



CONCEPT NOTE

Introduction

The Portuguese Ministry of National Defence will host an international seminar to discuss preliminary lessons in the armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine from a gender perspective.

One year after Russia's brutal and unlawful invasion of Ukraine, this event aims to offer a thorough analysis of the gendered consequences of war, focusing on the critical elements that policymakers should draw in order to ensure a solid foundation for security in Europe and its consequences around the world.

Context

NATO's new Strategic Concept reiterates its commitment to integrate the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda across all tasks and to continue to advance gender equality as a reflection of our shared values¹.

The conflict in Ukraine represents a fundamental attack on our democracies and values. Gender equality as a threat to traditional values is being used strategically by the Russian Federation as a political and military tool, with the aim of questioning the principles of the world order we are living in.

The best way to protect our security is to stand united. We must keep up this momentum to enhance our collective readiness and responsiveness, and to this end the centrality of integrating gender perspective is undeniable. We must ensure that WPS and gender perspective continue to be included in our support to Ukraine, in response to the full-scale Russian invasion.

¹ NATO, *Strategic Concept*, 2022, <https://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/>



This event will identify relevant insights on the gender perspective of the conflict for NATO and its partners - including in the context of the NATO-EU strategic partnership -, acknowledging that many of the lessons identified concern the Alliance collectively, as well as its member and partner nations individually.

Moreover, it will explore how to foster the implementation of the WPS Agenda within the Alliance, considering what concrete actions are needed to operationalize WPS in all of NATO's tasks going forward. This will enable NATO to think more creatively and comprehensively about evolving security challenges, enhancing its resilience and giving a better understanding of the environment in which it operates, ensuring strategic, operational and tactical effectiveness on the ground.

Finally, considering the next NATO Summit in Vilnius, in July, this event also aims to address, from a gender perspective, additional steps to strengthen our deterrence and defence, as well as to continue our unwavering support for Ukraine.