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**Activities report from the Office of Gender Affairs
(OGA) of the United Nations Organization Mission
in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
(MONUC)**

Kinshasa, 10 January 2003

The aim of this paper is to give a comprehensive review of the activities of the OGA using concrete examples to foster a better understanding of its role and function in a peacekeeping environment.
[Activities review: March-December 2002]

Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)

The Security Council... “5. Expresses its willingness to **incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations** and urges the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component”.

Security Council Resolution 1445 (2002) MONUC

The Security Council... “12. Calls upon **MONUC to pay special attention in carrying out its mandate to all aspects relating to gender perspective**, in accordance with resolution 1325 (2000), as well as to the protection and reintegration of children, in accordance with resolution 1379 (2001)”.

The Security Council...”19. Calls on **all parties to pay special attention to all aspects relating to gender**, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), and to the protection of children, in accordance with resolution 1379 (2001)”.

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Background

The Senior Gender Advisor, Ms. Amy Smythe, from Sierra Leone, took up her post in mid-March, 2002. MONUC has been operating since 1999 (SC resolution 1258 of 6 August 1999). A Gender Affairs Officer joined her in June 2002.

On 25 March 2002, the MONUC Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) sent a Memorandum to inform all Section Chiefs and Officers-in-Charge of the appointment of the Senior Gender Advisor to MONUC, including her Terms of Reference (see attached in Annex). The OGA has two strategies: **one internal** to MONUC as an institution of the UN and **one external** to MONUC, interfacing with different groups of the civil society, the Government, UN agencies and the international community.

As of 31 December 2002, the OGA consists of the Senior Gender Advisor at P5 level who reports directly to MONUC's Deputy SRSG; one Gender Affairs Officer at P3 level; two United Nations Volunteers (one female Information Officer and one male Research and Training Officer); one local administrative assistant. **It functions without a budget for developing its activities.**

Current activities

1. Gender Awareness:

1.1. Contacts within MONUC:

The Senior Gender Adviser spent time establishing contacts with her colleagues in all MONUC sections, i.e. military, Civilian police (Civpol), civilian personnel in all substantive areas as well as with members of the international community and agencies, Government and civil society in Kinshasa. Using Resolution 1325 (2000), **she explains the scope of her mandate and function within the mission as well as with outside partners.**

In this regard, the OGA created a mission-wide Gender Working Group that includes civilians and military at headquarters in Kinshasa and in the sectors¹ with a goal to assess the gender dimensions in MONUC's work.

1.2. Mission to Kisangani and Goma:

The Senior Gender Adviser visited the towns of Kisangani and Goma situated in the East to promote gender awareness and explain the strategy of gender mainstreaming to MONUC staff based in the field. With Kisangani and Goma being occupied by the rebel group RCD, the OGA thought that it would be necessary to approach the MONUC staff

¹ The country is divided into four sectors outside Kinshasa where the mission has opened offices and deployed civilian staff and military personnel.

the authorities of Eastern DRC as well as the local population to build bridges between the capital Kinshasa - where the OGA is based - and the rest of the country.

In Kisangani, the Senior Gender Advisor used this opportunity to talk to a group of 54 local police officers, including two women, and **she emphasized the scope of violence against women in the East as well as the impact of armed conflicts on women and girls** as highlighted in a Human Rights Watch report² and a publication by the International Center for Human Rights and Democratic Development³. The Senior Gender Advisor also met with the Governor of the Eastern Province together with a MONUC Political Affairs Officer and the Human Rights team based in Kisangani. Her participation in a UN inter-agencies meeting of heads of mission operating in Kisangani was also used to sensitize colleagues in the UN system to the importance of not only having projects targeting women but of having a gender perspective in the implementation of all decisions and activities in the field. At a capacity-building workshop funded by UNDP/UNOPS for local NGOs at which well over eighty women and men participated from the civil society organizations dealing with women and children, the Senior Gender Advisor was given the opportunity to speak about MONUC mandate in the DRC as well as Resolution 1325 leading to the setting up of a Gender Office within the mission.

