



MAINSTREAMING RESOLUTION 1325 ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY – ARE WE THERE YET?

By Renee Black

ABSTRACT

In October 2000, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 calling for women's participation in peace processes, the promotion of women's rights, and the protection of women from violence. Since then, however, advocates argue integration of these principles has been weakly implemented and that only a third of resolutions contain a reference to a gender perspective. This brief re-examines the need for this resolution, analyzes how and in what ways this resolution has diffused into the discourse at the Security Council, and identifies policy implications at the international level, and for Canada looking forward.

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INTRODUCTION

In October 2000, the United Nations (UN) Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace & Security, which acknowledged for the first time “the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women, recognized the under-valued and under-utilized contributions women make to conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peace-building, and stressed the importance of their equal and full participation as active agents in peace and security” (NGO Working Group on Women, Peace & Security).

However, in the nine years since the adoption of this landmark resolution, its influence remains unclear and important questions remain over what actions are needed to address the weaknesses in its implementation. One NGO project called Resolution Watch monitors the influence of 1325 on Security Council discourse by analyzing resolution language for 19 countries on the Department of Peacekeeping Operations agenda. (See Table 4)



They find that “the integration of a gender perspective and the provisions of 1325 have been sporadic and slow; many resolutions contain no references to women or a gender perspective,” and that only a third refer in some capacity to women or gender.” While there is clearly a gap in the Security Council’s commitment to 1325, this analysis fails to answer questions that might help to strengthen policy responses. For example, has this behaviour shifted over time? Are certain aspects of 1325 more prevalent than others? Are certain types of conflict more likely to elicit a reference to 1325 than others? What does this demonstrate about the extent to which 1325 has become mainstreamed in the discourse of conflict-specific resolutions? This brief reviews the need for Resolutions 1325, analyzes patterns found in the discourse of Security Council language in order to answer some of questions listed above, and highlights the policy relevance of 1325 to Canada today.

UNDERSTANDING THE NEED FOR 1325

Recognition of the need for a specific resolution dedicated to addressing the situation of women in armed conflict has resulted from over two decades of lobbying by women’s activists in conflict-affected countries. Yet, the attention drawn to the impact of conflict on women during several conflicts in the 1990s likely provided critical momentum for the issue. In both Rwandan and Bosnia, women became targets of systematic campaigns of sexual violence. The subsequent expansion of the jurisprudence arising from the establishment of international criminal tribunals in Bosnia and Rwanda, and subsequently the International Criminal Court in 1998, have been important steps in advancing the situation of women in these two countries in particular and in international law more broadly. These changes include the recognition that “rape was used as a form of torture and sexual organs of both men and women were deliberately, brutally violated.”

In the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide, women unexpectedly represented 70% of the population, and were forced to assume non-traditional roles. Despite laws that limited access to formal employment, property ownership and even control over their own children, women immediately began to head households, act as community leaders and family providers, and help to address the needs of devastated communities, including: burying the dead, finding homes for nearly 500,000 orphans, leading reconstruction efforts and becoming the most productive segment of the population (Powley). They also contributed to community security by convincing relatives on both sides of the conflict to return from hiding or refuge in other countries.



Many Rwandans perceive women to be better at reconciliation and less corrupt than men (Powley), which has likely been a contributing factor to the election of 55% women in the Rwandan parliament today.

Liberia has also witnessed a particularly dramatic shift in women's political participation. It is the first African country to elect a female head of state, it hosts one of only two female-led UN missions, and it has hosted the first and second ever all-female UN peacekeeping police units. Female enrolment in the Liberian National Police tripled following the deployment of these units. Furthermore, Liberia has a female-led Security Sector that includes a specialized sexual crimes unit. The presence of this unit has helped to increase social trust in the police in the communities where they serve. This, in turn, has resulted in increased reporting rates, which consequently have led to a decline in sexual violence crimes.

Liberia also recently hosted an international Colloquium on Women's Leadership in partnership with Finland, which culminated in the Monrovia Declaration and Call to Action on Resolution 1325. Moreover, just as the conflicts that affected these countries impacted on neighbouring countries, there is also evidence that positive advancements for women in Liberia and Rwanda are impacting on the situation of women in neighbouring countries such as Sierra Leone and Burundi.

