

## Women with a Blue Helmet

### The Integration of Women and Gender Issues in UN Peacekeeping Missions

Francesco Bertolazzi

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***Women with a Blue Helmet: The Integration of Women and Gender Issues in UN Peacekeeping Missions***

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Gender,  
Peace & Security

## **Abstract**

As the mandates of peacekeeping missions have become more and more complex, there has been an increasing recognition that a gendered approach to peacekeeping is essential to adequately respond to the needs of women, men, boys and girls who have been affected differently by armed conflict. The integration of gender into peacekeeping missions has taken two approaches: mainstreaming gender into the mandates, policies and practices of peacekeeping missions and increasing the number of women working in peacekeeping operations. As of 2008, only 2 per cent of military personnel in UN peacekeeping were female. This paper aims to enhance understanding of the challenges that stand in the way of realizing the goals of achieving a gender balance in peacekeeping operations, looking at recruitment of women, the impact of women peacekeepers, and training and capacity-building activities.

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Gender,  
Peace & Security

## Acronyms

AU	African Union
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
GA	Gender Advisor
GFP	Gender Focal Point
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia
ICTR	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
MINURSO	United Nations Missions for the Referendum in Western Sahara
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
MINURCAT	United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad
MONUC	United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
PSO	Peace Support Operations
Res 1325	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325
SC	Security Council
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SGTM	Standardized Generic Training Module
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TCC	Troop Contributing Countries
UN	United Nations
UNAMID	African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur
UN-INSTRAW	United Nations International Research and Training Institute for Advancement of Women
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UN-DPKO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations
UNDOF	United Nations Disengagement Force
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFICYP	United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNMIS	United Nations Mission in the Sudan
UNMIT	United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste
UNMOGIP	United Nations Observer Group in India and Pakistan
UNOCI	United Nations Operations in Cote d'Ivoire
UNPOL	United Nations Police
UNTSO	United Nations Truce Supervision Organization
UNV	United Nations Volunteers

## 1. Introduction

When it was first created, the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) served a relatively straightforward task of building sustainable peace and restoring a safe environment.<sup>1</sup> Peacekeeping staff across UN Missions supported this task by patrolling borders, keeping conflicting armies apart and performing military functions. These roles and responsibilities have shifted over the last twenty years as inter-state wars have been replaced by more complex intra-state and inter-ethnic conflicts. The result has been new challenges confronting the international community generally, including the peacekeeping community.

Based on this new environment, the UN has shifted its peacekeeping mission mandate beyond exclusively military operations to multidimensional missions. The central vehicle for this are integrated missions, which are set up to “help countries in the transition from war to lasting peace, or address a similarly complex situation that requires a system-wide UN response, through subsuming various actors and approaches within an overall political-strategic crisis management framework.” Key priorities within this multidimensional approach include: restructuring state’s institutions, reorganizing the judiciary system, training the host country’s police and armed forces, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, and organizing and monitoring electoral processes. To accomplish these priorities, the UN has sought to include a new set of personnel with skills that go beyond a military capacity.

The multidimensional approach also addresses issues relevant to protecting local populations through an improved understanding of the local culture, religious beliefs, customs and ways of life. Such an approach facilitates the implementation of new security policies that respond to all the different needs and issues on the ground. Within this new framework of peacekeeping operations, there has been recognition that a gendered approach is essential to adequately respond to the needs of women, men, boys and girls who all have been affected differently by armed conflict.

One part of ensuring the gender dimension of multi-dimensional peace operations is the effective integration of more women in peace-support operations (PSOs). The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has issued a number of policies emphasizing the important role that women have in achieving the mandates of multi-dimensional peacekeeping operations, including their potential advantage in accessing and working with vulnerable populations, particularly with female victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).<sup>2</sup> The integration of women into PSOs in an effective manner is largely dependent on the political will of individual Member States of the United Nations, the initiatives taken by high-level leadership, and the organization of mission staffing.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, the mandate of the first peacekeeping operation in Congo was to “ensure the withdrawal of Belgian forces from the Republic of the Congo, to assist the Government in maintaining law and order and to provide technical assistance. “The function of ONUC was subsequently modified to include maintaining the territorial integrity and political independence of the Congo, preventing the occurrence of civil war and securing the removal from the Congo of all foreign military, paramilitary and advisory personnel not under the United Nations Command, and all mercenaries.”

<sup>2</sup> On 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008, the UN approved SC Resolution 1820. This Resolution is a final acknowledgment that violence and sexual abuse against women and children can be a tactic of war.



## a. Report goals and methodology

In 2008, out of 77,117 military personnel in UN peacekeeping, 1,640 were female, which is around 2 per cent.<sup>3</sup> It is clear that despite many appeals from the Secretary-General<sup>4</sup> and the Security Council, the UN has yet to achieve a gender balance or to ensure the full participation of women in peacekeeping; the goal of this paper is to better understand the challenges that stand in the way of realizing the goals of achieving a gender balance. In addressing these challenges, this report will suggest key policy and implementation recommendations that could contribute to moving the UN forward on these very important tasks.

This paper is based on a desk and literature review of relevant articles and publications as well as web-based research on issues related to female peacekeeping. The desk review was bolstered by a survey among current peacekeeping operations,<sup>5</sup> which consisted of two questionnaires. The first questionnaire was addressed to female peacekeeping personnel, military, police and civilians involved in current peacekeeping operations and the second was aimed at the Gender Advisor or Gender Focal Point<sup>6</sup> of each peacekeeping mission.

The general survey respondent rates varied across missions.<sup>7</sup> High turnover of staff, lack of institutional memory or appropriate contact information were identified as key challenges for administering the survey. Of the 18 peacekeeping and peace-building missions, five Senior Gender Advisors or gender focal points (MONUC, UNOCI, MINURSO, UNFICYP and UNMIK) replied to the questionnaire.

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<sup>3</sup> United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Gender Statistics on troop contributing States available from <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/gend.html>

<sup>4</sup> *Report of the Secretary-General on Women, Peace and Security*, New York, 27 September 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Note that the word *peacekeeping* is not contained in the Charter of the United Nations. Nonetheless, since 1948 the Security Council has deployed more than 60 missions. As of 20 October 2008, 21 are the peacekeeping operations divided into 16 peacekeeping operations directed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and 5 peace-building operations, directed by the Department of Political Affairs (DPA). The list of the current operations can be found at <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/currentops.shtml#africa>.

<sup>6</sup> The role of the Gender Advisor in Gender Units is to “promote, facilitate, support and monitor the incorporation of gender perspectives in peacekeeping operations. Gender units and advisors in peacekeeping operations are working to provide technical guidance to the heads of operations, to ensure increased efforts to mainstream gender perspectives into all functional areas of peacekeeping and to increase the participation of women leaders and organizations in the implementation of the mandate of the operation.”; The Gender Focal Point’s role is “to assist in improving gender balance in peacekeeping operations, a network of focal points for women was established in DPKO Headquarters and field missions in late 2000, similar to the network of departmental focal points for women in the UN Secretariat. This network was set up on the advice of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women (OSAGI). In missions, these focal points are currently involved in personnel issues such as recruitment, promotions, employment discrimination and sexual harassment. The functions of the focal point for women should not be confused with those of the gender adviser.”