Comments: the main concerns raised in the interaction of the Senior Gender Adviser in Kisangani with different interlocutors among the UN, NGOs as well as groups of the civil society, including women's groups, included a weak institutional framework in the civil society in spite of progresses made in the past years; the civil society not being able to raise its voice in the peace process due to the present situation of conflict in the East and problems in moving around freely and meeting because of security concerns; lack of vehicles and communication facilities; trafficking in women/girls, prostitution; child soldiers; high level of human rights violation; poverty; unemployment; a great need for leadership training and political strategies to enable women to participate in the peace process in an official capacity.

2. Working with local groups of the civil society (outreach activities):

2.1. Follow-up of the peace process:

a) As part of its mandate to interface with civil society organizations and in order to mobilize efforts around the peace process, the OGA hosted a **one-day workshop on the peace process** on 2 August 2002. Twenty-four leaders of an umbrella of organizations, journalists and religious organizations, the President of Civil Society and Ministry of Social Welfare and Family officials were invited to an exchange of views on the theme "Peace in the DRC". The objectives of the gathering included information sharing and

² Human Rights Watch, "The War within the War", Sexual Violence against Women and Girls in Eastern Congo, June 2002, 128 pages.

³ Lisette Banza Mbombo and Christian Hemedi Bayolo, "Women's Rights Violations during the conflict the Democratic Republic of the Congo", from August 2, 1998 to September 30, 2001, International Center for Human Rights and Democratic Development, 2002.

researching strategies to ensure maximum participation of all in articulating issues in the peace process.

Comments: one of the conclusions of the one-day gathering was that, throughout the political events, the role of Congolese women has evolved from one of full participation before the colonial era to one of marginalization in the colonial era leading to powerlessness, to almost total exclusion from decision-making levels. Participants agree that attempts to involve women in public life have served only a symbolic purpose in a lot of instances. One major outcome of this session was the agreement by participants to create a Plan of Action together with other members of their various networks, with a strategy that would seek to engage both men and women from various walks of life in ongoing reflection leading to full and better balanced participation in public life.

b) Different meetings were held with civil society representatives on the organization and budgeting of a **peace campaign around Resolution 1325 and the Nairobi declaration** in schools, Universities and Churches with an accompanying media campaign. The OG facilitated donor contacts with the Belgian Embassy in Kinshasa, and also got in touch with the Canadian Embassy, USAID, CARE International and the EU delegation.

c) Groups of the civil society met with Mr. Mustapha Niasse, the SG's Special Envoy on 13 November. They handed over a memorandum reminding him of the SC Resolution 1325 on women's participation in decision-making and peaceful resolution of conflicts. On 3 December, groups of women presented a technical paper on the new Congolese Constitution to the Constitution Committee and copied it to the Mediator, the Facilitator, the President of the African Union and President Mbeki of South Africa.

In a related event, the civil society of South Kivu in Bukavu organized a **meeting of 25 women leaders** on 20 and 21 November at the initiative of the Réseau des Femmes pour la Défense des Droits et la Paix (Women Network for the Defense of Rights and Peace). The women wrote an open letter to the delegates of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and Special Envoy Mr. Niasse. They also distributed a position paper on the plans for the transitional government emphasizing good governance (30% of women represented in government; mechanism to stop human rights violations and to treat sexual violence as war crime; proposed names for women candidates).

d) La Dynamique des femmes politiques au Congo démocratique, DYNAFEP (Dynamique of political women in the Democratic Congo) organized a seminar on 6 December to launch the organization officially. The women's group had worked since January 2001, **unofficially lobbying and trying to ensure women's participation in the parties of the political opposition**. At the moment the organization's main objective is to advocate and lobby for the participation of women in the political process, and its membership consists of women from at least twenty political parties. DYNAFEP had sent 12 women to participate in the Pretoria talks in November. After the peace talks their next focus will be elections (emphasis will be on civic education programmes for women in preparation for elections referring to the resolutions of the Sun City Electoral Commission).

2.2. **International Day for Peace, 21 September 2002:**

The OGA, together with the Fédération des Femmes pour la Paix Mondiale (Federation of Women for Worldwide Peace) initiated civil society activities around the International Day for Peace. A meeting of NGOs was convened to discuss preparation of activities and a coordination committee set up by groups of the civil society that decided to organize a **“Week of peace and non-violence in the DRC”** between 21 and 28 September. One of the largest women’s networks “Cause Commune” (Common Cause) organized a dinner debate under the theme “Par qui peut venir la paix en RDC” (Who can bring peace in the DRC) focusing on individual responsibility in the peace process.