Despite these successes, the saliency of 1325 is weak outside of key advocacy circles, women's groups, and selected international organizations, as evidenced by the fact that many programs and policies continue to fail to adequately consider the situation of women. For example, in post-conflict Sierra Leone – where forcibly-recruited women made up 25% of combatants – demobilization and reintegration programs failed to recognize the differentiated impacts of the conflict on women, including that many communities rejected returning women. This, in turn, forced many women to turn to prostitution as a source of income and survival. According to an Amnesty International report written six years after the conflict, "rebel wives," continue to be "targeted for discrimination and exclusion and [are] denied access to health care, jobs and schools."

More generally, reintegration assistance tends to favour former combatants returning to communities who are generally *male*, while *females* who may have been victims of reintegrating combatants receive little or no assistance.



Although such reintegration assistance for former combatants remains a critical aspect of peacebuilding strategies, these policies have potential to reinforce existing disparities and can even be perceived by some as rewards for their role in the conflict.

The UN continues to strengthen its reintegration programs based on this and other experiences, however there are many other examples of the failure to consider gender perspectives in policy development. The key is that women's issues should not be considered separately as a distinct issue, and prioritized above or below other considerations; rather, emphasis needs to be placed on the idea that gender perspectives within policy analysis should become an integral part of *all* decision-making.

While there is a much broader recognition today of this need, many political actors continue to fail to see the value of including women or lack the political will to implement the principles upheld in 1325. As Swedish diplomat Pierre Schori explains, "after childbirth, war-making has possibly been the most segregated of activities along gender lines. Armed forces and military factions are generally male-dominated institutions, while women and girls face most risks and dangers. Yet, women are generally absent from official initiatives to end conflicts and their voices are missing from decisions on priorities in peace processes."

Resolution 1325 challenges historical characterizations of women as victims, and instead calls for their active participation in conflict resolution. Schori emphasizes that 1325 is not an end, but rather the beginning of a process that will gradually help to reduce the gap in inequalities that exist between men and women at all levels of society. Closing this gender gap will require considerable change, including through legal reform, effective law enforcement, normalizing the practice of gender mainstreaming, and employing the discourse of 1325 to ensure that women are able to effectively participate in decision-making processes.

MAINSTREAMING RESOLUTION 1325?

This section examines how Resolution 1325 has influenced Security Council discourse by examining the language of Security Council resolutions over a 10-year period. This analysis is broken down into two segments.

In the first segment, 315 resolutions¹ adopted between October 31, 2000 and October 31, 2008, are analyzed according to the following distinctions:



- References to 1325, which can either be *direct*, in that 1325 is specifically mentioned, or *indirect*, meaning that 1325 language is used but is not specifically mentioned.
- Each resolution is examined for the presence of one or more of 18 possible 1325-related themes (See Table 1).²
- Each theme is categorized by one of the three key pillars: the *participation* of women at all levels of decision-making; *prevention* through the promotion women's human rights, and; the *protection* of women from harm.

In the second segment, 73 resolutions adopted between October 31 1998 and October 31st 2000 with reference to the same countries, are analyzed for their inclusion of five key words – “mother,” “girl,” “woman,” “female” and “gender” – that indicate references to women before the adoption of 1325.

The analysis of these two data sets will help to show how references to women have shifted over time, which themes and patterns are more and less likely to emerge, and what shifts are occurring at a country level.

The following are the major findings resulting from this analysis:

| Rank | Theme | Pillar | Graph Code |
|------|--|---------------|------------|
| 1 | General Reference to 1325 | Prevention | 1325 |
| 2 | Peacekeeping Operations | Prevention | PKO |
| 3 | Conflict Prevention & Resolution | Participation | CPR |
| 4 | Rule of Law & Human Rights: Institutions and Mechanisms | Prevention | ROL |
| 5 | Civil Society | Participation | CS |
| 6 | Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration, Resettlement and Repatriations | Prevention | DDR |
| 7 | Peace Negotiations & Agreements | Participation | PN&A |
| 8 | Constitution, Justice and Security Sector Reform | Participation | SSR |
| 9 | Governance & Electoral Processes | Participation | GEP |
| 10 | Reporting by the Secretary General | Prevention | UNSG |
| 11 | Sexual Exploitation & Abuse | Protection | SEA |
| 12 | Training of UN Personnel | Prevention | TUNP |
| 13 | Violations of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law | Protection | VHR |
| 14 | Refugees & Internally Displaced Persons | Protection | IDP |
| 15 | Protection of Civilians & Humanitarian Assistance | Protection | PCHA |
| 16 | *Sexual and Gender-Based Violence | Protection | SGBV |
| 17 | *Gender Equality & Post-Conflict Reconstruction | Participation | GE |
| 18 | *AIDS/ HIV | Protection | AIDS |

