

U.S. Engagement in International Peacekeeping

From Aspiration to Implementation



Partnership for Effective Peacekeeping

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Women in International Peacekeeping

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Refugees International

The background of the cover is a solid light blue color. In the lower half, there are several overlapping, wavy, abstract shapes in various shades of blue, creating a sense of movement and depth. The shapes are layered, with some appearing in front of others, and they flow across the width of the page.

Introduction

One of the goals of this Report is to examine the role of women in peacekeeping and to suggest ways in which the United States should advance improvements in this area.

Over many years the roles of women in war and conflict -- and in peace and security -- has received increasing attention. In 2000, the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) calling for recognition of differing gender perspectives on security, seeking greater protection for the human rights of women and girls in wars and conflicts, and opening greater participation by women in preventing conflict and creating and preserving peace. Nevertheless, even by 2010 the recruitment of women peacekeepers was found to be "one of the greatest challenges facing the United Nations."¹

In addition, today greater attention is directed toward efforts to eradicate sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and the use of SGBV as a weapon of war, as opposed to accepting SGBV as an unavoidable side effect.² In 2008, the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1820 (and later UNSCR 1888), requiring peacekeepers to protect women and girls from SGBV in armed conflicts.³ An important and tangentially-related topic is sexual abuse and exploitation (SEA) by peacekeepers. (See Preventing Violence Against Women in Peacekeeping Operations on page 44 of this Report.)

By most measures, women are disproportionately underrepresented as peacekeepers and in the leadership of peacekeeping operations.⁴ (See table on page 43.) It is widely acknowledged that peacekeeping efforts would be enhanced with greater involvement of women. Why should greater involvement of women in peacekeeping operations be sought? What are the impediments to achieving this goal? And what can the United States do to help?

¹ Torunn L. Tyrggestad, "Trick or Treat? The U.N. and Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security," *Global Governance* 15 (2009), p. 539-557. Also see: Skard Torlid, "Gender in the Malestream – Acceptance of Women and Gender Equality in Different United Nations Organizations," *Forum for Development Studies* 36 [1] (2009).

² U.N. General Assembly, 65th Session, *Report of the Secretary General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009)*, November 24, 2010.

³ UNSCR 1820 states: "Reaffirming also the resolve expressed in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, including by ending impunity and by ensuring the protection of civilians, in particular women and girls, during and after armed conflicts, in accordance with the obligations States have undertaken under international humanitarian law and international human rights law."

⁴ Within DPKO "peacekeepers" can refer to staff playing a variety of roles described generally as (1) Military personnel (including a formed battalion or seconded experts), (2) Police personnel (including Formed Police Units (FPUs) or seconded individuals), and (3) Civilian staff.

Mandate

The goal of increasing the proportion of female staff and achieving gender balance within the U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has existed for more than a decade. UNSCR 1325 called for an expansion of women's contributions to field-based operations across peacekeeping missions "especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel."⁵ This reflected the U.N. Security Council's recognition of the unique experiences of women, men, girls, and boys in wartime and the desire that the U.N.'s staff should reflect and draw upon those experiences.

In 2006, DPKO's internal policy directive *Gender Equality in UN Peacekeeping Operations* looked more carefully at the gaps in recruitment and retention of women which resulted in an internal mandate to "advance gender balance among DPKO headquarters and mission staff, including at senior management levels."⁶ In 2009, still far from the "gender balance" it originally mandated for its missions, the U.N. Security Council passed UNSCR 1888, employing stronger language about the responsibility of Member States to deploy qualified women military personnel and for the first time suggesting that women join missions as military and police personnel.⁷

The Value of Enhanced Roles for Women as Peacekeepers

In addition to serving the goal of gender balance, increasing the number of women in peacekeeping operations has been shown to have positive operational impact.

Security is measured by the ability of a population to be mobile, to have access to resources and infrastructure, and to be free from physical violence. The primary task of peacekeepers is to contribute to that security. Data from a 2010 DPKO-sponsored study on women peacekeepers based at the U.N. Mission to Liberia (UNMIL) shows empirical evidence that mainstreaming women in peacekeeping roles can have an impact on security for the population.⁸ In addition to the well-known and recognizable all-women Indian Formed Police Unit (FPU), women in UNMIL held a variety of roles in the mission, such as senior level leadership (including

⁵ U.N. Security Council, *Security Council Resolution 1325* (2000), "On Women and Peace and Security," October 31, 2000, (U.N. document S/RES/1325, 2000).

⁶ U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *Gender Equality in U.N. Peacekeeping Operations, A Policy Directive*, prepared by Jean-Marie Guéhénno, November 3, 2006.

⁷ U.N. Security Council, *Security Council Resolution 1888* (2009) "Encourages Member States to deploy greater numbers of female military and police personnel to United Nations peacekeeping operations, and to provide all military and police personnel with adequate training to carry out their responsibilities."

