Excellency,

UN Women is pleased to announce that it launched the second programming round of the Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations on 28 April 2021. In March 2019, UN Women in partnership with the Government of Canada, launched the Elsie Initiative Fund with the aim of accelerating progress towards achieving the United Nations gender targets in line with Security Council resolutions and the UN Department of Peace Operation’s Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018 - 2028, to increase the meaningful participation of women serving in uniformed roles in peace operations.

I, alongside my co-chair of the Steering Committee for the Fund, Ms. Gwyn Kutz from the Government of Canada, am very pleased to draw your attention to the attached Call for Letters of Interest (LOI) in both English and French, which invites both Troop and Police Contributing Countries (primary recipients) and UN organizations (secondary recipients) to apply to the Fund. The Fund will consider proposals for three different types of activities:

- Barrier assessments to identify the main factors impeding the deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers to United Nations missions;
- Projects aimed at increasing the meaningful participation of uniformed women peacekeepers in United Nations missions;
- A premium for the deployment of gender-strong units that include substantial representation of women overall and in positions of authority, have provided gender-equity training to all unit members, and has adequate material to ensure parity of deployment conditions for women and men peacekeepers.

Consideration can also be given to funding a combination of these activities for Troop and Police Contributing Countries.

The barrier assessment is mandatory, as the barrier assessment outcomes and recommendations are required to form the basis for proposed activities for which funding is being requested.

Proposals for activities by Official Development Assistance (ODA)-eligible UN Troop and Police Contributing Countries (link) will be given priority consideration for funding. The Fund may also support projects submitted by participating UN organizations that will implement and test innovations aimed at enhancing the meaningful participation of uniformed women deployed in United Nations peace operations.

LOIs are due to the Fund Secretariat by the 31st of July 2021 and must be signed by a Minister or Chief of Defense, Minister of Interior or Police Commissioner, or equivalent. Further details are available in the Call for LOI Form and Application Guidelines. Additional resources will be provided including a video tutorial and a list of Frequently Asked Questions.

Two Technical Briefings are organized on a presentation of the Fund and how to apply in the Second Programming Round on:

- Tuesday 18 May 09:00 EDT – 10:30 EDT, in English
- Thursday 27 May 10:00 EDT – 11:30 EDT, in French.
All communications regarding the Fund including the submission of LOIs should be sent to: elsie.mptf@unwomen.org.

The Elsie Initiative Fund also continues to seek donors interested in supporting the sustainable deployment and the full, equal and meaningful participation of trained and eligible uniformed women to UN peace operations through a financial contribution to the Fund.

For further details on activities of the Fund and potential contributions, please visit the website: https://elsiefund.org.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Åsa Regnér
Assistant-Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director
Normative Support, UN System Coordination and Programme Results