* Do not appear in the NGO Working Group checklist

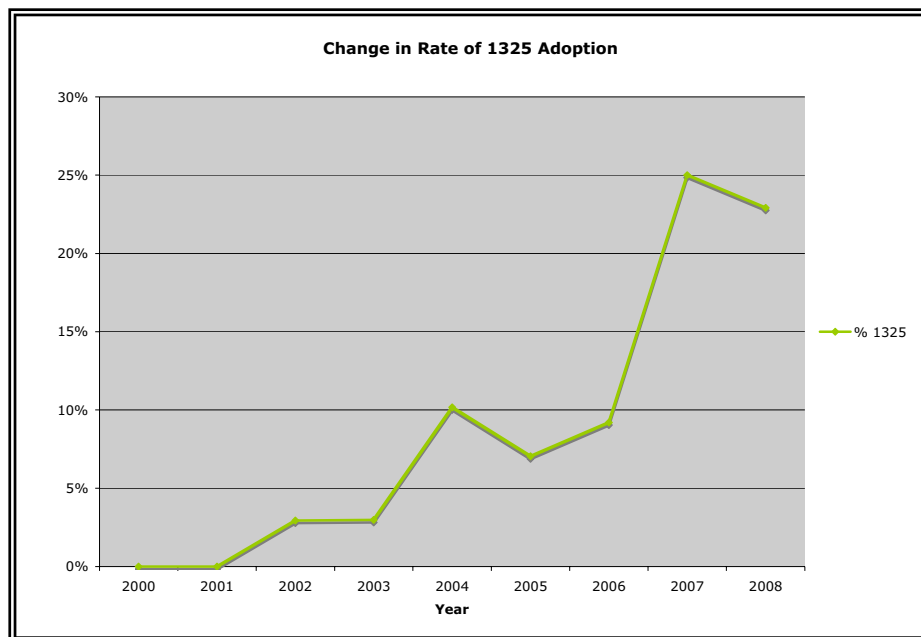
Table 1: 1325 Themes

Note: Each theme can actually have element of any of the pillars, however each has a dominant focus, and that is what has been used here to classify each theme.



TEMPORAL PATTERNS

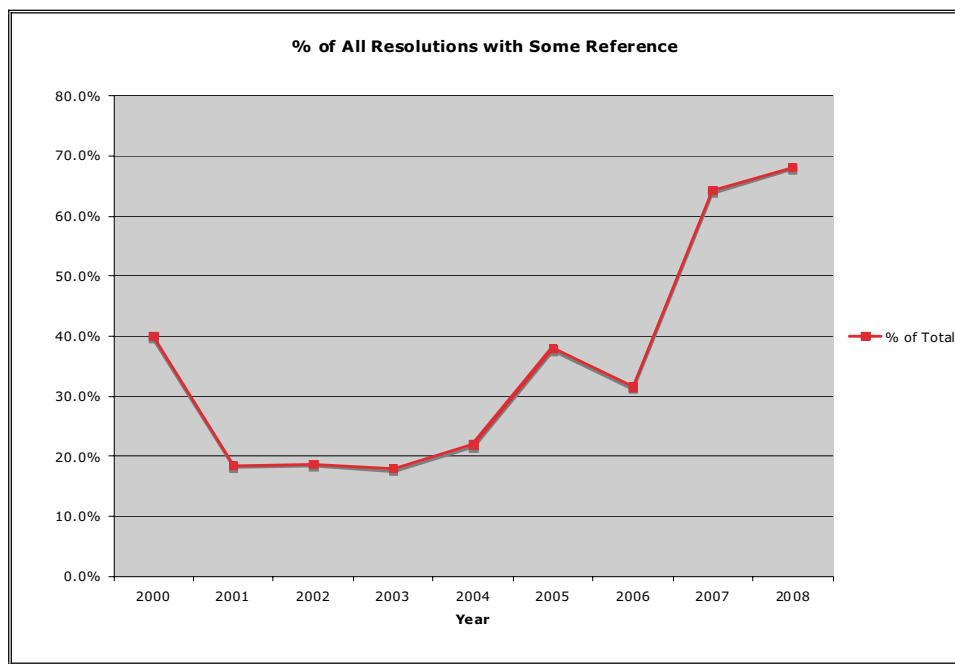
Direct references to 1325 can be found in 15% of all resolutions and have grown slowly over time, remaining under 11% until 2006 and jumping to 25% only in 2007. (See Graph 1). While only 34% of all resolutions contain either a direct or indirect reference to 1325, referencing has generally increased since 2001. Prior to 2005, references can be found in less than 22% of resolutions, yet this rose to 40% in 2005, and then to 64% and 68% in 2007 and 2008 respectively. (See Graph 2 and Table 2)