⁸ Kristen Cordell, "Best Practices for Gender Mainstreaming at the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) From 2003 to 2008," United Nations, Best Practices Unit, 2010. Also see: Carole Doucet, "Women in Peacekeeping: The Power to Empower," Remarks for the Seminar at University of Liberia -- The Importance of Including Women in Peacekeeping Missions, 2009.

the then only female Special Representative to the Secretary-General (SRSG), individual police (from Denmark, Norway, and Sweden), all-women military battalions (from Ghana and Nigeria), and individual military experts (from the Philippines).⁹

The first finding is an improved capacity for collection and analysis of community-based intelligence among female military and police staff. Understanding the host community has been recognized as a core component of keeping the peace, especially useful in areas of protracted conflict that divide communities along ethnic lines. Within UNMIL, an all-women battalion of Ghanaian women established a relationship that improved intelligence gathering by connecting informally with local women who were initially reticent to report crimes or suspicious activities.¹⁰ In one case, open dialogue between peacekeepers and local women resulted in the uncovering of a significant stockpile of weaponry.

How might gender affect intelligence collection? UNMIL's male peacekeepers viewed their goals narrowly, citing their impact on crime rates for armed robbery and assault, with little attention to the provision of wider human security. Women peacekeepers, by contrast, described their goals to include the protection of civilians and saw community intelligence as broad and all encompassing. None of the all-male units had developed community outreach, rehabilitation activities or response efforts for sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in the communities, while the women peacekeepers had done so.

An increased capacity of missions to address SGBV is the second area where women peacekeepers have a significant impact. In August 2009, the United Nations highlighted the connection between a greater number of women in a mission and a lower rate of SGBV in the community.¹¹ The data showed two impacts: improved prevention through security and improved response to women survivors. To prevent SGBV in the community in and around Monrovia, the Indian FPU introduced night patrols and self-defense classes for teenage girls. Their presence, alongside focused activities, effectively eroded intimidation and provided reassurance for vulnerable groups,¹² creating a more hospitable environment for civilian women.

⁹ Women represent 168 of the 10,165 peacekeepers within UNMIL.

¹⁰ The 10th contingent of Ghana Battalion, headquartered in the port city of Buchanan, in Grand Bass County, Liberia, is the largest female military battalion in the UNMIL. Buchanan is a small and predominantly Muslim community, a context in which local women's interaction with male soldiers was forbidden. The battalion's 41 women serve in supportive roles, including medical and administrative assignments.

¹¹ United Nations Policing, *Roundtable Discussion at U.N. Headquarters on U.N. Police and Gender Based Violence* (New York, August 17, 2010), <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/sites/police/initiatives/globaleffort.shtml>.

¹² Rachel Mayanja, "Review of Strategies for Enhancing Gender Balance Among Uniformed Personnel in Peacekeeping Missions," (policy dialogue from the United Nations Peacekeeping Operation with Troop and Police Contributing Countries, New York, NY, March 28, 2006).

Data from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Liberia show that local women characterized their interaction with male peacekeepers as difficult, and as a result, expressed themselves in oblique language.¹³ In the case of rape or sexual violence, this makes response difficult and contributes to perpetrator impunity.¹⁴ This is an area where data shows that women peacekeepers have a comparative advantage.

The all-women Indian FPU also set up Women and Child Protection Units (WCPUs), highly accessible and secure police stations across the country, staffed with female police. By working alongside local women, female peacekeepers serve as resource for building the capacity of the community to sustain national security structures and also emphasize transparency and inclusivity for those structures. This is important in post-conflict settings, where the population often does not trust the institutions tasked with keeping them safe. In Liberia in 2008, only 12% of women victims reported incidents of sexual abuse to the police.¹⁵

The presence of women peacekeepers “inspires more women to join their local police services,”¹⁶ which strengthens the systems as well. Women peacekeepers in Liberia lead recruitment of women for the National Police (which now boasts almost 20% women). As national police and military institutions evolve to include more women, they can gain credibility. Higher gender integration of institutions correlates with enhanced transparency and decreased rates of corruption.¹⁷ The presence of women in evolving security structures enhances overall national stability in the transition to peace.¹⁸

Women peacekeepers become role models for local women in challenging social and cultural context, both within and outside of the security sector. Having female and male peacekeepers working side-by-side can be catalytic in breaking down traditional views that discriminate and marginalize women.¹⁹ After four sequential rotations of the all-women FPU, there is significant erosion of long-standing harmful practices that have inhibited women (specifically rampant child marriage, polygamy and prostitution).

¹³ U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *Enhancing the Operational Impact*, 2006.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ United Nations Mission to Liberia, Legal and Judicial System Division, *Research on Prevalence and Attitudes to Rape in Liberia* (September to October, 2008).

¹⁶ U.N. Department of Public Information “United Nations in Global Effort to Increase Number of Female Police in Peacekeeping Operations Women Officers Have Special Role to Play in Societies Affected by Conflict ‘Power to Empower’ Theme of Campaign to Move United Nations towards Gender Equity” (U.N. Press Release PKO/218 WOM/1751, August 2009).

¹⁷ David Dollar and Raymond Fisman, “Are Women Really the ‘Fairer Sex’? Corruption and Women in Government,” Policy Research Report on Gender and Development, Working Paper WP/4 (Washington, DC, World Bank, 1999).

¹⁸ Cheryl Bernard, Seth Jones, Olga Oliker, Cathryn Thurston, Brooke Stearns, and Kristen Cordell, “Women and Nation Building,” (Santa Monica, The RAND Corporation, 2008).

