

Women, Peace and Security: What's in a number?

By Joanna Hayter, Chief Executive Officer IWDA

If women, peace and security is part of your working life or institution's accountability then the numbers 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106 and 2117 are really important and meaningful to you. But let's be honest – most people have no idea what's behind these numbers and why they matter at all.

Resolutions and action in the last 100 days

In one week's time the UN Security Council will hold its annual Open Debate on Resolution 1325. The world's leaders will speak to their nation's commitment and actions in regard to women, peace and security, or UNSCR 1325: WPS as it is often abbreviated.



Julie Bishop (left), Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia and UN Security Council President during the month of September, chairs a high-level meeting on small arms on 26 September 2013. UN Photo/Amanda Voisard

Resolution 1325

Resolution 1325, adopted in 2000, was the first ever resolution from the Security Council that linked women's experiences of conflict to the international peace and security agenda. It is both a framework and a tool. It affirms women's participation in decision making and peace processes including conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction. It seeks to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations. It addresses the prevention of gender based violence and the protection of women and girls, and it integrates gender analysis into all UN reporting and actions.

Defining security

The women, peace and security agenda, however, is challenged by narrow definitions of security and lower prioritisation given to conflict prevention. To date, the debate has focused on reconstruction and rehabilitation or humanitarian operations during and/or post conflict. This limited focus is a problem; we know that security is more complex than that. However, the addition of subsequent resolutions and a steady lobby from civil society to incorporate a robust gender perspective into peace and security is

opening the discussion beyond militarism and national or collective security to a context of human security. This broader definition of security embraces:

- △ Justice or impunity
- △ Personal and community security and the elimination of violence against women
- △ Food and health security
- △ Economic and political security
- △ Environmental or cross border security; and of course,
- △ Women's full inclusion in all negotiation and decision making processes, with men as partners in promoting women's participation.

Forward momentum

This year has already seen significant advances in women, peace and security:

On September 26th 2013, Resolution 2117 saw the Security Council's 7,036th meeting adopt its first-ever resolution dedicated to the question of **small arms and light weapons**. It is importantly aligned with the Global Arms Trade Treaty established in April this year. For states emerging from conflict such as Timor-Leste, Bougainville, Papua New Guinea or Solomon Islands, it is clear the proliferation and misuse of conventional small arms and light weapons continue to be used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children. Statements from the Council consistently captured that these weapons pose a grave threat to civilians, to peacekeepers, to humanitarian workers and to civil society organisations. Their proliferation and misuse can undermine the rule of law and human rights, and destroy efforts to rebuild broken societies.



The UN Security Council at its meeting marking the 10th anniversary of landmark resolution 1325 on women in peace and security, in 2010. UN Photo/Paulo Filgueiras

Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Security Council President for September, Julie Bishop launched the meeting by saying "The proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons threatened peace and drove conflict in many of the countries under the Council's consideration. It was an issue that crossed much of that body's work, from sanctions, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, to the women, peace and security agenda, yet the Council had not considered it for more than five years. It is therefore entirely appropriate that we do so today."

On August 21st 2013, women leaders from across our nation established the Australian Civil Society Coalition on Women, Peace and Security with the sole purpose to support the implementation of the Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

On June 24th 2013, Resolution 2106 to address sexual violence in conflict was adopted by the Security Council at its 6,984th meeting. It affirms that women's political, social and economic

empowerment, gender equality and the enlistment of men and boys in the effort to combat all forms of violence against women are central to long-term efforts to prevent sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations. It also underlines the important roles that civil society organisations, including women's organisations, and networks can play in enhancing community-level protection against sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations and supporting survivors in accessing justice and reparations.

Australia – what can we do?

One year on from the introduction of Australia's National Action Plan, our international opportunities are apparent. As a nation, we can:

1. Maintain Australia's emphasis on WPS staying at the forefront of the UNSC agenda both during Australia's Presidency and in all relevant deliberations throughout the period of Australia's seat on the Security Council and identify an ongoing advisory group of civil society representatives whose core business is WPS
2. Sustain funding to international development agencies whose core business is women's safety and security linked to conflict prevention and resolution, peace building, transitional justice and women's rights
3. Sustain the government commitment to the Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development Initiative to accelerate women's leadership in peace and security policy and planning in our region
4. Continue to collaborate in and support the implementation of Pacific Regional Action Plan through civil society networks and political, diplomatic and official channels
5. Continue to improve embedding the WPS agenda in the Australian government's approach to human resource management for defence, AFP and deployed personnel
6. Resource evidence gathering, information exchange and dialogue with wider networks such as the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict or the WPS Academic Collective
7. Contribute to shaping how peace and security are defined and prosecuted in the Proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Post- 2015 Development Agenda and through other regional or national plans and policy development for Women's Empowerment, Gender Equality, Peace and Security in countries such as Bougainville, Burma or Fiji.

What you can do

As an individual, you can:

1. Write to your political representative now to let them know that funding for women, peace and security must be a vital part of Australia's foreign aid and security budgets
2. Promote and transfer knowledge to your networks about agencies like IWDA, whose work prioritises safety and security for women and girls. [Follow IWDA on Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).
3. Track the monitoring of the UN system in relation to WPS at www.peacewomen.org and share this information to increase public support and momentum
4. Donate your time, money or expertise to strengthen international dialogue between civil society organisations, government and the UN as we work towards the post 2015 Development Goals.
5. Watch the following video by Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF International) and share it to champion a wider definition of security: And keep an eye out on IWDA's website for a report titled "Pacific Peacewomen's Perspective on the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security" to be launched ahead of the 13th anniversary of the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (October 31st) which will highlight women, peace and security narratives from Fiji, Solomon Islands, Bougainville and Tonga and link these to the key pillars of the

action plan.

Want more numbers?

6. 4444Take a look at these mutually reinforcing resolutions for Women, Peace and Security:

1999 – [1265](#)

2000 – [1296](#), [1325](#)

2005 – [1612](#), [1624](#)

2006 – [1738](#)

2008 – [1820](#)

2009 – [1882](#), [1888](#), [1889](#), [1894](#)

2010 – [1960](#)

2011 – [1998](#)

2012 – [2068](#)

2013 – [2106](#),