<sup>7</sup> A significant number of forms have all the same been returned from the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), United Nations Operations in Cote d’Ivoire (UNOCI), United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB) (which in fact is a political mission supported by DPKO), United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).



## **b. History of women in peacekeeping**

In 1999, the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action<sup>8</sup> called for the UN DPKO to undertake a series of measures to advance the gender balance and gender equality at all levels of peacekeeping missions. The Plan of Action emphasized the importance of the participation of women in all stages of a peace process, from negotiations to international withdrawal. It spelled out the steps the UN and Member States should take to mainstream gender, including providing gender training to all peacekeeping personnel and recruiting a higher number of women in high-level, decision-making positions. An ambitious target of achieving 50/50 representation by 2015 was set. The United Nations Transitional Assistance Group in Namibia (UNTAG) was the first mission to implement these policy guidelines amidst an environment that combined traditional peacekeeping activities with peacebuilding functions.<sup>9</sup>

On October 2000, the United Nations Security Council unanimously approved Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Resolution 1325 was the first time that the Security Council recognized that women and girls are affected by conflicts in a different way than men and boys and therefore have an essential role in participatory peace processes. The Resolution built on previous international legal mechanisms such as the Windhoek Declaration/Namibia Plan of Action in its provision for a stronger gender mainstreaming component within peacekeeping missions. Since its passage, Resolution 1325 has served as a milestone towards better integration of women's perspectives in peace processes. Resolution 1325 emphasizes the importance of women's participation in all steps of a peace process, from negotiations to the signature of a peace agreement, emphasizing the necessity for pre-deployment, gender and sexual abuse and exploitation (SEA) training for all military, police and civilian staff being deployed to missions.

In many peacekeeping missions, Gender Units, Gender Advisors, and Gender Focal Points have been created to ensure that gender mainstreaming programmes and mechanisms are regularly implemented and coordinated with a mission's activities. Resolution 1325 and the Namibia Plan of Action have been integrated by guidelines<sup>10</sup> prepared by the UN DPKO aimed at helping the Mission's Gender Advisor in their implementation efforts.

Gender units oversee the coordination of gender activities inside and outside of the mission. The partnerships that the Gender Unit forms with local actors such as civil society organizations, women's associations, ministries of the host countries, as well as international NGOs and other UN agencies on the ground have shown to be an important method for implementation. Where it is possible to liaise with all of these different actors effectively, the inclusiveness of these programmes is well-acknowledged. However, this is

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<sup>8</sup> S/2000/693

<sup>9</sup> UNTAG is still considered one of the most successful multidimensional peace support operation and part of its success was also due to a stunning 60% of female presence in the international professional civil staff.

<sup>10</sup> There are, for example, "Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security in Peacekeeping Contexts: A Strategy Workshop with Women's Constituencies *From Troop and Police Contributing Countries*", Pretoria, 7-9 February 2007. Available from [http://www.peacewomen.org/resources/Peacekeeping/PDF/Pretoria\\_concl.pdf](http://www.peacewomen.org/resources/Peacekeeping/PDF/Pretoria_concl.pdf); "Gender mainstreaming in the work of the United Nations on peace and security", of 19 May 2004, available from <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ianwge/activities/E-2004-CRP-3.pdf>; "Gender Resource Package for Peacekeeping Operations", 2004. The package is downloadable at <http://pbpu.unlb.org/pbps/library/GRP%20Full%20Version.pdf>.



only possible with an adequate allocation of funds and resources, and mostly with the formal engagement of the whole staff making up the mission.

Gender units have also initiated and supported the inclusion of a gender perspective into programmes such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) initiatives; police or security sector reforms, including organizing gender trainings and devising gender-sensitive policies; disseminating information materials on Resolution 1325; responding to sexual exploitation and abuse; and justice and human rights. All of these activities can be performed only if all the components of a peacekeeping mission, including the military, the police and the civilian side, collaborate in a cross-cutting manner.

### **c. Gender mainstreaming in Peace Support Operations**

Gender mainstreaming in peace support operations is essential for the success of the operation because it helps to:

- Respond to different security needs within society
- Improve operational effectiveness
- Create a representative mission
- Strengthen civil components of the mission
- Strengthen democratic oversight

Gender mainstreaming is not solely about advocating for women's rights, but about critically analyzing all the challenges and opportunities for reform and reconstruction with respect to existing gender roles and inequalities.

Gender-blind peace agreements have only partially secured peace in war-torn societies and programming based on these agreements (such as DDR) cannot be considered inclusive. The risk in not having a gender perspective is that the mission will overlook important issues of inclusive security that will jeopardize agreements and threaten the fragile peace. Applied at the mission level, gender mainstreaming is one tool for understanding complex situations, reaching a broader consensus, inspiring new solutions and solving conflicts by incorporating new approaches and viewpoints.

Gender mainstreaming, as defined by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), is "the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated."

In her paper "Women, Peacekeeping and Peacemaking: Gender Balance and Mainstreaming,"<sup>11</sup> Judith Hicks Stiehm identifies three "I"s as potential obstacles in the gender mainstreaming process:

According to the responses provided by Gender Advisors and Focal Points, there are three factors that determine the level of implementation of policy directives regarding a gender balance inside the peacekeeping missions:

- The political will of senior management
- The availability of funds
- The availability of human resources.

**Inertia, Implementation and Institutionalization.** The inertia of institutions and consolidated procedures is often difficult to change. This influences the way in which policies are drafted and implemented. To effectively realize its full potential, gender mainstreaming should address the roots of the organizational structures, and make changes based on an equitable distribution of resources. This is a process that takes some time.

Gender mainstreaming promotes a holistic and broad approach to addressing the tasks and challenges faced by a peace support operation in a post-conflict environment. Identifying ways to address

gender-based violence is often a part of peace support operation mission mandates since these issues form part of protecting the human rights of a population and for establishing sustainable peace and security in a given country. Promoting gender issues can contribute to the reform of existing discriminatory policies that have negative gendered effects. By following and implementing gender-sensitive policies and procedures, a peacekeeping operation can provide a good example to national and local institutions.

The results of the survey undertaken for this research yielded several examples of good practices, challenges and hindrances in gender mainstreaming in peace support operations. Good practices include working proactively with government and civil society organizations in a country and using limited resources strategically. Challenges include lack of resources and difficulties working with local organizations. As can be seen below, some strategies that have worked well for one mission have met with difficulty in others.