¹⁹ Mayanja, “Strategies for Enhancing Gender Balance.”

Young women, formerly highly susceptible to these practices, are now more likely to consider a range of educational and work opportunities. How does this impact the security of the population? Evidence shows that empowered women (1) are far less likely to become impoverished or dependent, (2) have healthier children, (3) are more likely to invest their incomes in family goods, and (4) are more likely to receive education.²⁰ As a composite, gender-balanced nation states are less internationally aggressive and have higher growth rates overall.²¹ Empowering women appears to be a means of contributing to long-term stability.

Impediments to Women in Peacekeeping

The issues surrounding women in peacekeeping are part of a larger debate over the recruitment of quality staff to the U.N. amid the challenges of constant staff shortages, rotation procedures, health and welfare issues, and security concerns.²² As a coalition of Member States, the U.N. is dependent upon troop-contributing countries (TCCs) and police-contributing countries (PCCs) to staff its forces. This means that the number of women in peacekeeping operations is dependent upon the number of women among the total contributed personnel. The low number of women in peacekeeping missions reflects the low number of women in the military and police forces across TCCs and PCCs (including the United States).²³

The U.N. has recognized the impact on women peacekeepers on increasing security on the ground in host countries and placed a priority on increasing the ratio. It is truly the responsibility of all Member States to assist the U.N. in building its quality and number of personnel (both through personnel and financial resources). The U.S. military is particularly poised to do so, given the breadth and range of talent it holds. Ann-Marie Orlor, Deputy U.N. Police Advisor stated, "Much more can be done if we have more female officers. However, we depend on Member States to nominate these [female] formations. The U.N., therefore, strongly encourages police-contributing countries to establish a policy that sets the percentage of the contribution of female police officers at par with the national gender

²⁰ Cheryl Benard and Kristen Cordell, "Women and Human Security: The Case of Post Conflict Afghanistan," (Georgetown University: *WIIIS Words Journal*, 2007); also see: Mary Caprioli, "Gender Equality and State Aggression: The Impact of Domestic Gender Equality on State First Use of Force," *International Interactions* 29 (2003), p. 195-214.

²¹ Mary Caprioli, "Gender Equality and State Aggression: The Impact of Domestic Gender Equality on State First Use of Force," *International Interactions* 29 (2003), p. 195-214. Links between gender equality and state aggression is an interesting debate, too lengthy for the purpose of this paper, but for more information, also see "Women and Nation Building" (Santa Monica, The RAND Corporation, 2008).

²² Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) and U.N. Department of Field Support, *Voices from the Field: An Analysis on Best Practice Reporting: A Joint Project of the United Nations Study Program*, (New York, SIPA and the Peacekeeping Best Practices Service, 2011).

²³ Camille Pampell Conaway and Jolynn Shoemaker, "Women in United Nations Peace Operations: Increasing Leadership Opportunities," (Washington, DC, Women in International Security, Georgetown University, 2008).

ratio.”²⁴ Through improved research, policy doctrine, and coordination efforts, the U.S. government can support and sustain this effort.

The Department of State, in its first *Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review Report*, committed itself to “boost the number of women police officers and peacekeepers who are particularly well suited to work with host country female populations and local communities,” but it is not clear how this aspiration is to be achieved.²⁵ Improving clarity on the structure that the U.S. has for bringing qualified women candidates to the U.N., the challenges at both the national and international level, and the evidence of the comparative advantage of women’s inclusion will yield recommendations on new strategies for the United States.

A 2011 report *Improvement of the Status of Women in the U.N. System* focused specifically on addressing the recruitment and retention of female civilians (including at higher levels) throughout DPKO.²⁶ It found the percentage of women in professional civilian posts to be 39.9%, with very few women represented in senior management.²⁷ The study also found women rarely advanced within the system and are concentrated at headquarters (as oppose to field missions).²⁸ There are currently three women among the 17 Special Representatives to the Secretary-General (SRSG)²⁹ and no women serving in DPKO as force commanders.³⁰ Civilian women also have much higher rates of turnover than their male counterparts.³¹

In 2011, despite the prevailing mandates and requirements, the implementation of the recruitment and retention of women within DPKO is highly irregular, dichotomized and under reported. Few women sign up, and those who do rarely stick around.³² Ninety percent of DPKO missions are non-family duty stations. Female personnel regularly cite spousal and family considerations as reasons for turning down assignments.³³ Women also opt out based on self evaluation. A study by Women in International Security found that potential women peacekeepers are regularly “reluctant

²⁴ United Nations, “U.N. peacekeeping missions urged to bolster number of women police officers,” (New York, U.N. Press Release, August 7, 2009), accessed September 2, 2009, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=31715&Cr=sexual+violence&Cr1=peacekeeping>.

²⁵ U.S. Department of State, *Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review Report*, 2010.

²⁶ U.N. General Assembly, 65th Session, *Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System*, Report of the Secretary-General (U.N. document A/65/334, 2010).

²⁷ Women are now in the majority at the P3 level – 56% of P3 and 25% of non-seconded P4 staff. The proportion of women to men continues to drop until the D2 level, where of the 7 non-seconded staff, 4 are men and 3 are women.

²⁸ Conway and Shoemaker, “Women in United Nations Peace Operations.”

²⁹ The mission’s highest civilian post.