Graph 1: % Change in Theme #1 (1325-Specific Reference) Since October 31, 2000

| Year | Total # of Resolutions | # of Resolutions w Reference | % of All Resolutions |
|--------------|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| 2000 | 5 | 2 | 40.0% |
| 2001 | 27 | 5 | 18.5% |
| 2002 | 32 | 6 | 18.8% |
| 2003 | 39 | 7 | 17.9% |
| 2004 | 41 | 9 | 22.0% |
| 2005 | 50 | 19 | 38.0% |
| 2006 | 57 | 18 | 31.6% |
| 2007 | 42 | 27 | 64.3% |
| 2008 | 22 | 15 | 68.2% |
| Total | 315 | 108 | 34.3% |

Table 2: Change in Thematic Reference since October 31, 2000



Graph 2: % Change in All Thematic References since October 31, 2000

Of the 73 Security Council Resolutions analyzed between October 31, 1998 and October 31, 2000, seven (less than 10%) contained one of the five key words, six of which refer to women as victims or in need of protection while one, UNSCR 1270, calls for “gender-related provisions” for UN personnel training protocols. None of these resolutions calls for the participation of women.

| Year | # of Resolutions | # of References | % of References |
|--------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1998 | 6 | 1 | 16.7% |
| 1999 | 38 | 5 | 13.2% |
| 2000 | 29 | 1 | 3.4% |
| Totals | 73 | 7 | 9.6% |

Table 3: Resolutions & References Prior to 1325 (PW countries only)



THEMATIC PATTERNS

The themes most likely to be referenced tend to refer to the protection of women, or to procedural matters, which fall under the prevention pillar (e.g. training for UN personnel). None of the top fives themes focus on the participation of women in decision-making processes. (See Table 3) Themes that specifically address the participation of women, including Governance & Electoral Processes, Constitution, Justice & Security Sector Reform and Conflict Prevention & Peacebuilding, are among those least likely to be referenced.

| Rank | Theme | # of References | % of Resolutions |
|------|---|-----------------|------------------|
| 1 | Sexual Exploitation & Abuse | 55 | 14.3% |
| 2 | UN Secretary General Reporting | 53 | 13.8% |
| 3 | Reference to 1325 | 42 | 10.9% |
| 4 | Training by UN Peacekeepers | 36 | 9.4% |
| 5 | Sexual & Gender-Based Violence | 28 | 7.3% |
| 6 | Protection of Civilians & Humanitarian Assistance | 27 | 7.0% |
| 7 | Rule of Law & Human Rights | 26 | 6.8% |
| 8 | Violence Against Human Rights | 25 | 6.5% |
| 9 | Peacekeeping Operations | 20 | 5.2% |
| 10 | Gender Equality & Post-Conflict Reconstruction | 15 | 3.9% |
| 11 | Demobilization, Disarmament, Reintegration, Resettlement & Repatriation | 12 | 3.1% |
| 12 | Conflict Prevention & Peacebuilding | 12 | 3.1% |
| 13 | Constitution, Justice & Security Sector Reform | 10 | 2.6% |
| 14 | Civil Society | 9 | 2.3% |
| 15 | Governance & Electoral Processes | 8 | 2.1% |
| 16 | Refugees & Internally Displaced Persons | 3 | 0.8% |
| 17 | Peace Negotiations & Agreements | 0 | 0.0% |
| 18 | HIV/ AIDS | 0 | 0.0% |

Table 4: Number and Percent of Thematic Reference

CONFLICT-SPECIFIC PATTERNS

Eight of the 19 countries analyzed have resolutions referring to over half (nine) of the possible 18 themes, with Sudan having resolutions reflecting 15 of the possible 18 different themes.

There is evidence of a strong positive correlation between the number of resolutions adopted for a given country and the number of themes represented throughout that country's set of resolutions.

Conflicts with highly complex peacekeeping missions tend to reference a greater number of themes, which is intuitively consistent given that complex operations are more likely to have more granular levels of reporting and more gender specialists.