The Gender Unit of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) takes a proactive role in mainstreaming gender in the mission's activities, working closely with the government's Ministry of Gender, Family and Children, other UN agencies, NGOs and civil society organizations in the country. MONUC is currently implementing Resolution 1325 and the Namibia Plan.

One major obstacle to effective gender mainstreaming is the lack of resources. For example, the United Nations Operations in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) is in favor of implementing Resolution 1325 and the Namibia Plan of Action, but the Gender Unit is understaffed and has little access to funds. Moreover, the mission is focused on DDR and electoral issues, but there has been little work to integrate a gender perspective into these processes. The mainstreaming of a gender perspective is promoted by the Gender Units, but it is necessary that all of the mission's components integrate a gender perspective into their work. The Public Information Office (PIO) of UNOCI has overall responsibility for gender sensitization

<sup>11</sup> Judith Hicks Stiehm, "Women, peacekeeping and peacemaking: gender balance and mainstreaming," *International Peacekeeping Journal* (2001), Available from <http://catalogo.casd.difesa.it/Document.htm&numrec=031313279959500>



activities, particularly initiatives involving collaboration with local population. Other challenges in implementing Resolution 1325 at the local level include difficulties liaising with local women's associations, whose work can be too fragmented for collaboration or for inclusion in peacebuilding activities.

Facing similar resource issues, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) puts its limited resources to work in the community. Its programmes focus on uniting women of the conflicting parties (northern and southern parts of Cyprus) by organizing events with representatives from communities from both regions. The Missions' Gender Focal Point is active in implementing the Windhoek Declaration by ensuring that the recruitment selection process takes gender balance into account.

The United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) is experiencing difficulties in regard to compliance with Resolution 1325 and the Namibia Plan of Action. At the time of writing, there was no Gender Advisor and all the gender-related work was undertaken by the Gender Focal Point. This results in very little consideration being given to Resolution 1325 and the Namibia Plan of Action. Lack of funding, understaffing and an overwhelming number of other tasks also hinder the mission's implementation of gender-specific policies. Because of limited resources, the Gender Focal Point's main tasks consist of arranging and organizing the International Women's Day and releasing public announcements. A respondent to the questionnaire said that, in general, the mission does not accommodate the special needs of women peacekeepers, for example, by modifying the accommodation provided by the host government, and there are no special provisions for females regarding the special security needs of women.

## 2. Female recruitment

Women's recruitment and inclusion in peace support operations has slowly improved over the years. Between 1957 and 1979, only five out of 6,250 peacekeeping soldiers were women. During the period 1957 and 1989, only 20 out of about 20,000 military personnel involved in peacekeeping were women. The seven missions with the lowest female participation rate were established before 1980. In contrast, the twelve missions with the highest participation rate of women were established after 1990. By 1993, 11 out of the 19 UN peacekeeping missions had significant civilian components, and women constituted one-third of the international UN civilian staff.<sup>12</sup> While women have increasingly been involved, in the current twenty-one peacekeeping operations, military female personnel are only 1,734 out of a total of 77,057 staff (in 2007 there were 1,034 women out of 71,673 and in 2006 there were 1,235 women in peacekeeping out of 65,555 militaries).<sup>13</sup>

Although this data shows progress in the participation of uniformed women in peacekeeping operations, there are still major obstacles to the full integration of women, especially at the senior management level. Between 1948 when the first PSO was established and 2008, only seven women have been appointed as Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSg) and one as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSg).<sup>14</sup>

Recruitment procedures for peacekeeping missions call on UN Member States to supply the UN Security Council with the armed forces and necessary facilities to assist in maintaining international peace and security.<sup>15</sup> The United Nations has no responsibility in the selection of the personnel that troop-contributing countries (TCC) put at its disposal and have no voice in the pre-deployment training of these personnel, though selection tests are held prior to the deployment of troops. The UN can ask for staff that has a certain professional background and experience. Nevertheless, responsibility to provide qualified and well-trained personnel lies primarily in the hands of the TCCs.

As of January 2009, the top three contributing countries were Pakistan (with an overall number of police, military observers and troops of 10,989), followed by Bangladesh (9,424), and India (8,640). Far beyond lag other developing countries like Nigeria (6,001), Nepal (3,924), Rwanda (3,635), and Ghana (3,283).

Challenges also occur for the recruitment of civilian posts. According to a 2006 report, the current 'Galaxy' system that the UN uses to advertise and disseminate civilian posts receives an average of 600 résumés for each opening. This makes comprehensive screening difficult. Additionally, the report found that Member States continue to recommend men for vacancies, and cultural and institutional impediments persist despite mandates for a gender

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<sup>12</sup> Hudson, Heidi, "Mainstreaming Gender in Peacekeeping Operations: Can Africa Learn From International Experience?" Department of Political Science, University of the Free State, African Security Review Volume 9 Number 4, 2000. Available at: <http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/ASR/9No4/Hudson.html>

<sup>13</sup> United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

<sup>14</sup> The last ones appointed were: Ellen Margrethe Løj, appointed as SRSg in October 2007 and Henrietta Joy Abena Nyarko Mensa-Bonsu appointed August 2007 as DRSg, both in UNMIL. Former women SRSgs were: Margaret Joan Anstee in Angola (UNAVEM II), 1992-93, (she has also written about her experiences as a woman SRSg in *Never Learn To Type: A Woman at the United Nations*), Elizabeth Rehn in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), 1995-2001, Carolyn McAskie in Burundi (ONUB), 2004-2006, Gro Harlem Brundtland in Cyprus (UNFICYP), 1998-99, Heidi Tagliavini in Georgia (UNOMIG), 2002-2006 and Angela King in South Africa (UNOMSA), 1992-94.

<sup>15</sup> The Article 43 of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations requires that all UN member states make available to the Security Council their armed forces and the facilities necessary to assist in maintaining world peace and security.



balance. This coupled with a lack of accountability for the recruitment and hiring women at the senior management level creates resistance among staff to discuss the issue. On the other hand, when positions are reserved for women, some male colleagues become resentful. The danger with posts reserved for women is that they can appear as tokens and face additional scrutiny that men may not encounter.<sup>16</sup>

A joint effort from TCCs and DPKO is necessary to facilitate the inclusion of women at all levels of peacekeeping missions. Efforts by national armies to increase female recruitment are dependent on each nation's recruitment policy. Resistance to women's inclusion by Member States is the product of a traditionally male-dominated environment in security forces. Requests from the headquarters level should continue to reflect the need for qualified and suitable female staff and should act as an incentive for TCCs to promote gender equality in their armed forces.