³⁰ U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, *Ten Year Impact Study on the Implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 (2001)*, New York, NY, 2010.

³¹ U.N. General Assembly, *Improvement of the Status of Women*.

³² Conway and Shoemaker, “Women in United Nations Peace Operations.”

³³ *Ibid.*

to accept positions unless they are extremely confident that their qualifications and experience exactly match the needs of the position.”³⁴

Another possible explanation was uncovered by Abraham Afrim-Narh's assessment of Ghanaian women serving DPKO. He found a significant disconnect between the perception of women peacekeepers (as favorable) and their “actual involvement,” which she found to be extremely limited.³⁵ A 2006 report from DPKO found that women in mission were regularly “assigned to administrative and non-challenging positions that deprive them of opportunities for both professional satisfaction and career development.”³⁶ Considering the constraints, a lack of meaningful involvement is a likely deterrent to securing quality talent. Female staff cannot be seen only as those responsible for community clean up days, health fairs, and outreach at orphanages.

The constraints on the inclusion of women and their operational impact with the U.N. deserve greater attention, specifically through the lenses of troop-contributing countries (TCCs) and police-contributing countries (PCCs).³⁷ The U.S. government's institutional obstacles to recruitment of women determine its overall contribution.³⁸ As of July 2011, the United States has 100 total staff (75 as police and 25 as military) serving in U.N. missions around the world. The greatest concentration is in Haiti (MINUSTAH), where eight of the 68 police personnel deployed are women.³⁹

The U.S. military does not recruit many people, let alone women, to DPKO. This is grounded in the fact that U.S. military personnel are stretched thin in other operational theatres and U.S. military leadership is wary of a command structure that could undermine its own. Additionally, the forces are drawing from a base of only 13-14% women staff. On the policing side, the State Department's International Office of Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) relies on a subcontractor system for filling individual staff police requests. The partnership is challenging as contractors set their own recruitment terms, which are not gender sensitive. So this is not particularly a gender issue, it is a recruitment issue; broader still, it is a values issue.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ A.T. Afrim-Narh, “Gender Integration and International Peacekeeping: The Case of the Ghana Armed Forces,” (Master's Thesis, University of Oslo, 2006), <http://www.duo.uio.no/publ/statsvitens-kap/2006/41510/41510.pdf>.

³⁶ U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations, “Strategies for Enhancing Gender Balance,” 2006.

³⁷ The Security Council commits to include a gender component in U.N. field operations (1325, OP5), and requests that the Secretary-General's reports to include information on the progress of gender mainstreaming within each operation (1325, OP17).

³⁸ Micah Zenko, “The Case for U.N. Peacekeeping,” (Washington, DC, Council on Foreign Relations, 2011).

³⁹ U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations, “Monthly Statistics Report on Troop and Police Contributing Countries,” 2011, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors.shtml>.

Recommendations

2.1 The U.N. continues to set targets, calling on Member States to contribute to DPKO women peacekeepers with specific, tangible skills, replicating programs such as the Secretary-General's Global Initiative.⁴⁰

This creates a “pull” for more women in the ranks of peacekeepers, and we know this can have an impact. In 2008, MINUSTAH took concerted action to increase a gender balance and achieved great gains. Their civilian representation increased for international staff (from 32% to 34%), U.N. volunteers (from 26% to 28%), and national staff (from 12% to 18%).⁴¹ However, the real responsibility relies on Member States (including the United States), to provide the “push” for the qualified female staff to peacekeeping missions.

The U.S. military has its own set of institutional obstacles to U.N. staffing and recruitment.⁴² The U.S. does not assign many people, let alone women, to DPKO. This is grounded in the fact that U.S. military personnel are stretched thin in other operational theatres and U.S. military leadership is wary of a command structure that could undermine its own. So this is not particularly a gender issue, it is a recruitment issue; broader still, it is a values issue.

2.2 DOD conducts an internal evaluation of its personnel for their increased deployment of women to multilateral operations.

The research must explore women's operational impact, barriers and opportunities and link relevant skills sets to U.N. Terms of References (across PKO departments). In South Africa, a vigorous military review in 2006 revealed many women were interested and prepared to serve in DPKO, which led to new policy on the inclusion of women. Today, that country boasts one of the highest ratios of women to men in the U.N.⁴³ Argentina and Chile both used national reviews on defense policy and gender as precursors for design of the participation element of their National Action Plans.⁴⁴

The review should carefully consider trends in women's participation in the U.S. military, how domestic military skills sets would translate

⁴⁰ The goal of the Global Initiative is for the U.N. police to be 20% female by 2014. U.N. News Center, “U.N. peacekeeping missions urged to bolster number of women police officers,” (New York, August 7, 2009), <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=31715&Cr=sexual+violence&Cr1=peacekeeping>.

⁴¹ U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, *Ten Year Impact Study on the Implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 (2001)*, New York, NY, October 2010.

⁴² Zenko, “The Case for U.N. Peacekeeping.”

⁴³ Mayanja, “Review of Strategies for Enhancing Gender Balance.”

