✓ Formalize women's informal peace activism. Rather than continuously passing resolutions, identifying the spaces where women feature the most and mainstreaming their informal peace activities into formal peace processes would be a better alternative. The fact that women are not significantly represented in the formal sphere of peacebuilding does not erase the reality of their existence in the informal sphere or the significance of the work they do there.
- ✓ Develop an implementation framework that puts research at the fore
- ✓ Localize security and peace discussions to ensure better relations between women and security agencies/institutions.
- ✓ Create safe space for psychosocial aids and recovery of GBV victims/survivors.

## REFERENCES

- AU Commission (2016), 'Implementation Of Women, Peace And Security Agenda In Africa' <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/Special-Envoy-Report-2016-Final-2.Pdf>
- Chie A., (2021), 'Africa's Unequal Pandemic', <https://www.imf.org/External/Pubs/Ft/Fandd/2021/07/Africas-Unequal-Pandemic-Chie-Aoyagi.Htm>
- Chris A., & Charles D., (2022), 'Covid-19: Africa And The African Union' <https://www.lse.ac.uk/International-Relations/Centres-And-Units/Global-South-Unit/Covid-19-Regional-Responses/Africa-And-Covid-19>
- Global Conflict Tracker (2022), 'Conflict In Ukraine' <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-ukraine>
- Kheira T., (2022) 'Four Pathways Of Climate Insecurity: A Guide For Humanitarians' <https://blogs.icrc.org/law-and-policy/2022/01/13/four-pathways-climate-insecurity-humanitarians/>
- Reuters (2022), 'Covid-19 Tracker' <https://www.reuters.com/graphics/world-coronavirus-tracker-and-maps/regions/africa/>
- Sarah M (2021), 'History Of Covid-19' <https://www.news-medical.net/Health/History-Of-Covid-19.aspx>
- UN News (2022), <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1126171>
- UN Women (2022), 'In Focus: Women, Peace, And Security', [https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/in-focus/2022/10/in-focus-women-peace-and-security?Gclid=Cj0kcqia7bucbhcearisaiowr\\_Qe3wnt7hsfnt-Dw7q9f4olfsb2mzt2fedgxddrdj9czky-qlxqqaanmjealw\\_Wcb](https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/in-focus/2022/10/in-focus-women-peace-and-security?Gclid=Cj0kcqia7bucbhcearisaiowr_Qe3wnt7hsfnt-Dw7q9f4olfsb2mzt2fedgxddrdj9czky-qlxqqaanmjealw_Wcb)
- UN Women, 'Gender-Based Violence; Women And Girls At Risk' <https://www.unwomen.org/en/hq-complex-page/covid-19-rebuilding-for-resilience/gender-based-violence>
- Women's International League For Peace And Freedom, 'About Women, Peace, And Security In Security Council' <https://www.peacewomen.org/security-council/wps-in-sc-council>



**29 September 2022**

#### **About the Authors**

**Christopher Afoke Isike**, PhD, is a Professor of African Politics and International Relations in the Department of Political Sciences, University of Pretoria and Director of the African Centre for the Study of the United States, University of Pretoria (ACSUS-UP), South Africa. He is also the current President of the African Association of Political Science (AAPS), and member of the Board of Directors of Global Development Network (GDN). Professor Isike conducts research from an Africanist lens, and teaches international relations theory, strategic and security studies, and security theory at the University of Pretoria. His research interests include African soft power politics, women, peace and conflict studies, women and political representation in Africa, rethinking state formation in Africa, politics in a digital era and African immigration to South Africa. A C2 rated researcher by the National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa, Prof Isike has over 60 publications in top national and international peer-reviewed journals including chapters in books published by reputable publishing houses globally.

He is Editor-in-Chief of Africa's foremost political science journal, *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies* (2020 to 2024), and has been Editor of *Ubuntu: Journal of Conflict and Social Transformation* since 2017. He also serves on the editorial board of several reputable international journals, such as *International Political Science Abstracts*. Prof Isike consults for the UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women and the KwaZulu-Natal provincial government on gender equality and women empowerment issues in South Africa. He was recently appointed by the Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture as a Social Cohesion Advocate of South Africa from 2020 – 2024.

**Prof. Nkechika Ibe** is currently a Tsuha Global Fellow at The University of Western Australia. She is a graduate of Political Science from Madonna University and hold a master's degree in International Relations and Diplomacy from University of Nigeria Nsukka. She completed a diploma course in International Security from the European Academy of Diplomacy under the Academy of Young Diplomats program in Warsaw Poland. She has completed different certification courses from reputable institutions such as the United Nations Institute of Training and Research (UNITAR), Peace Operations Training Institute (POTI) and so on. She is also the founder of Impact Her World Foundation, a not-for-profit organization focused on promoting the interest and wellbeing of women and girls. She also founded Women in Security, Peace, and Diplomacy Network (WISPAD) Nigeria. Nkechika is a member of Women in International Security (WIIS Global) and Harvard Women in Defense, Diplomacy and Development (Harvard W3D).



29 September 2022

ABOUT THE PROJECT

### Imagining A Common Horizon for Humanity and the Planet

The world is passing through an extremely troubled period in its history, with a seemingly new challenge encountered at every turn. Serious economic, social, cultural, environmental and political crises at a global level are exacerbated by those being felt in individual countries. The challenges we are facing take a variety of forms, from financial collapses to climate change, from international terrorism to regional conflicts, and from the refugee problem to xenophobia.

All of these crises are being aggravated by the impact of the pandemic, revealing the inability of humanity to tackle them collectively, and invalidating the romantic discourse of globalization. As history continues its march, we are reminded that the answer to the common problems of humanity cannot be found by becoming more introverted, polarized or prejudiced. No matter how severe our problems, our destiny should not be seen as unchangeable. The problems we experience are primarily a result of human activity, and can be overcome only through human effort, but we should remain aware that there are many different hurdles to be passed if we are to rid ourselves of the crises being experienced in many parts of the world.

Only through conscious, patient and collective effort can we overcome the problems of humanity. Now is the time for dignified people from the different cultures and geographies of the world to come together in solidarity. It is time to speak with full respect of human dignity, setting aside the importance we place in our individual identities. An alliance of people who see truth and justice as the major pillars of our kind, will be able to open the door to a new era of solidarity for humanity. A dignified future is possible. We believe that Turkey holds a special, if not privileged, position, based on its geographical, historical and cultural characteristics, and can serve as a host to this joint effort of humanity.

Our goal within the scope of this project is to bring together the leading thinkers of the world, to create an international intellectual platform that draws its strength from human dignity, and that aims to build for the future of humanity and the planet with a holistic synergy with a view to offering humanity a common horizon. As Cappadocia University, our vision in this regard is to provide an academic platform from where esteemed intellectuals from around the world can share their visions for a common future of humanity and our planet, and to comment on the challenges and opportunities they envisage.

You can find detailed information about the Project at <https://commonhorizon.kapadokya.edu.tr/en/>

Cappadocia University (<https://kapadokya.edu.tr/en/>) is a young foundation (private) university in central Turkey, Cappadocia. The main goal of the university is to raise generations of opinion leaders who can read the 21st century realistically, and whose views therefore carry weight and significance – go-to men and women who are highly knowledgeable in their fields, who are happy to share their knowledge, and who will thus be respected and trusted by others. Cappadocia University is home to a highly successful dual-pronged system of academic and vocational programs that act in support of each other.

ABOUT THE  
CAPPADOCIA UNIVERSITY