#### **a. Incentives and disincentives for women peacekeepers**

In order to design appropriate recruitment policies that resonate with many women, it is important to understand why women might be motivated to join PSOs. The survey showed six main reasons that women tend to join missions. Most of the survey respondents cited their career as the top reason for having joined a mission. An additional incentive cited was the economic benefits, though such benefits were not cited as a determining factor in the questionnaires. An altruistic, value-driven goal of bringing peace to a war-torn society was also a common motivating factor. This was more likely to be cited by African women peacekeepers that experienced conflict or upheaval in their own countries before joining missions. Sharing experiences and meeting colleagues from other countries was also considered an incentive for many women to join United Nations PSOs. The opportunity to work and live in a demanding, international environment was also cited by many of the respondents, though this was also presented as a challenge by some women.

Some women peacekeepers were selected by their national armies because they possessed particular skills needed at the mission level. Specifically, these peacekeepers had a sound record of military experience in their country of origin (especially women from Scandinavian

"I applied for a UN peacekeeping mission thinking that the UN is better than any diplomatic mission regarding the status of its staff and mainly women with under aged children and families. Honestly, I did learn about the real definition of non-family mission only when I joined the field. When I read it on my first contract, I understood that the UN does not provide financial support to family members. That was the way it is called non family missions", as stated by a Tunisian civilian staff.

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<sup>16</sup> Women in International Security, *Women in United Nations Peace Operations: Increasing Leadership Opportunities* (Washington, DC, Georgetown University, 2008).



countries), spoke local languages, or had performed particularly well at governmental or diplomatic levels.

Many missions are non-family duty stations, which mean that travelling with family members is not allowed. As a result, familial and personal relationships can suffer. The questionnaires revealed that experienced female staff often feel isolated when they are on mission. Most of the women in peacekeeping operations are unmarried, divorced or have no children. In most peacekeeping operations, there is not a safe environment to raise children or have a family life. Respondents affirmed that they have been able to manage their family relations well either because they have very strong support from their family or because they are single or divorced.

Reports and experiences of sexual harassment, gender discrimination and biases towards candidates with a humanitarian background also limit the number of women in TCC militaries. This is complicated by the long-standing inability of the UN to reach outside its current staff when advertising vacancies. The restricted circulation of vacancy announcements and the post requirements present substantial challenges to the recruitment of women.

## **b. Women in mission leadership**

The questionnaires received showed that positions of high authority in peacekeeping missions are not easily accessible for women. Women often refrain from applying for high-rank military posts. Since many armies have only recently admitted women in their ranks, and military experience is a key requirement to have access to high-rank UN positions, it continues to be challenging for women to obtain positions of leadership. In the rare event that a woman is chosen to work in the military, she often is assigned to safer, less visible or less "serious" roles rather than decision-making or front line positions. A few missions have made progress in this area, but much more has to be done, especially in the senior levels of the military and police.

The few respondents that had served under a senior female officer said that the working environment had been positive and that the women leaders had an excellent understanding of the mission. Women senior officers are cited as having an open attitude towards the different needs of women peacekeepers and can serve as an inspiration for women both within and outside the mission. Among the negative comments received regarding women's leadership, some cited revenge towards male colleagues, who are seen as having made the path difficult for senior women.<sup>17</sup> In more than one case, this was explained by the amount of stress put on female senior officers.

Survey respondents agreed that women (in both leadership and regular posts) had to make personal sacrifices to achieve their professional goals. Respondents cited that this may be one explanation for their sometimes 'bossy' behavior towards their staff.<sup>18</sup> Perhaps such behavior is also influenced by the fact that the organizational structure of the military has always been seen as a male-dominated environment with emphasis on the importance of stereotypical male attributes of toughness, discipline, loyalty and combat-readiness. Other respondents also cited the envy, dislike and even hate from male colleagues, the difficult relationships with other women at the same level, and the need for a woman to have a "protector" or a "mentor" to access these high-level positions.

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<sup>17</sup> Survey Response, MONUC, 2009.

<sup>18</sup> Survey Response, MINURSO, 2008.



### **c. Examples of Mission Specific Recruitment Policies and Practices**

The largest peacekeeping operation, MONUC, shows no clear mandate on female recruitment. Out of the over 18,000 personnel serving in MONUC, the percentage of women among international staff, military and civilians, is about 30 per cent,<sup>19</sup> and 14 to 15 per cent of female national staff. South Africa<sup>20</sup> contributes the highest number of female peacekeepers to the mission (101 women), followed by Uruguay (84). Countries that participate in the mission with troops but that have not included a single woman in their personnel contributions are Pakistan, Bangladesh and Morocco, which form part of the largest troop contributing countries.

In the MONUC police force, women make up 26 of the 300 police officers (approximately 9 per cent) and 32 out of 750 members of Formed Police Units (about 4 per cent). A number of countries contribute a small number of women police, including Sweden, Madagascar, Central African Republic, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger and Cameroon. In each of these troop contributions, female representatives account for 6 to 8 per cent of total staff.

At the civilian level, women are still extremely under-represented in higher management positions in MONUC. The highest position held by a woman is a D-1 post, which is the lowest of the UN Senior Management positions. Women are the least represented in the transport, fuel, engineering and aviation sectors, with a female presence ranging from 4 per cent and 9 per cent. Other areas with relatively small numbers of women (between 10 and 20 per cent) are the security sector and field administration offices, the electoral division, the Geographic Information System (GIS) unit, and property management among others. Women's participation is between 20 per cent and 49 per cent in the human rights, conduct and discipline, legal affairs, medical, finance, UNV management, DDR and political affairs sectors. Women make up more than 50 per cent of staff members in human resources, field liaison offices and procurement. The Rule of Law and the Gender Unit are made up of between 50 and 60 per cent of women staff.

At the UNFICYP mission, there has been a 15 per cent increase of women recruited since 2006. However, women have not held senior management positions (D-1 and above) and have mainly occupied mid-level management positions (P-4 and P-5).

Because of the work of its Gender Focal Point, MINURSO has been active in recruiting women. Despite this, women mostly occupy mid-level management positions, though recently a woman was appointed as the head of a unit. Additionally, the mission has increased the number of women UN Military Observers (MILOBs) and civilians. However,

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<sup>20</sup> South Africa has recently adopted a National Action Plan aimed at encouraging and increasing the number of South African female peacekeepers in peace support operations as well as in the national defence sector. The Plan is part of South Africa's commitment to support gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping missions, as provided for the UNSCR 1325. Luyanda Makapela, "Plan to Assist Recruitment of Women Peacekeepers Adopted", *All Africa*, 3 October 2008. Available from <http://allafrica.com/stories/200810030626.html>





there is a higher rate of turnover of female civilian staff members than male staff. Some attribute this to the mission having a women-hostile environment.<sup>21</sup>

UNMIK has kept more or less the same percentage of women throughout its years of operation. Questionnaire respondents gave the opinion that the presence of women in the mission is considered more like a “politically correct measure” than a method of increasing the effectiveness of the peacekeeping mandate. On the other hand, women seem to be restrained by the fact that their family background affects their work life either by being too self-confident or too male-dependant.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Survey Response, MINURSO Gender Focal Point.