⁴⁴ Marcela Donadio and Cecilia Mazzotta, “Gender Perspective and International Security: The Participation of Women in Peace Operations,” (presentation at the RESDAL bi-national seminar, Buenos Aires, November 4, 2008), <http://www.resdal.org/genero-y-paz/women-in-the-armed-and-police-forces.pdf>.

internationally, and how women's experiences while working for the U.S. would impact their international work. This might include creatively thinking about where to find women military staff, using examples from within the government. In its recruitment of women police for peacekeeping missions, the State Department realized a core challenge was the lack of national policing units to serve as FPU's. Instead of being deterred, they created a partnership with the New York Fire Department to serve in Haiti (MINUSTAH).⁴⁵ The idea was forward-leaning, and created a new resource for recruitment efforts.

2.3 DOD includes preferences for women within job descriptions for staff officers.

Recruitment for U.N. positions from within DOD is gender blind. Currently there are no explicit regulations on including women in staff requests. DOD has asserted that language encouraging women candidates to apply for U.N. postings would constitute gender-based discrimination.⁴⁶ This position seems overly cautious and should be reexamined. Encouraging women to serve as staff officers is not discriminatory; it is a type of targeted recruitment similar to encouraging women to enlist.

Other nations have been successful at addressing the concern of discriminatory action because they identify the tangible skills and value-added that women can bring to certain roles (such as providing assistance to victims of SGBV). Secondly, they structure recruitment to mirror the U.N. system preferences, such as sending full battalions instead of staff spread out among posts. Their delegation of staff is in line and in response to the preferences of the U.N.⁴⁷ In coordination, the State Department must continue to move away from use of contactors to supply police - or alternatively work with contractors on their resistance to include gender within position descriptions.

2.4 DOD creates incentives for U.S. women to serve the U.N.

While the challenges are many, the incentives for U.N. service are few. Serving the U.N. is perceived as a career-ending move for many in the U.S. military. In order to serve in DPKO, U.S. military staff must take off time from their other pursuits (such as education, professional development, and deployment), significantly diminishing opportunities for promotion. Participation in missions must be valued, which can only come through attaching the experience to positive implications for career development.

⁴⁵ United States State Department Official, author interview, August 2010.

⁴⁶ Department of Defense Staff Member, author interview, 2010.

⁴⁷ Mayanja, "Strategies for Enhancing Gender Balance."

Once the actual policy has been promulgated, creative information, and awareness campaigns should provide outreach to women candidates highlighting the work of women who have served in the U.N., demystifying the process and encouraging mentorship. The State Department's Office of International Narcotics and Law (INL) is leading the way on this effort by sharing information at law schools, police centers, and training academies. They participate in conferences and bilateral partnerships to inform policy makers on the topic. Recently they provided funding for international participants to attend the "International Association of Women Police Conference," an internal event in Lexington, Kentucky. This work should be continued and emulated by partners such as DOD.

Given its leadership within the U.N. and its focus on improving the professionalization of its own staff, the U.S. should contribute only professional staff with professional skill sets. Sending low-ranking military staff to DPKO will only undermine the effort of the U.N. to do away with tokenism. As a result, DOD must expand beyond sending only staff officers to DPKO.

2.5 DOD continues to support, participate in and fund roster programs and training to build the pool of qualified women personnel.

In the longer term, the United States can take a number of steps to expand the capacity of the applicant pool. Rosters collect and vet quality talent for quick mission placement based on need. They have proven a successful way for attracting and placing quality female candidates – especially at more senior levels.⁴⁸ This is useful because having women involved at the decision making level of peace and stability operations has proved key to increasing women throughout the ranks.⁴⁹ USAID has considered having gender experts in their Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) Roster, and should look to the Norwegian Refugee Council's GenCAP Roster as one possible good example.

2.6 The United States engages military academies, graduate and leadership programs and training institutions to broaden the pool of female talent (including West Point, the National Defense University, and the Peacekeeping and Stability Operational Institute).

Gender staffing and gender staff capacity are not one and the same. These institutions are forward-leaning in their preparation of tomorrow's military leaders and must be tasked with broadening the pool of female talent. Additionally, they are crucial resources for increasing the knowledge of gender across staff, ensuring that men

⁴⁸ Conaway and Shoemaker, "Women in United Nations Peace Operations."

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

are partners and advocates on issues such as eliminating SGBV.

2.7 Partnering with other PCCs and TCCs to aid information and knowledge sharing.

A potential best practice is for the State Department to work on increasing the applicant pool, providing new training opportunities for women and often reaching out to female police abroad through the iPost Project. The office has also supported DPKO in creation of a women's association of peacekeepers, which will soon have an online presence.

Within the U.S. government more widely defined, the State Department's Bureau of International Organization Affairs (IO) must work alongside this effort, by bridging the gaps for women civilians interested in working within the U.N. The current state of this effort is extremely short-sighted; the IO website for example, suggests that Americans work to become Junior Professional Officers, a U.N. recruitment program for which Americans are ineligible. Coordinating entry into the U.N. on the civilian side is a place where the U.S. has a comparative advantage. With the large pool of talented State Department and DOD women coming back from hardship posts in Afghanistan and Iraq,⁵⁰ the U.S. is poised to contribute quality talent. IO, INL and the U.S. Mission to the United Nations must work alongside this effort; to reform the qualities sought in staff.