There appears to be a positive correlation between the number of resolutions adopted by a particular conflict and the number of resolutions referencing 1325 directly or indirectly. Six countries – Afghanistan, Burundi, Golan Heights, Haiti, Sudan and Sierra Leone – have over 40% of country-specific resolutions containing some reference to 1325 or a 1325 theme. Countries with high numbers of resolutions and considerable 1325 references have typically experienced disturbing histories of violence against women, including high levels of rape by armed actors in countries with repressive governments and patriarchal traditions.

This is proven to be true in Afghanistan, the DRC, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Sudan and suggests a reactive rather than proactive response.

| Country | # of Resolutions | # of Theme Types | # of Resolutions with Reference to 1325 | % of Resolutions with Reference to 1325 |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------|---|---|
| Sudan | 24 | 15 | 12 | 50.0% |
| Sierra Leone | 19 | 14 | 9 | 47.4% |
| Burundi | 10 | 12 | 4 | 40.0% |
| Cote d'Ivoire | 29 | 12 | 9 | 31.0% |
| Haiti | 9 | 12 | 5 | 55.6% |
| Liberia | 29 | 11 | 8 | 27.6% |
| DRC | 42 | 10 | 13 | 31.0% |
| Timor-Leste | 14 | 10 | 4 | 28.6% |
| Afghanistan | 26 | 7 | 12 | 46.2% |
| Chad & CAR | 2 | 3 | 2 | 100.0% |
| Cyprus | 17 | 3 | 6 | 35.3% |
| Ethiopia & Eritrea | 21 | 3 | 1 | 4.8% |
| Georgia | 16 | 3 | 5 | 31.3% |
| Lebanon | 19 | 3 | 6 | 31.6% |
| W. Sahara | 22 | 3 | 5 | 22.7% |
| Golan Heights | 16 | 2 | 7 | 43.8% |
| India & Pakistan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Kosovo | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Middle East | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Total | 315 | | 108 | |

Table 5: # and % of Resolutions Reference By Country, Theme Types

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

The above analysis demonstrates that references to women in conflict have been sporadic and inconsistent, and have tended to refer to women as victims, rather than referring to the need for gender perspectives or for calling for greater participation of women in decision-making processes.



Before the adoption of 1325, references to women were generic and were not directed at specific actors. The adoption of 1325 resulted in a significant increase in the number of resolutions that refer to women. While referencing remained slow up until 2005, the proportion significantly increased from 2006 onward, suggesting that gender mainstreaming is becoming more normalized within the Security Council. It is unclear whether this shift has been the result of an internal intervention; yet, it is certainly attributable, in part, to sustained advocacy of NGOs and UN entities, and does not necessarily indicate that the Security Council itself has internalized gender considerations into operational behaviour.

However, there are three significant concerns that emerge from this analysis. First, the percentage of direct references has reached only 25% of all resolutions even by 2008. Second, conflicts with the highest proportion of references tend to be characterized by frequent instances of violence against women. A cursory glance also find that these conflicts are host to complex peace operations, suggesting that high rates of victimization and mission types are possible drivers for high referencing rates. Third, the themes most frequently referenced tend to refer to women as victims rather than as active agents in the peacebuilding process. The latter two findings point to reactive versus proactive responses to addressing the situation of women, and highlight critical weaknesses in the Security Council's commitment to key aspects of 1325. Furthermore, while there appears to be increasing recognition that prevention is the cheaper and more effective response, this recognition has yet to translate into political will and compelling action.

RESOLUTION 1325 AND CANADIAN POLICY

There are two high-level policy considerations for Canada with respect to 1325.

The first involves fulfilling the Secretary-General's October 2004 request to all countries to develop National Action Plans (NAP) on Women, Peace & Security. At least 14 countries (mostly European states), have developed NAPs to date, and several more are currently developing NAPs. Donors typically use NAPs to build coherent cross-departmental strategies on 1325 into the 3D's (diplomacy, development and defense) of foreign policy platforms.



For conflict-affected countries, there tends to be a greater focus on the domestic implementation of 1325. For example, many countries focus on increasing the participation of women in post-conflict governance. Interestingly, some donor countries are choosing to create their NAPs in tandem with post-conflict countries. For instance, Ireland is collaborating with both Timor-Leste and Liberia to inform the development of its NAP.

Curiously, there is evidence that a Canadian NAP was developed under the Martin administration, (PeaceWomen) however it was never officially launched and little is known about its contents. Advocacy groups may be biding time and waiting for the fall of the Harper government before again pursuing this agenda in a more aggressive manner, perhaps out of concern that any plan under the Harper government would reflect a watered down, 'lowest common denominator' approach.