<sup>22</sup> Survey Response. UNMIK Gender Advisor.

### 3. Impact of Women Peacekeepers

In January 2007, a 125-strong all-women police contingent of peacekeepers from India was deployed to Liberia. The Liberian case is the only case of an all women contingent at the time of this research. Traditionally, contingents have always been composed of men and only a few women served with their male colleagues. The changes in peacekeeping mandates and activities make it necessary to review the habits of sending men-only contingents. Further, such changes necessitate reflection on the role of women soldiers in restoring peace and security in war-torn societies. The majority of respondents to the survey expressed agreement that mixed teams are operationally more effective. More than half the respondents (67 of out 104) affirmed that they saw no obstacles to integrating women into military units. The main reason respondents cited for why mixed teams are important was that women often have easier access to female members of civil society.

"I believe that a gender balance should not be the only reason to deploy female officers a mission or position. As for male officers - proper skills, attitudes and behaviors are necessary and should be the primary reason for appointing someone into a managerial post." Bosnian female peacekeeper in UNFICYP

In some circumstances, female soldiers may have a comparative advantage to interacting with the local population on matters such as sexual exploitation, abuse and violence, among other issues. Additionally, women can help at security checkpoints, where they may be better positioned to speak with and search local women. Another point in favor of mixed teams is represented by the fact that all societies are made up of both women and men. In this way, mixed teams can therefore better reflect the reality outside the.

Mixed units can serve as an example for the host society on how men and women can work together on even the most difficult tasks. However, mixed teams must be balanced; many respondents pointed out that mixed should not mean 95 per cent men and 5 per cent women, though it often does. Additionally, in mixed teams, women may be relegated to support staff roles, such as cooking, cleaning and secretarial tasks. Women in such roles are officially called peacekeepers and are included in mission statistics, but in reality are completely marginalized from the most visible and main mandated peacekeeping activities.

The overwhelming majority of respondents agreed that women peacekeepers bring different perspectives and attitudes to their work. They also supported the idea that the integration of women within male-dominated units is most successful when women do not try to compete with their male counterparts in terms of strength and toughness, but instead work to compliment these skills.<sup>23</sup>

When it comes to the relationships with the host community, the presence of women can have other positive effects in that it improves the balance and the overall relations within

and outside the mission. Inside the mission, the female presence can sometimes act as a brake against possible violations of the code of conduct. Where the presence of women in peacekeeping operations was higher, such as in the missions in Guatemala and South Africa, the missions were completed with enormous success and the mandates were completely fulfilled.<sup>24</sup> While this can be attributed to multiple factors, the presence of women in these missions should be taken into account. There has also been speculation about the link between the presence of women in missions and the decrease of prostitution and cases of sexual abuse and exploitation (SEA), though there is little data to support this link.

There seems to be a relationship between the traditionalism of a society and the level of tolerance for women in security forces, particularly in national armies. In the mission to the Western Sahara (MINURSO), a traditional Muslim country, 10.2 per cent of the troops were women — the highest of any UN peacekeeping mission in 1993.<sup>25</sup> Contrary to expectations, there was no evidence that the presence of women in the military had a detrimental effect on the outcome of the mission. In another case, the Norwegian authorities excluded female officers from their group of observers to the mission in Pakistan (UNMOGIP) on the assumption that women would not be welcome. It later transpired that their decision was uninformed and would have benefited from consultation with colleagues in the host country.<sup>26</sup>

“In DRC where the majority of atrocities were committed by men in armed forces, the presence of women facilitates the communication, the information sharing, and problem solving from the victims. A raped person will feel more confident with a woman rather than a man.” African woman peacekeeper in MONUC.

#### a. Women and Community Interactions

It is important to analyze whether women’s increased involvement in PSOs results in a higher level of collaboration between the PSO and women and women’s civil society groups. Half of the respondents said that they have had no contact with local women’s associations. This can be due to a number of different factors. The Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) that defines and sets the rules for the deployment of foreign armies in a sovereign state might mandate that no contacts be made between soldiers and the local population. In addition, it is often difficult to keep in regular contact with these associations and to develop and maintain a relationship with them because of the high level of turnover in peacekeeping missions. It can also happen that notwithstanding the personal commitment of a few people in getting off the ground initiatives aimed at building relationships with local associations, the support of the higher management is needed it is, instead, denied. When interactions with local organizations are prioritized, the results from such cooperation are generally excellent and can act as models for future collaborations. For instance, a peacekeeper in ONUCI described her work with local women’s organizations in reorganizing youth

<sup>24</sup> The United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) was established in January 1997 and lasted for six months. Its main functions were to verify the agreement on the ceasefire and to disarm the combatants of the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca. The United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA) was not a peacekeeping mission *strictu sensu*, but, as its title suggests, was more a political mission responsible for observing the electoral process.

<sup>25</sup> Anita Helland & Anita Kristensen, *Women in Peace Operations, Women and Armed Conflicts – A study for the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs* (Oslo, Norway, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 1999) p 83.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

associations as key to building an inclusive peace process. Collaboration with women's organizations can happen in a number of ways, including the co-organization of charitable events, meetings, and conferences; sensitization sessions on SEA, GBV or HIV; and the sharing of information.

## **b. Field-Based Case Studies**

The following section contains two stories about the lives of two women peacekeepers in the field. The content of the two human interest stories have been taken directly from the questionnaires and have been included in this paper with the consent of the participants.

### **Human Interest Story #1 – The Case of Esther from Chad**



Esther is a 47-year-old United Nations Police (UNPOL) officer working in the United Nations Mission in Ivory Coast (UNOCI). She has spent the last seventeen years in the Chadian police forces and has been serving in the UNOCI mission for one year as Guard Commander in Abengourou. This is her second mission.

Esther decided to join the peacekeeping mission because of her extensive background in the police forces. Additionally, because of her background as a technician and advisor

on social and human sciences issues, she thought that her skills would be very useful and the work interesting in a peacekeeping context.

Esther believes that women and men should perform the same tasks, even though women have to also deal with the problems arising within the household. Women are at the same time mothers and members of different associations and their opinions are always expressed with tact and courage. Esther feels that women and men should be working together since they have to jointly lead their destinies. If one of the two genders is left out, one could run the risk of giving a false, or at least partial, interpretation of data and facts. As to the more technical aspects of her profession, Esther thinks that men and women should receive the same basic training. A specialization on ensuring gender balance within the units is also desirable.

Esther has continuously participated in trainings on issues such as gender and development organized by various institutions, associations, women's organizations and the United Nations. Since population and development is her main focus and area of work, gender has always been at the centre of her studies. At the mission level, Esther has been continuously involved in gender issues. In 2007, she participated in the drafting of the "Gender and Peacekeeping" report published by the UNPOL post in Yamoussoukro and in 2007 she took part in the workshop organized by the Gender Unit of UNOCI on "Gender and violence in peacekeeping missions." On behalf of MINURCAT, Esther participated in the training of commanders of the integrated security detachment called "Gender and violence in the

refugees and IDPs camps.” Esther’s work has allowed her to work with local women’s associations in collaboration with the Public Information Office in the country. She has assisted in reorganizing the youth associations with the help of other UN agencies on the ground.