2.8 Once adopted, the National Action Plan (NAP) should receive support and full funding by Congress.

There exists a great opportunity for the United States to address these challenges in the development of the National Action Plan on U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325. In a commitment made by Secretary Clinton in 2010, development of the National Action Plan (NAP) will serve as the U.S. blueprint for work on women in peace and security. In other countries, a NAP can serve as a vehicle to improved participation of women in the U.N. In 2009, Chile's NAP focused almost exclusively on the participation of women in the armed forces, putting particular emphasis on the role of Chilean troops in peace support operations.⁵¹ As a result, Chile increased its numbers of women in peacekeeping operations.⁵² NAPs in Belgium, Denmark, and Norway also include strategies for increasing numbers of women serving multinational efforts and

⁵⁰ In the case of DOD this includes some 200,000 women veterans.

⁵¹ Government of Chile, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Plan de Acción Nacional Para la Implementación de la Resolución del Consejo de Seguridad de la Organización de Naciones Unidas 1325/2000, "Mujeres, Paz y Seguridad,"* (2009). For more on the plan by Norway see: Anita Schojolsset, "Closing the Gender Gap in the Armed Forces: The Varying Success of Recruitment and Retention Strategies in Nation," (policy brief, Oslo: Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), March 2010).

⁵² Donadio and Mazzotta, "Gender Perspective and International Security."

have each been successful.⁵³ The NAP is an appropriate place for connecting and coordinating various government agencies on this effort.

“Send me your female troops, your police, your civilian personnel and your senior diplomats and I will ensure that they are all considered; that qualified candidates are rostered; and that the maximum number is deployed to the field as quickly as humanly possible.”⁵⁴ This call from U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in 2008 has yet to be answered by the United States. As a composite, the action-oriented recommendations set forth here will allow the U.S. to fulfill a critical role in the U.N.’s ability to protect and secure. They go beyond merely material resources to become a contribution of skillful, valuable human resources.

⁵³ A. Sherriff and K. Barnes, “Enhancing the EU response to women and armed conflict with particular reference to Development Policy (ECDPM Discussion Paper 84),” (Maastricht, ECDPM, 2008), p. 109-111, <http://www.ecdpm.org/dp84>.

⁵⁴ Ban Ki-moon, “Remarks to the Security Council meeting on Women, Peace and Security,” (speech to the U.N. Security Council, New York, NY, June 19, 2008).

DPKO Peacekeeping Personnel by Gender⁵⁵

Branch/ Unit	Number			Percentage	
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Military Experts	2,128	87	2,215	96	4
Troops (Formed Battalions)	80,334	2,126	827,460	99	1
Military Total	82,462	2,213	84,675	97	3
Police (Individual)	5,635	1,028	6,663	85	15
Formed Police Units (FPUs)	7,266	420	7,686	95	5
Police Total	12,901	1,448	14,349	90	10
TOTAL	95,363	3,661	99,024	96%	4%

Missions and TCCs of Merit⁵⁶

	Top “Troop-Contributing Countries” Contributions (Number of Women)	Top U.N. Mission Integration (Percent of Women)
Military Experts	N/A	MONUSCO (3%)
Military Battalions	South Africa (17%) Nigeria (7%)	UNFICYP (7%) UNAMID (5%) UNIFIL (4%)
Individual Police	N/A	UNOCI (6%) UNAMID (2%)
FPUS	India (11%, 1 Unit of 100 women) Bangladesh (13%, 1 Unit of 123 women)	UNMIL (16%) MINUSTAH (9%)

⁵⁵ U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Monthly Statistics Report on Troop and Police Contributing Countries (July 2011), <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors.shtml>.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

Preventing Violence Against Women in Peacekeeping Operations

Introduction

Throughout history, war has disrupted and destroyed communities. Often those powerless and most at peril are women and their children. One of the goals of peacekeeping is to protect civilians and create a secure environment, and peacekeepers must give priority to the security needs of women and girls. Two issues in particular command attention from peacekeepers: (1) Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) committed by combatants and other members of the local community during conflicts, and (2) Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) committed by peacekeepers themselves.

The Role of Peacekeeping in Preventing SGBV

The important role that peacekeeping operations can play in preventing SGBV and effectively addressing the needs of its victims is touched upon throughout this Report. Adequate funding for peacekeeping operations allows the deployment of adequate numbers of qualified peacekeepers. As Chapter 2 notes, among the advantages of having greater numbers on women in peacekeeping operations and in leadership in peacekeeping are the beneficial impact they can have in discouraging SGBV, investigating acts of SGBV, and aiding the women who are victims of SGBV. Chapter 3 mentions that the proper training of peacekeepers will include training regarding civilian protection and the prevention of SGBV. And the growing reliance on civilian and police capacity, discussed in Chapter 4, will include a growing reliance on these peacekeepers for investigating and prosecuting the perpetrators of these crimes and addressing the needs of the victims.

What is lacking are (i) continual in-mission training of peacekeepers on SGBV, and (ii) evaluation of the impact of that training. Troop contributing countries (TCCs) and police contributing countries (PCCs) must step up to prepare mission staff and create new accountability mechanisms. U.S. training institutes and programs have a key role to play in coordinating the development of new training and evaluation mechanisms and ensuring that programs with a significant gender dimension are funded.

