UN Security Council Resolution 1325

Resolution 1325, adopted by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on 31 October 2000, urged states to consider the impact of conflict on women and girls and encouraged the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations. It called for the increased representation of women in decision-making processes (including an expansion of the role of women in the field-based operations of the United Nations) and suggested the need for an increase in gender-sensitive training efforts.

Resolution 1325 forms part of a broader set of resolutions that together make up the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. The core UNSC resolutions that form the WPS architecture include Resolutions 1820 (2009), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010).

Women and Peacebuilding

Academic experts have long argued that peacebuilding is a gendered and culture-specific process. For example, Cheryl de la Rey and Susan McKay (2006) argue that ‘[a]dvancing women’s global status demands that they be co-architects with men of re-emerging post-conflict societies... women’s national, regional, and international involvement fundamentally shapes how peacebuilding projects and processes develop’ (p. 150). Christine Chinkin and Hilary Charlesworth (2006) have also produced a comprehensive analysis of women and peacebuilding, particularly examining the relevant legal framework.

UN WOMEN reported in 2012 that women were formally involved in the peace processes in various capacities (signatories, mediators or negotiators) in the conflicts in El Salvador (1992), Croatia (1995), Guatemala (1996), Northern Ireland (1998), Kosovo (1999, Burundi (2000), Papua New Guinea (2001), Macedonia (2001), Afghanistan (2001), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2003, 2008), and Kenya (2008). However, in most these conflicts, women were involved in less than ten per cent of the peacebuilding process, with the greatest involvement being in the Kenyan ‘Nairobi Agreement on the Principles of Partnership of the Coalition Government, with 33% of mediators and 25% of negotiators being female.
Women have contributed to local peacebuilding processes in more informal and ‘grassroots’ capacities in countless other conflict and post-conflict situations including in Afghanistan, Liberia, Nepal, Pakistan and Sierra Leone (see Action Aid’s report here) Rwanda, Cambodia and Northern Ireland. Women also contribute to peace processes through their employment; for example, Jackie Kirk (2004) looks at how female teachers contribute to peacebuilding and reconstruction processes. Veronika Fuest (2008), analysing post-conflict society in Liberia, suggests that ‘[t]he war appears to have resulted in a disintegration or dilution of the institutions that used to define women’s role in society, and it simultaneously created opportunities for social, political, and economic mobility’. Including women in peacebuilding processes can therefore have long-lasting implications for the post-conflict stability of nations.

**Gender and Peace Agreements**

Equal Power–Lasting Peace noted that of the 585 peace agreements that were signed between 1990 and 2010, only 94 of them (or 16%) contained any reference to women. Only 25 of these agreements made a general reference to gender equality in a political and legal sense and only 17 made an explicit reference to sexual violence.

The failure to incorporate women into the peacebuilding process continues in current peacebuilding efforts. For example, the Democratic Republic of the Congo peace agreement signed by eleven African countries in 2013 fails to address either women’s rights or participation, except for a brief reference to sexual violence.

Christine Bell (2005) has undertaken research into how peace negotiations are gendered at every stage. She proposes inclusion strategies to ameliorate the systematic exclusion of women in these processes, using the conflict in Northern Ireland as a case study. Christine Chinkin (2003) shows how peace agreements can be used to advance gender equality and ensure that women participate in peacebuilding activities. When Chinkin was asked to identify ‘model clauses from peace agreements’, she responded that ‘the reality is that there is no peace agreement that provides an overall model for appropriate provisions for ensuring that the needs of women within the conflict zone are served alongside those of men’. My research suggests that little has improved in the past decade. Therefore, there remains a substantial amount of work to be done to involve women in the peacebuilding process and to incorporate into peace agreements the issues disproportionately impacting women.