According to Esther, increasingly, women have access to positions of authority but she feels that there is still a lot to be done in terms of reducing the challenges that prevent women from accessing high-management posts in UN missions. Even though the capacities to ensure a gender balance are in place, the way recruitment is managed is poorly directed toward this objective. Esther feels that having women in the peacekeeping mission has increased its effectiveness. She believes that the women peacekeepers contribute to the success of the mission because they enhance the relationship between militaries and civilian populations.

On the topic of addressing allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse within missions, Esther suggested that the problem be tackled from the base, starting with a review of old codes of conduct in relation to today’s mandates. This should occur both at the UN level and in the national context. Esther believes that such a review would show that there is little similarity between today’s context and the texts dating back to the 1960s because the society changes so continuously.

## **Human Interest Story #2 – The Case of Maj Shobha Nair**

Shobha is a 32-year-old woman from India who currently serves as a Military Observer in MONUC. She is currently working as an Acting Team Leader. She has worked with the Indian military for eight years.



Shobha says that her experiences during daily patrols have demonstrated to her that women’s involvement in peacekeeping can have a positive effect on the mission’s relations with the local population. She suggested that mixed teams are more effective than single gender teams. Shobha thinks that, as much as possible, women and men in peacekeeping operations should fulfill the same tasks. She said that it is not a matter of men or women being better at certain tasks than the other gender, but that what is required is a collective effort. Mixed teams can be more successful because they can face and solve a whole array of situations which can lead to more positive outcomes. She cited community patrols as an environment for mixed teams to have a significant impact. She felt that her presence on such patrols made young girls and women feel more comfortable coming forward.<sup>27</sup>

Shobha received a pre-deployment gender training which was, in her opinion, planned adequately. She cited the same adequacy in the in-mission gender training.<sup>28</sup> Shobha suggested that one good practice for the training of women peacekeepers could be that an experienced woman peacekeeper be invited to provide trainees with first-hand experience and knowledge about a mission’s

<sup>27</sup> Survey Response, 2008.

<sup>28</sup> MONUC in-mission training consists of training sessions that last between 30 minutes and two hours, depending on how large the audience is, and it covers topics like gender roles, impact of armed conflict, survival strategies, sexual and domestic violence, sexual exploitation and abuse and women’s participation in electoral processes.



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relationship with the local female population. She stated that this could be helpful in order to provide information on how to handle difficult relationships, especially in different cultural contexts.

Finally, when asked what could be done to improve the understanding of SEA and GBV issues in the peacekeeping operation, she suggested the provision of increased education and training. She feels that education about such issues should not just be applied to peacekeeping training, but should be provided to society at large, saying that educating people and making them understand gender differences and violent dynamics at a very early age can help to eradicate this kind of violence.

As seen from these two testimonies, the presence of women peacekeepers can be of invaluable utility to the mission. Female peacekeepers that responded to the questionnaire frequently highlighted their positive impact on the local populations when they are regarded as trustful and loyal soldiers that. Additionally, women spoke about their roles in listening to the stories that the victims of armed conflicts have to tell (especially reports of sexual exploitation or abuse). Women can help to facilitate communication inside and outside of the mission and can provide important access to information with respect to gathering evidence for the prosecution of international crimes, such as crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide, including gender-based violence.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> As defined under the Statute of Rome of the International Criminal Court



#### 4. Training and Capacity-Building Activities

Gender trainings are an excellent way of preparing peacekeepers to be deployed in PSOs. The mandates of official documents, such as Resolution 1325 and the Windhoek Declaration, provide the normative basis for the importance of gender training in peacekeeping missions. There are two main types of training given to peacekeeping troops: pre-deployment training, which occurs prior to deployment and is given in a troop's home country or region; and induction training, which occurs at the mission level.

Pre-deployment gender training aims to educate troops on the basic values of the United Nations when dealing with men and women of the host population. Pre-deployment gender training should be "broad and generic, incorporating a wealth of different examples,"<sup>30</sup> but should also cover specific information about culture and gender in the country where the mission will be deployed. Training should inform peacekeepers about the social context where they will operate in order to help reduce unintended effects of their behaviours on the local population.<sup>31</sup>

Pre-deployment training is the responsibility of the troop-contributing countries. Unfortunately not all TCCs apply the same policies and priorities in these trainings and the levels of training can be substantially different from one country to another. Many of the top TCCs are developing countries, where there might be few resources for providing troops with adequate training and resources especially with respect to gender issues. Nevertheless, there are a considerable number of training centres, particularly in the global South, that conduct capacity-building activities.

Half of the survey respondents (60 out of 104) stated that they participated in a pre-deployment gender and SEA issues training. These trainings were given by different actors (NGOs, academic institutions, or online courses), not necessarily by the United Nations.

To facilitate training in line with the goals of Resolution 1325, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has prepared a Standardized Generic Training Module (SGTM), within its human rights training module. This provides a way for DPKO to assist TCCs in formulating and organizing gender training or events. Institutions who have taken advantage of this resource include the Peace Support Training Centre in Canada (which works with UN military observers), the Chilean Joint Peacekeeping Operations Centre (CECOPAC), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research in Geneva, and the Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operation.

Upon their arrival at mission headquarters, military and civilian personnel receive induction training. This training includes a session on gender issues and SEA that can vary from half an hour to a couple of hours. The responsibility for this training lies primarily in the hands of the Gender Advisor or the Gender Focal Point.<sup>32</sup> Induction trainings are provided upon the arrival of troops and usually run for half an hour to a couple of hours. Unfortunately, because of the short length of training, it is not always possible to train personnel on gender issues. An additional problem can be language barriers. In these cases, the Gender Advisor

<sup>30</sup> Angela Mackay, *Training the Uniforms: Gender and Peacekeeping Operations* (Development in Practice, 2003)

<sup>31</sup> S/RES/1325

<sup>32</sup> Minna Lyytikäinen, *Gender Training for Peacekeepers: Preliminary Overview of United Nations peace support operations*, (Santo Domingo, UN-INSTRAW, 2007).

trains a contingent's top officer who in turn is responsible for training the contingent. Military and civilian police trainings are usually held separately from civilian trainings.