Victim assistance, identified by the U.N. as a priority, is an area in which the U.S. military has experience. Pentagon figures show that nearly one-third of women veterans say that they were victims of rape or assault while they were serving.¹ Commanders and leaders who have had experience dealing with this sensitive issue would be prepared to work with victims of SGBV around the world.² It is a skill-set possessed by qualified men and women. As the Zeid Report notes, “The presence of more women in a mission, especially at senior levels, will help to promote an environment that discourages sexual exploitation and abuse, particularly of the local population.”³

It is worth mentioning that combating SGBV generally involves improving the status of women in the host country and strengthening the local capacity to address discriminatory practices and their impact.⁴ Both UNSCR 1325 (in operational paragraphs 10 and 11) and UNSCR 1820 addressed the need of peacekeeping operations to combat SGBV in broad contexts.⁵ In the lead up to the adoption of UNSCR 1820, a wide range of information about SGBV in areas where peacekeepers work was collected and developed, including the Wilton Park Report.⁶ With the development of the new doctrine and considerable resources (including a recent inventory of best practices by UNACTION), peacekeeping operations work to address SGBV within the context of protection.⁷

¹ Nancy Gibbs, “Sexual Assaults on Female Soldiers: Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” *Time Magazine*, March, 2010, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1968110,00.html#ixzz1USkTwZse>.

² Kristen Cordell, “Combating Sexual and Gender-Based Violence: A Key Role for U.S. Women Peacekeepers,” *Open Democracy*, March 2009.

³ Prince Zeid Ra’ad Zeid Al-Hussein, *A Comprehensive Strategy to Eliminate Future Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, report to the U.N. Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, (U.N. document A/59/710, 2005), New York, March 2005, <http://www.un.org/depts/dpko/ctte/sea.htm>.

⁴ Sarah Martin, “Must Boys be Boys? Ending Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Peacekeeping Missions,” Washington, DC, Refugees International, 2005, <http://www.refintl.org/sites/default/files/MustBoysbeBoys.pdf>.

⁵ Security Council Resolution 1820 (2008) “Calls on all parties to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict.”

⁶ U.N. Development Fund for Women and U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *Women Targeted or Affected by Armed Conflict: What Role for Military Peacekeepers?* summary report of the Wilton Park Conference, South Downs, U.K., March 27-30, 2008.

⁷ U.N. Development Fund for Women and U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence – An Analytical Inventory of Peacekeeping Practice*, June 30, 2010, <http://www.stoprapenow.org/uploads/advocacyresources/1291722944.pdf>.

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Novel and forward-leaning programs such as Joint Protection Teams (deployed to MONUSCO in 2010) are increasing the overall technical capacity of peacekeeping missions on SGBV. This is a significant step forward, since deployment of gender units cannot be considered sufficient for ensuring protection of women and girls across the country.⁸

Building on UNSCR 1820, UNSCR 1888 called for improved early warning systems and data collection around SGBV.⁹ As a part of one of the most organized intelligence operations in the world, the U.S. military should investigate the advantages of supporting this development, specifically through the office of Margot Wallstrom, Special Advisor to the Secretary General on Sexual Violence. Monitoring and evaluation are key, and while agencies such as the U.N.'s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have figured out the formula, DPKO needs additional resources to follow suit. DOD should also consider the integration of new training modules developed by UNACTION, to reframe its own training on SGBV.

Meeting the Challenges of SEA in Peacekeeping

Among the most disturbing shortcomings of peacekeeping operations are the too frequently occurring incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) committed by U.N. peacekeeping forces. What could be more treacherous than peacekeepers turning on the civilians they were sent to protect? Many excellent reports have been written on this issue, and it is not the place of this Report to duplicate that work. However, in light of the gravity of this issue, this Report will summarize the U.N.'s efforts to respond to the perpetration of sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers operating under its authority and make recommendations for improvement.

⁸ The United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, *Ten Year Impact Study on the Implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325, (2001)*, (New York, October 2010).

⁹ U.N. Security Council, *Security Council Resolution 1888 (2009) [On Acts of Sexual Violence Against Civilians in Armed Conflicts]*, (U.N. document S/RES/1888, September 30, 2009).

Allegations and proof of sexual misconduct by some peacekeepers cast doubt on the legitimacy of U.N. peacekeeping and undermine the U.N. as a whole. U.S. citizens and their leaders appropriately demand remedial action. Some have gone so far as to call for a moratorium on new peacekeeping missions partially due to such “unconscionable acts of misconduct.”¹⁰

Past allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation by peacekeepers, especially in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Liberia, tarnished the credibility of the U.N. In 2004 widespread incidents of prostitution, rape, trades that involved sex for food or aid assistance, and exploitation of minors came to light.¹¹ This revealed a culture of impunity, domination, and lack of accountability that contributed to the perpetration and continuation of these egregious acts.¹²

In response, the U.N. Secretary-General announced in 2005 a “No Tolerance on Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Campaign.”¹³ DPKO’s Conduct and Discipline Unit was tasked with implementation of a three-tiered strategy of improved prevention, enforcement, and remedial action.¹⁴ Since then, changes in the terms and implementation of the Code of Conduct have increased peacekeeper buy-in and the accountability of leadership. For example, the U.N. may take action on prosecution in the instance that a host country fails to do so.¹⁵ However, success is built largely on mission-level planning, resources, and will. Many missions host Conduct and Discipline Teams (CDTs) who work closely with the Gender Advisor to provide induction training and code of conduct management.¹⁶

¹⁰ *United Nations Transparency, Accountability, and Reform Act of 2011*, H.R. 2829, Section 1001, 112th Congress, (August 30, 2011).