**Women as Peacebuilders**

The security and protection demands sought by women vary significantly from conflict to conflict, and therefore a generic cover-all gender clause cannot be inserted into peace agreements for the effective resolution of conflicts. Some of the recent agreements have included the gender-sensitive acceleration of
landmine clearance (Afghanistan 2001), rights for female combatants (Uganda 2006), a civilian police force with female officers comprising at least 30% of the force (Darfur 2005), comprehensive reintegration policies for the benefit of the community as opposed to the individual (Afghanistan 2010) and inclusion in the Executive, Legislative and Judicial organs of government (including Burundi 2000, Liberia 2003, Kenya 2008, Darfur 2005).

Security for women is not necessarily achieved at the cessation of conflict. Peace in this context also takes on broader connotations, including freedom from interpersonal violence, access to education and access to healthcare. Elisabeth Rehn and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (2002) agree that building peace can take many forms, from looking after children orphaned by the conflict, to contributing to the rebuilding of damaged or destroyed infrastructure and establishing mobile health clinics.

Peace therefore often means much more the cessation of overt hostilities, and it is vital for women to be represented in the peacebuilding process so that their unique interests can be taken into account when looking towards a post-conflict society. Azza Karam (2000) also discusses the importance of reframing women, moving from occupying a space of victimhood and passivity to active contributors to peacebuilding.

Non-Military Gender-Sensitivity Training

The Australian Agency for International Development (‘AusAID’) released gender guidelines for peacebuilding in July 2006. They addressed the background to gender and peacebuilding, outlined general guidelines and provided specific sectoral guidelines including informal peacebuilding, peace negotiations and agreements, reconciliation processes, the implementation of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programs and national developments, including governance, legal, economic and education restructuring.

In 2008, Peacebuilding and Oxfam Canada released a comprehensive summary of a workshop held in Ottawa entitled ‘Gender Training and Fragile States: What Works?’. It considered gender training and the experiences thereof of the workshop participations, and also provided recommendations for various stakeholders, including funders, non-government organisations, gender trainers and participations.

More recently, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (‘DCAF’) released two publications in 2013 specifically relating to women in peacebuilding activities. These are ‘Gender Training for the Security Sector: Lessons Identified and Practical Resources’ and ‘A Women’s Guide to Security Sector Reform’. The former was published as a result of findings from a three-day workshop in June 2012 and is directed towards the security sector generally. In contrast, the latter is directed at women and provides information about the security sector as well as activities and tools to provide practical suggestions in reforming the security sector.
Finally, in April 2013, the United States Institute of Peace offered a course on ‘Gender and Peacebuilding’, while the United Nations Institute for Training and Research is running an upcoming course (‘Gender, leadership and peacebuilding’ will run from 25 September 2013 – 23 October 2013), as are the Human Rights Education Associates (‘Women, Peace and Security’ will run from 12 June 2013 – 13 July 2013).

Australia and Gender-Sensitive Approaches to Peacebuilding

In a statement before the United Nations Security Council on 21 January 2012, Dr Mike Kelly, Australian Parliamentary Secretary for Defence, recognised ‘that peacebuilding processes involving the participation of women are more likely to succeed. Peacekeeping missions can play a strong role in fostering such participation, including through the work of gender advisers and role models’. He advocates a multi-dimensional approach to peacekeeping and peacebuilding, both in training and in the field.

A Peace Operations Planning and Procedures Manual was released by the Australian Defence Force on 14 December 2009, which recognises that gender and peacekeeping training is required for all personnel deployed as representatives of the United Nations. The Department of Defence Website also hosts an undated PowerPoint presentation of ‘Gender Equality in Peacekeeping’, the ‘17th Standardized Generic Training Module’ and what appears to be an excerpt from a training manual on the same module that forms part of the training for UN Peacekeepers.

It therefore appears that the Australian Defence Force implements gender-training in relation to UN operations. It is less clear whether such programs are required or run when members of the Australian Defence Force act in their national capacity.