### **a. Standardized Training on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse**

Since gender is such a central issue in conflict and post-conflict areas, it is very important that adequate training on gender issues is provided to peacekeeping troops. In particular, there is a greater need to address sexual abuse and exploitation (SEA) in training activities. The issue of misconduct and SEA is one of the most urgent issues that need to be tackled. All staff members working under the UN flag are expected to adhere to a series of rules and regulations that include, among other documents, the UN Charter and the Ten Rules for the Blue Helmets. Appropriate training should cover both mission-specific code of conducts<sup>33</sup> and the Secretary General's zero tolerance policy.<sup>34</sup>

Codes of Conduct are issued from the UN and vary across missions. For example, the code of conduct for MONUC calls for the peacekeepers to show respect for traditional culture and values of the host population. It also has provisions for the actions of peacekeepers, including how they should behave in gatherings, tips for avoiding political discussions, and compliance with all security procedures.

In the case where a peacekeeper does not follow a Code of Conduct, the TCC is responsible for disciplinary action. For this reason, codes do not include any specific details of sanctions, but instead remind peacekeepers and civilian personnel to follow the rules and regulations issued by the UN.

The UN Code of Conduct requires that the peacekeepers:

- Conduct themselves in a professional and disciplined manner;
- Respect the environment of the host country;
- Respect local customs and practices, religion and culture;
- Treat host populations with dignity, respect, courtesy and consideration;
- Support and encourage proper conduct among fellow peacekeepers.

In addition, it prohibits Peacekeepers from:

- Bringing discredit to the United Nations, or their nations out of a lack of proper behavior;
- Committing any act that could harm or bring suffering to the local population, especially women and children;
- Becoming involved in sexual liaisons that could jeopardize their impartiality.

Nearly half of survey respondents who had received deployment gender and SEA training (29 out of 60) said that the training they received addressed issues about SEA in a satisfactory manner. Respondents also expressed widespread agreement on the recommendation to repeat training on a regular basis or to expand training so that it runs

<sup>33</sup> See Annex III. Also available from [http://www.genderandpeacekeeping.ca/resources/5\\_UN\\_Codes\\_of\\_Conduct.pdf](http://www.genderandpeacekeeping.ca/resources/5_UN_Codes_of_Conduct.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> An inventory of materials published by the United Nations on the prevention and elimination of sexual exploitation and abuse is available from <http://ochaonline.un.org/OchaLinkClick.aspx?link=ocha&docId=1072750>



for more than one hour. Respondents proposed a number of suggestions for enhancing the effectiveness of gender and SEA trainings prior to deployment, such as role-playing exercises and practical examples in trainings, and leaving more space for debate as well as question and answers sessions.

Challenges to the effective implementation of gender training programmes include the lack of funding, understaffing and the lack of political will. Additionally, the continuous rotation of staff members and the complexity of the subject matter also impact training programmes. The regular repetition of trainings, or “refreshers,” could help to address these issues at the mission level, though such repetition requires funding and staffing resources. Mandatory gender and SEA trainings alone cannot solve the problem of sexual harassment, abuse and discrimination, but need to be accompanied by measures to ensure that perpetrators are appropriately sanctioned.

## **5. Concluding Thoughts and Recommendations**

In recent years, there has been increasing recognition at the international level of the importance of including women in all levels of conflict management and post-conflict recovery. One important aspect of this is increasing the participation of women in peacekeeping missions. There are a number of benefits for this type of participation. Women’s involvement in peacekeeping missions can trigger positive changes for women in the countries where they serve and where women are often kept at the margins of society by providing positive examples of women’s leadership. The participation of women can also have a positive effect on the environment of the mission as well. The presence of women in both military and civilian positions can help to deter the misconduct or unprofessional behavior of all-male contingents.<sup>35</sup> In addition, a mixed mission has the advantage of reflecting the composition of the host society in a more representative way, where men and women live together and where they find ways to treat each other with mutual respect and trust.

While the integration of women in civilian components of peacekeeping missions is increasing,<sup>36</sup> the same cannot be said for the participation of women in military contingents. Women’s involvement in military peacekeeping remains small. The low number of women acting as military peacekeepers is a reflection of the low number of women in the armed forces of the contributing countries. To address this, troop contributing countries take measures to bring about institutional changes, including recruitment policies, to improve the incentive for women peacekeepers to join the mission.

The responsibility for ensuring that peacekeeping troops are adequately trained and prepared to engage in peacekeeping operations lies primarily with the troop-contributing countries. Because of the importance of gender training, it is very important that all such training includes a strong gender component, including information on sexual abuse and exploitation and the relevant UN rules and regulations around these issues. Because Peace Support Operations (PSOs) are composed of contingents from different countries and cultures, ensuring the same level of preparedness and pre-deployment training is difficult.

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<sup>35</sup> Allegations of sexual abuse and rape were made several times against UN peacekeepers, especially during the UNOSOM I and II operations in Somalia but also during the missions in Bosnia, Kosovo, Ethiopia and Congo. See BBC News, “UN sexual Allegations Double”, BBC. 6 May 2005. Available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4521481.stm>.

<sup>36</sup> The female component accounts now for around 30% of civilians within peacekeeping missions directed by DPKO. In the military instead women represent only 1% of the military contingents.



Different cultures and different attitudes towards the role of women in society must be taken into consideration when sending troops abroad for peacekeeping purposes.

The following are suggestions and recommendations made by the peacekeepers and Gender Advisors interviewed for this study:

1. The UN and troop-contributing countries must ensure that there is no impunity for perpetrators of GBV or sexual exploitation abuse. This is detrimental to the effectiveness of the mission, particularly in its relation with the local community. Furthermore, reports of abuse can deter women from joining peacekeeping missions at the country level. Peacekeepers who suffer from or witness any kind of abuse need clear, straightforward and quick reporting procedures. Sometimes it is exactly for the lack of such procedures that SEA or GBV cases go unreported.
2. TCCs are responsible for the behavior of their troops, including in relation to preventing and punishing SEA and GBV. TCCs have to provide mandatory pre-deployment gender training for all personnel, including military, civilian police, or civilian staff. Improving the regularity and standardization of education and capacity-building activities across TCCs would be an important step in this area.
3. The United Nations DPKO should review the codes of conduct of each mission to ensure that they are context-specific. Wherever possible, the Roles of Engagement (ROE) negotiated with the host country should promote a safe environment in which to build relationships with local associations and to interact with the civil population in order to address the needs of the various components of the society.
4. To increase the level of knowledge and understanding of the context where they operate and to gain the trust and confidence by the host population, it wherever possible, peacekeepers should interact with the local civilians organizing common events and joint activities. Women's organizations play a particularly important role in ensuring that a gender perspective is also included in a final peace agreement.

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## **Annex I:** Questionnaire for female peacekeepers in-mission

General information (optional):

Name (also option to answer anonymously or with pseudonym):

Age:

Country of Origin:

Position:

Mission/ duty station:

Time served in the military/police force:

Duration of mission:

General questions:

1) Is it the first time you have been assigned to a peacekeeping operation?

Yes

No

1.2.) If not, as a woman, has anything changed about serving in a peacekeeping mission since your last mission?

2) What made you decide to sign up for a peacekeeping operation? How do you balance your work with your personal life?