¹¹ Zeid, *A Comprehensive Strategy to Eliminate Future Sexual Exploitation*.

¹² Martin, “Must Boys be Boys?”

¹³ It stated, “We cannot tolerate even one instance of a United Nations peacekeeper victimizing the most vulnerable among us ... such behavior violates the fundamental ‘duty of care’ that United Nations peacekeepers owe to the very peoples they are sent to protect and serve. The basic policy is clear: zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse of any kind.”

¹⁴ U.N. Office of the Secretary General, *Bulletin 2003/13 on Sexual Abuse and Exploitation and Bulletin 2008/5 Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority*, New York, NY.

¹⁵ As mandated in the MOU: Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping, Operations and its Working Group on the 2007 resumed session, New York, June 11, 2007.

¹⁶ U.N. Office of Internal Oversight Services Conduct and Discipline Unit, see: cdu.unlb.org.

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These teams have launched outreach campaigns to ensure that the local population understands the process for filing an allegation and to call upon the U.N.'s partners (including NGOs) to report any allegations of which they become aware. In UNMIL, the Joint Program on SGBV introduced an internal awareness-raising campaign "Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse." As a result the number of SEA cases reported there declined significantly, as they have across U.N. peacekeeping operation missions since 2009.¹⁷ The success of the U.N.'s approach to addressing SEA among peacekeepers has led NATO to consult with U.N. officials on best practices.

U.N. peacekeeping troops come from the Member States, and the ultimate responsibility for punishing SEA perpetrators rests with the national governments of the offenders. The U.N. has strict protocols in place regarding SEA. If a U.N. staff member is the subject of an allegation, the U.N. investigates. If the accused perpetrator is a peacekeeping soldier, then the Member State can investigate or ask the U.N. to do so. If a Member State fails to investigate, then the U.N. will carry out an investigation on its own. Violations result in repatriating the perpetrators to their home countries to face legal repercussions and disciplinary measures. Furthermore, to increase transparency, the U.N. now issues quarterly press releases to publicize updated statistics regarding sexual exploitation and abuse cases in field missions.

The U.N. also provides assistance to victims through its sexual exploitation and abuse victim assistance mechanism in every country where it operates. This provides victims with access to the services they need, including medical, legal, psychosocial, and immediate care. One can learn more about how the U.N. responds to cases of sexual misconduct, at the website of the U.N.'s Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Task Force at <http://www.un.org/en/pseataaskforce/>.

Several best practice approaches have emerged, and we recommend that the United States use its votes and influence at the United Nations in furtherance of these:

¹⁷ According to the United Nations office of Internal Oversight Services Conduct and Discipline Unit, see: cdu.unlb.org.

- 1. Collaboration with host governments to build a strategic framework to address SGBV in national institutions** (e.g., MONUC's work with the DRC National Strategy on SGBV, which combines efforts of the government, donor community and senior U.N. leadership);¹⁸
- 2. Coordination of efforts through sub-groups and country-level thematic groups** (e.g., UNMIL's leadership of the U.N. Country Team Sub Group on SGBV which together efforts from U.N. Women, UNFPA and UNICEF on operational tasks including a gender sensitive DDDR);¹⁹
- 3. Build community capacity to sustain attention to SGBV within the national security sector** (e.g., strengthening the justice system through a new SGBV crimes units in Liberia, Child Protection Units in Haiti, and training for all judges and lawyers in Chad);²⁰
- 4. Raise awareness and support for local initiatives** (e.g., new domestic violence law by UNMIT in Timore-Leste and UNAMA's lobbying efforts for a CEDAW- relevant violence against women act).²¹

¹⁸ United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of Security Council Resolutions 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009)*, (U.N. document A/65/592-S/2010/604, November, 2010).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.* Signed into law by the Afghanistan parliament in 2009.

Author Biography



Kristen A. Cordell has served the United Nations in missions to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and Lebanon. Within these contexts she has advised on issues related to sexual and gender based violence, security sector reform, policy interventions for improved national capacities and empowerment strategies for women in post conflict contexts. She has authored several books and reports on the role of gender in post conflict reconstruction including: *Women and Nation Building* (RAND, 2007) and *Best Practices in Gender and Peacekeeping* (UN-DPKO, 2010). She has also worked on Gender Evaluation for the World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group. Ms. Cordell was heavily involved in the advocacy and passage of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1820, "Against the Use of Rape as a Tool of War," now being implemented across member states. From 2009 to 2010 she served as the Senior Gender Advisor for the Lebanon Field Office of UNRWA. Ms. Cordell holds a bachelor's degree in History and Political Science and a master's degree in Public Policy from Pepperdine University. In 2011 she was named as one of the Top 99 under 33 Foreign Policy Leaders, by YFPF. She currently supports Refugees International work on Gender and Peacekeeping in the Middle East and Africa.