

## **4Peace Executive Director (F)**

### **Background**

You are the widow of a former high-ranking Danaanian diplomat to the UK. While your husband served in the Danaanian Foreign Service, you built a name for yourself as a Warod women's rights advocate. You have had to assert yourself in order to establish a visible presence in a predominantly male political environment. As an elder who has worked for many years on women's rights, you feel you have earned the right to speak bluntly. You are often invited to speak at international conferences and have won a number of prestigious awards, which has granted you international recognition and respect.

Your husband died when the civil war began, and one of your sons died in the war a decade ago. You wanted to help find a solution to the senseless war, so you began working with a group of mostly Warod and Nurul women to collect supplies for the wounded and displaced. You soon realized that women wanted to be organized, so you founded a humanitarian organization with six other women activists that came to be known as 4Peace. Along with humanitarian support, 4Peace began conducting shuttle diplomacy during the civil war, negotiating several local ceasefires between factions of the Alliance for Freedom and Democracy (AFD) and the government. 4Peace is very well connected to what is happening on the ground in many parts of Danaan, not only because of the organization's commitment to being inclusive of all backgrounds but also because of the organization's work on local ceasefires.

As a Warod, you also feel a deep connection with the AFD's cause but disagree with their tactics. This war has become senseless and the violence must end.

### **What you hope to accomplish**

You are committed to making sure 4Peace is highly visible throughout the peace process and is seen as a legitimate, neutral voice of the people. You are frustrated that, despite all of the work 4Peace has done on to promote peace and reconciliation, you have not been invited as a representative or an advisor to the talks. Your organization has a track record of successfully shuttling between the AFD and government delegations.

You want women IN THE TALKS! Including the right women at the table (many of whom you could recommend) will help produce a much more legitimate, relevant peace agreement and will also help strengthen the outcome of the talks, by adding vital substance to the discussion and making sure the needs of the Danaanian people are considered. Specifically, you want the mediation team and negotiating parties to consult with and invite more women to the table. You want a civil society forum to be funded and organized with women occupying at least 50% of the seats. The forum would serve as a platform for feeding community interests into the peace process. You are traveling to Abayo (the capital of Trumont), where the peace process is ongoing, because you want to convey this idea to members of the Contact Group. Women United International has set up a meeting for you with the US Special Envoy.

You are aware that 4Peace is not the only organization promoting women's inclusion. You attended one ROEI Commission on Gender convening, which brought women civil society leaders together to discuss their challenges and demands. However, you felt that the Commission on Gender prescribed civil society's priorities (primarily formal, direct representation for women in the talks, and tracking

and addressing sexual violence in conflict). You don't disagree with these demands on principle, but you felt that the Commission representative was more interested in getting the top civil society leaders in the room than developing a coherent list of demands that reflected the perspectives of the Danaanian people. There are many additional priorities that are not currently reflected in the Commission's position paper. For example, you have heard from many communities across ethnic lines that women local leaders are increasingly seen as trusted, neutral arbiters and peacebuilders, perhaps because so many men have left their homes to take up arms. The mediator and parties could incorporate these women into the peace process, or into the implementation process, to boost credibility and legitimacy in the eyes of the people.

### **Capacity to create change**

You have strong connections to decision-makers and policy shapers internationally and you also have connections to many communities on the ground. You have access to actors at all levels and can also act as a connector when it proves valuable for promoting your agenda. Your Warod ethnicity will also likely help to gain access to the AFD delegation as they won't see you as a threat.

### **Relationships with other roles**

You have worked closely with the international NGO Women United International ("Women United"). They have provided funding and technical support for 4Peace for a number of years. You also have strong connections with civil society leaders across Danaan, but have had little contact with IDPs and refugees. Some of your colleagues have pushed for collaboration with leaders from IDP and refugee communities, but you believe that getting women a seat at the table is the highest priority. After this is accomplished, you can focus on expanding your reach into other communities. Plus, once at the table, you know many of your recommendations will benefit IDP and refugee communities.

You have strong connections with some of the international actors, such as the UK Special Envoy. When your husband was based in the UK, you became close friends and have continued to stay in touch. You are also known by the warring parties from the ceasefire you negotiated in Mos, although the government largely views 4Peace as an AFD ally.

At the Commission on Gender consultation, you met the Commission's representative and the head of the Danaan Women's Unity League (DWUL). The DWUL leader was much too eager to align herself with the Commission. She spoke too eagerly about too many issues and she seemed to believe that DWUL could affect change in all of those issue areas overnight. Your first impression was that she is naive and inexperienced. While you have a deep respect for DWUL's organizational history, you do not want to be associated with the head of DWUL. You have spent many years trying to bolster 4Peace's reputation as a serious, hard hitting civil society organization; this fickle, young woman could hurt your reputation among senior policymakers. You are reluctant to partner with anyone who will detract from 4Peace's hard earned legitimacy and prominence.

There are other women's NGOs doing decent work in Danaan, but you feel they are too focused on issues like ending sexual violence in conflict. Though sexual violence is a wide scale, horrible problem that affects women and girls, there has been an overemphasis of this issue and the result has been a portrayal of women as primarily victims of the conflict. Women have played many roles in Danaan's conflict and you believe that we need to highlight their agency above all. Elevating women as leaders can help to bring about more broad scale change because when women are in decision making roles.