NATO and Gender-Sensitive Approaches to Peacebuilding

NATO has released multiple publications relating to gender-sensitive peacebuilding, including ‘How Can Gender Make a Difference to Security in Operations’ (2011) and the Committee on Women in NATO Forces’ ‘CWINF Guidance for NATO Gender Mainstreaming’.

In 2009, CWINF was renamed and its mandate was broadened. The replacement body, the Committee on Gender Perspectives, currently advises the organisation’s Military Committee, supports gender-mainstreaming, disseminates relevant information, facilitates the exchange of relevant information within NATO and liaises with external organisations regarding issues to do with gender and the military.
Other Countries and Gender-Sensitive Approaches to Peacebuilding

It is unclear to what extent the US and UK defence forces receive training in gender-sensitive approaches to peacebuilding, if such training exists at all.

The Scandinavian countries appear to offer a good model of how to incorporate gender into military training, including in relation to peacebuilding. The Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations recognises the value in including gender perspectives in military operations, describing gender perspectives as ‘force multipliers’. The Centre provides training, education and support to defence organisations to ensure the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda.

The Gender Project of the Norwegian Armed Forces have also sought to implement UNSCR 1325 and the website of the Norwegian Armed Forces suggest that some comprehensive gender-specific training is or has been made available including Gender Dimensions to Transition from Military to Civilian Life (including sessions on masculinities, gender-sensitive peace agreements, weapons, transitional justice and economic reintegration), Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration Gender Course and another DDR course for managers. Unfortunately, the student handbook for the Norwegian Defence University College does not appear to be available in English, but this would likely outline all of the courses available. The Norwegian School of Sport Sciences, Defence Institute has also released a research bibliography entitled Gender and Military Issues in the Scandinavian Countries that could prove to be a useful resource for information about further research that exists in this area.

The website for the Finnish Defence Forces is largely in Finnish; however, there is a webpage entitled ‘Gender-neuvojat kentälle’ (accessible via the search bar on the homepage) which refers to ‘1325’, ‘2000’ and ‘gender’. Therefore, further research and translation may provide information about the official policies of the Finnish Defence Forces. The University of Helsinki and the Academy of Finland appear to have an ongoing research project, ‘GENCIMIL – Gender Perspectives on Civil-Military Relations in Changing Security Environment’ that may prove relevant. One of the researchers from this project, Johanna Valenius, wrote a Chaillot Paper in 2007, ‘Gender Mainstreaming in ESDP missions’, which provides a comprehensive overview of gender mainstreaming and contains case studies, including Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Swedish Armed Forces have also incorporated gender-mainstreaming into their training activities. It has recently run a Gender Field Advisor course and has also offered a Gender Seminar for Commanding Officers as well as a Gender Flag Officer Seminar. In a discussion on The Role of the Armed Forces in the Implementation of UNSCR 1325, UN Women suggest that ‘Sweden has the most advanced training programme’, and therefore the Swedish Armed Forces could prove to be a good model for other countries seeking to implement military-based gender-sensitive training.
Female Engagement Teams (‘FETs’)

Since 2009, the United States Defence Forces have deployed FETs, first on an ad-hoc basis, but recently they have become part of a formal program. FETs have contributed to defence activities in various ways, including ‘engag[ing] the local population, [giving] them information about what the Marines were doing, provid[ing] humanitarian assistance and gather[ing] information about the area of operation’. They have also helped to ‘foster communication’, particularly in regions where cultural sensitivities prohibit the direct communication between male members of the Defence Forces and female members of the local societies. The Australian Defence Force has also deployed FETs in Afghanistan.

One study by Thomas Moore et al. (2012) suggests that FETs ‘can significantly enhance the ability of international forces to effect changes in opinion in populations… [and] allow for more efficient dissemination of information and opinions’. However, FETs are not entirely unproblematic; they sustain and perpetuate the belief that women are inherently more peaceful than men, and their deployment does not address the fundamental problem of women’s exclusion from formal and informal peace planning and negotiations.