3) Should women carry out different tasks than men in peacekeeping missions? Why? Is that the case in your mission? How do men and women's tasks differ?

4) What particular training should female peacekeepers undergo that is different from basic training? What would be the most effective way to conduct such training? Should men undergo any special training in addition to basic training? What kind?

5) Did you receive training on gender issues and/or sexual exploitation and abuse before being deployed? Do you think the time and content allocated to it was enough to have an impact?



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6) Did you receive in-mission training on the same subjects as well? How do you evaluate it?

7) In Liberia, an all female police force from India has been deployed as part of the peacekeeping mission. Do you think women as peacekeepers could be more effective if they were separated from men or are "mixed teams" more effective?

8) Do women have access to positions of authority in the chain-of-command in peacekeeping operations? If so, do you think these women bring different attitudes or perspectives to their work?

Have you ever served under a female senior officer? What was your experience?

9) Do you think that the presence of female peacekeepers improves the relationship between the military and civilians? How? If possible, give a concrete example.



10) Do you as peacekeeper have any relationship with local women's associations or organizations? How do you interact?

11) Do the roles of engagement include a code of conduct on the behavior that peacekeepers have to observe during deployment with respect to local population?

12) What do you think could be done to improve peacekeeping missions with respect to issues such as sexual exploitation or violence against women?

Thank you very much for your participation.

The results of these questionnaires will be published at:

<http://www.un-instraw.org/en/gps/general/gender-peace-and-security.html>



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## **Annex II: Questionnaire for Gender Advisors and Focal Points**

General information (optional):

Name:

Age:

Country of Origin:

Mission/ duty station:

Duration of mission:

How is the mission responding to the mandate of UNSCR 1325 and the Windhoek Declaration/ Namibia Plan of Action? What policies/projects are being implemented inside your mission?

Has the mission increased its female recruits over the last year or in comparison to other missions? What positions do women occupy within your peacekeeping mission?

What are the major difficulties in implementing UNSCR 1325 within the mission? What challenges do you face to make your mission "gender responsive"?

4) Do you have a story of success about how your mission has responded to challenges such as sexual violence, and/or gender discrimination?

Thank you very much for your collaboration.

The results of this questionnaire will be published at:

<http://www.un-instraw.org/en/gps/general/gender-peace-and-security.html>



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## Annex III: Code of conduct for Blue Helmets



### **TEN RULES CODE OF PERSONAL CONDUCT FOR BLUE HELMETS**

- 1** Dress, think, talk, act and behave in a manner befitting the dignity of a disciplined, caring, considerate, mature, respected and trusted soldier, displaying the highest integrity and impartiality. Have pride in your position as a peace-keeper and do not abuse or misuse your authority.
- 2** Respect the law of the land of the host country, their local culture, traditions, customs and practices.
- 3** Treat the inhabitants of the host country with respect, courtesy and consideration. You are there as a guest to help them and in so doing will be welcomed with admiration. Neither solicit or accept any material reward, honor or gift.
- 4** Do not indulge in immoral acts of sexual, physical or psychological abuse or exploitation of the local population or United Nations staff, especially women and children.



- 5** Respect and regard the human rights of all. Support and aid the infirm, sick and weak. Do not act in revenge or with malice, in particular when dealing with prisoners, detainees or people in your custody.
- 6** Properly care for and account for all United Nations money, vehicles, equipment and property assigned to you and do not trade or barter with them to seek personal benefits.
- 7** Show military courtesy and pay appropriate compliments to all members of the mission, including other United Nations contingents regardless of their creed, gender, rank or origin.
- 8** Show respect for and promote the environment, including the flora and fauna, of the host country.
- 9** Do not engage in excessive consumption of alcohol or traffic in drugs.
- 10** Exercise the utmost discretion in handling confidential information and matters of official business which can put lives into danger or soil the image of the United Nations.



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## **WE ARE UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPERS**

The United Nations Organization embodies the aspirations of all the people of the world for peace. In this context the United Nations Charter requires that all personnel must maintain the highest standards of integrity and conduct.

We will comply with the Guidelines on International Humanitarian Law for Forces Undertaking United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and the applicable portions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as the fundamental basis of our standards.

We, as peace-keepers, represent the United Nations and are present in the country to help it recover from the trauma of a conflict. As a result we must consciously be prepared to accept special constraints in our public and private lives in order to do the work and to pursue the ideals of the United Nations Organization.

We will be accorded certain privileges and immunities arranged through agreements negotiated between the United Nations and the host country solely for the purpose of discharging our peacekeeping duties. Expectations of the world community and the local population will be high and our actions, behaviour and speech will be closely monitored.





## **We will always:**

- ◆ Conduct ourselves in a professional and disciplined manner, at all times;
- ◆ Dedicate ourselves to achieving the goals of the United Nations;
- ◆ Understand the mandate and mission and comply with their provisions;
- ◆ Respect the environment of the host country;
- ◆ Respect local customs and practices through awareness and respect for the culture, religion, traditions and gender issues;
- ◆ Treat the inhabitants of the host country with respect, courtesy and consideration;
- ◆ Act with impartiality, integrity and tact;
- ◆ Support and aid the infirm, sick and weak;
- ◆ Obey our United Nations superiors and respect the chain of command;
- ◆ Respect all other peace-keeping members of the mission regardless of status, rank, ethnic or national origin, race, gender, or creed;
- ◆ Support and encourage proper conduct among our fellow peace-keepers;
- ◆ Maintain proper dress and personal deportment at all times;
- ◆ Properly account for all money and property assigned to us as members of the mission; and
- ◆ Care for all United Nations equipment placed in our charge.



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## **We will never:**

- ◆ Bring discredit upon the United Nations, or our nations through improper personal conduct, failure to perform our duties or abuse of our positions as peace-keepers;
- ◆ Take any action that might jeopardize the mission;
- ◆ Abuse alcohol, use or traffic in drugs;
- ◆ Make unauthorized communications to external agencies, including unauthorized press statements;
- ◆ Improperly disclose or use information gained through our employment;
- ◆ Use unnecessary violence or threaten anyone in custody;
- ◆ Commit any act that could result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to members of the local population, especially women and children;
- ◆ Become involved in sexual liaisons which could affect our impartiality, or the well-being of others;
- ◆ Be abusive or uncivil to any member of the public;
- ◆ Willfully damage or misuse any United Nations property or equipment;
- ◆ Use a vehicle improperly or without authorisation;
- ◆ Collect unauthorized souvenirs;
- ◆ Participate in any illegal activities, corrupt or improper practices; or
- ◆ Attempt to use our positions for personal advantage, to make false claims or accept benefits to which we are not entitled.





**W**e realize that the consequences of failure to act within these guidelines may:

- ◆ Erode confidence and trust in the United Nations;
- ◆ Jeopardize the achievement of the mission; and
- ◆ Jeopardize our status and security as peacekeepers.

United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations  
Training Unit