



Women's Network
for Dialogue and Enduring Peace

We are women peacebuilders and civil society and humanitarian aid leaders from across Ukraine and both sides of the front line. We are members of the Women's Network for Dialogue and Enduring Peace which we founded in 2015. We have over a decade of experience in peacebuilding, dialogue and providing support to conflict-affected populations on both sides of the front line.

Our human-centered approach aims to protect the lives and well-being of all affected by the conflict, and we are dedicated to ensuring their interests are represented in the peace process. A human-centered approach can address the needs of all affected communities, prevent future violence and build a sustainable peace.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM FAILED CEASEFIRES UNDER MINSK AGREEMENTS

While supporting conflict-affected populations on both sides of the front line, we learned many lessons about why the ceasefires put into place under the Minsk Agreements repeatedly failed. These include:

- Ceasefire monitoring did not operate 24/7. We observed that monitoring ended daily at 4 PM, after which ceasefire violations would increase, with significantly greater impacts on affected populations until monitoring resumed the following morning.
- There was no transparency or communication about the ceasefire implementation or monitoring mechanism with civil society and affected populations, and there was no mechanism to engage them in efforts to monitor or support the ceasefire on the ground.
- There was no verification or compliance mechanism for ceasefire violations. Ceasefire violators were not held accountable.

- Ceasefire monitoring was not tied to the Normandy Format negotiations and political process.
- Essential services, humanitarian aid, security and protection were largely unavailable in the buffer zone and demining was never completed.

All of these factors served to undermine public trust, ceasefire legitimacy and durability.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A DURABLE CEASEFIRE

Informed by lessons we learned from the failed ceasefires under the Minsk Agreements, we recommend:

1. MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- **Create a special ceasefire monitoring body** composed of representatives from neutral countries and agreed upon by both Ukraine and Russia. It must function day and night, 24/7. In addition to monitoring, this body should have the mandate to resolve disputes and hold ceasefire violators accountable.
- **Implement a transparent ceasefire monitoring mechanism.** Civilians must understand who records violations, how the information is used, and how it protects them personally. This is essential for building trust, legitimacy and a durable ceasefire.

2. CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION AND DIGITAL SECURITY

- **Engage civilians and civil society organizations** in monitoring efforts, with a secure data transfer mechanism in place that ensures the physical safety of the informant.
- **Establish a mechanism providing an open two-way communication channel** for affected populations to voice their needs, concerns and recommendations for achieving lasting peace in Ukraine and to receive transparent and timely information on progress being made on their recommendations and all relevant matters of concern, such as:

announcements of demining operations and locations for distribution of humanitarian aid. This mechanism needs to be put in place with the ceasefire and function for the duration of the peace process.

3. TECHNOLOGY AND ETHICS

- **Use technology** such as satellites, sensors, and cameras to support the monitoring of the vast 750-mile front line and reduce the risk to human monitors.
- **Satellite data** should be collected and managed by an international body or organization that is a neutral trusted source and made available to the ceasefire monitoring body.
- While many suggest the use of **drones**, this will cause more psychological trauma in affected populations because drones are associated with warfare and death, and people will be unable to determine whether the drone is serving a peaceful monitoring purpose or is on its way to attack.
- **We therefore propose eliminating the use of drones until drone technology is developed which makes it possible for affected populations on the ground to be able to distinguish between incoming military or monitoring drones.** In this case, the monitoring drones should be easy to identify, and a wide public education campaign would be needed to build trust and gain support for drone use from affected populations.
- **Develop a secure system for storing and analyzing monitoring data.**

4. TRANSPARENCY AND TRUST

- **Clearly articulate the terms of the ceasefire.** Vague formulations lead to disputes and increase the risk of violations.
- **Ensure the ceasefire agreement is transparent,** accessible and easily understood. This will build trust and support for the ceasefire in the population.

5. SECURITY AND PROTECTION

- **Establish a demilitarized buffer zone** along the entire front line and carry out thorough demining in the area.
- **Ensure the operation of essential services** in the buffer zone for the people living there who are mostly elderly and do not want to leave their homes, including emergency medical care, fire department services, water, electricity, gas and garbage collection.
- **Provide regular humanitarian aid**—food, medicine, and essential supplies—for people living in the buffer zone.

6. HUMANITARIAN CORRIDORS AND REUNIFICATION

- **Open humanitarian corridors** for the secure movement of civilians and the reunification of families and communities on both sides of the front line.

7. CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES

To build on the recent exchanges of bodies and prisoners of war, **we recommend implementing interim ceasefires** in sectors such as energy and nuclear power infrastructure, and geographical ceasefires focused, for example, on residential and densely populated areas in specific regions. Under such interim ceasefires, monitoring, verification and other mechanisms can be established to deconflict and manage the ceasefires and create corridors for humanitarian aid.

 A sustainable ceasefire is imperative for building an enduring peace. It must be based on trust, meaningful civil society participation and transparency. The Women's Network for Dialogue and Enduring Peace continues to work to ensure that the voices of affected populations are heard and that decisions are made with the participation of those who actually live with the consequences of war.