However since June 2008, the Security Council has adopted three more resolutions (1820, 1888 and 1889) on the women peace and security agenda, which, among other things, reinforce calls for the development of NAPs, mandate the appointment of a Special Representative to the Secretary-General on sexual violence, and call for establishment of global indicators on women, peace and security. These developments are creating important momentum at the UN and have some potential to encourage Canada to reconsider its position.

The second matter relates to UN reform agenda, which included four possible proposals specifically aimed at strengthening strategic coherence in the UN's delivery of funds, services and programs related to women. The most ambitious of these proposals, known as the Composite model, called for the development of a unified international women's agency, endowed with both a policy and operational branch. There is very limited awareness in Canada about this aspect of UN reform or about Canada's role in this process. But in fact, Canada's Mission to the UN has played a key leadership role in building support among member-states for this agenda. The result of these and other efforts was the adoption on September 14, 2009 of a General Assembly Resolution mandating the Secretary-General to deliver a proposal for the establishment of this new entity within the next six months. (INSTRAW)



In the meantime, there are many questions that Canada must ask itself. For one, while Canada is advocating for significant change in the status of women abroad, the participation of women in Canadian parliaments has only risen from 20.6% and 22.1% in the last 12 years. (Cool) This stagnation has led Canada to drop from 21st to 48th in female parliamentary representation worldwide. (IPU) Although most Canadian political parties have committed to having more women campaign in elections, this has yet to translate into stronger representation. If Canada expects to be a credible advocate for participation policies overseas, surely questions of its own situation and the barriers to women's effective participation at home warrant higher priority.

Canada is also playing a critical role in Afghanistan, yet Canada's application of Resolution 1325 in the Afghan context is vague at best. While there are a number of projects that focus on gender equality, there is limited evidence that 1325 is informing or driving these projects. Participation is not strongly emphasized, and while there is evidence that gender perspectives are important to the policy development process at the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the programs identified tend to focus on health and education.

Afghan women, particularly those in rural areas, continue to face monumental challenges. Sixty percent of Afghan girls under the legal age of 16 are forced into arranged marriages and are immediately removed from school, contributing to Afghanistan's 80% female illiteracy rate (The Economist). The majority of women face domestic violence and sexual harassment, which severely restricts their ability to participate in political life. According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Programme Manager Gender Advisor Indai Sajor, even collecting data on sexual violence in many communities is nearly impossible due to threats to victims and human rights defenders, cultural traditions that encourage women's silence, ineffective rule of law and systematic denial of women's political participation. Sajor explains that, "it is not just about documenting sexual violence but also understanding why women do not want their sufferings documented." As PeaceWomen explain, "the issues of participation and violence are inextricably linked – sexual violence is both a cause and consequence of low levels of women's participation in all decision-making and participation in day-to-day life. Sexual violence does more than discourage political engagement, sexual violence holds communities hostage and prevents access to markets, water-points and schools." (Cook)



The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and Canadian Forces are also working on other important areas such as helping to professionalize the Afghan security sector through training on women's issues and recruiting female officers. Yet neither the lessons learned in Liberia, nor the calls from the Secretary-General and the Security Council to deploy more female troops seem to be informing Canada's deployment strategy, with women representing only 10% of personnel deployed to Afghanistan since 2004.

A 2008 RAND report presented to the Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, finds "little evidence that the terms of UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security are taken seriously in Afghanistan" and many view "that cultural change on issues like gender discrimination will take generations." While there may be truth to this statement, it should only strengthen the argument for the need for a more unified and coherent strategy aimed at fully implementing 1325. Such a strategy must focus on understanding and strategically addressing the barriers that prevent women from participating in public life in order to drive sustainable change for Afghan women and women around the world.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Renee Black completed a Masters at the University of Ottawa's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs in April 2009. She spent six months in New York doing research on the Women, Peace & Security agenda, two of which were spent interning with the United Nations in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. She is presently consulting with UNIFEM. Renee's research interests include: the role of media in conflict; transitional justice mechanisms; resources and conflict; international institutions; transnational activism and global policy development. Renee previously completed Honors Commerce at Dalhousie and worked as a Business Analyst on IT projects for over seven years.

ENDNOTES

¹ Note: The PeaceWomen data set contains a number of discrepancies, which are outlined in the appendix of an extended version of this article, which can be found at the Journal of Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary.

² Note: These themes are largely derived from a 1325 Checklist developed by the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace & Security.



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