Comments: because of a lack of financial assistance, NGOs could not carry out many of the planned activities. However, local radio and TV broadcasted messages of peace and discussions on the impact of armed conflicts on women and girls in the DRC.

2.3. **Dissemination of useful documents:**

With the assistance of the former Minister of Culture, contacts were established with the Observatoire des Langues (Languages Observatory) to translate the **Nairobi Declaration** and the **Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security** into four local languages (kikongo, kiswahili, tshiluba and lingala). The translation work has been completed and the groups of the civil society, with the help of the OGA, are doing fundraising for the printing and publication of these documents and their further dissemination to the Government, civil society organizations, churches, unions, educational institutions, political parties and media. The Government has shown an interest in supporting the dissemination of these documents.

Comments: the Senior Gender Advisor put a lot of efforts in meeting with the civil society, especially women’s groups, to help them define a common agenda for peace. The OGA works only with networks of NGOs or groups of the civil society that have a knowledge of the peace process and a strong commitment at the grassroots level, thus avoiding individual organizations that have a limited scope of activities on the ground and very often a political agenda for their own promotion. Still, it appears very difficult to put all the initiatives together when competition for resources is fierce and the country is still divided politically and militarily. It will be very challenging to work on capacity building with local groups of the civil society and gather scattered initiatives in a constructive way that strengthen local commitment to the peace process and participation of different groups of men and women in the rehabilitation of the post-conflict society.

As it is written in the report by Life and Peace Institute⁴, “The situation, where women are amongst the most active and effective advocates for peace at the grassroots level, but hardly penetrate the higher levels of the society structures, is not only unjust towards women but also counterproductive for the peace process as a whole. One can easily imagine that the peace building activities of Civil Society organizations would go through

⁴ Romkema Hans, “An Analysis of the Civil Society and Peace Building Prospects in the North and South Kivu Provinces, Democratic Republic of the Congo”, Life & Peace Institute November 2001, p. 55.

a major reorientation if the more pragmatic views of women would be seriously included in the development of the programmes”.

3. **Campaign on violence against women:**

a) The OGA and the Réseau Action Femmes, RAF (Women Action Network) organized a one-day event on 25 November to launch a 16-day campaign to eliminate violence against women until 10 December. RAF is publicizing its work on **highlighting contradictions in the equality between men and women in the Congolese civil code vis-à-vis CEDAW** and instruments to which the DRC is a signatory. RAF's aim was to show in its campaign activities that violence against women constitute human rights violations.

b) MONUC Human Rights Section based in Bukavu, in the East, is collaborating with the “Commission de lutte contre les viols et violences au Sud Kivu (Commission to fight against rapes and violence in South Kivu), together with local and international NGOs. The Human Rights office in Bukavu consolidated a status report on sexual violence against women and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the German NGO G' to cooperate on the fight against sexual violence⁵.

In a related event, in a statement and letters to the UN Secretary-General and High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Coalition contre les violences sexuelles en RDC (Coalition against sexual violence in the DRC), South-Kivu, on 7 December, explains rape used as a systematic weapon of war in the province by all armed groups (Interahamwe, Mai Mai, APR, RCD-Goma). One of the partner organizations, Centre Olame in Bukavu reports in the month of November 2002, that the Centre hosted and followed up on 117 women and girls raped in Bukavu, Shabunda, Walungu, Kalehe and Kabare territories. 75 per cent of the women were under 30 years old; four became pregnant due to rape and three were infested by HIV/AIDS.

Comments: together with the Human Rights Section, there is a need to further investigate gender based violence in the East, improve the victims' access to medical and psychological services as well as to strengthen the capacities of local groups of women deal with the problem, while mobilizing national and international communities and fight against impunity. It is interesting to note also that USAID has indicated willingness to fund projects on violence against women and which are possible linked to DDR processes. The agency organized a reference group meeting on 6 December to work on a country strategy paper for USAID/DRC. International Law Group, Search for Common Ground (local NGO), MONUC OGA and Human Rights Section were able to explain the prevalent problems and activities with this regard with a special emphasis on gender perspectives in DDR.

⁵ MONUC Bukavu, Human Rights Section, “Status Report: Sexual Violence in the South Kivu”, October 2002.

4. **Other meetings and contacts:**

a) On 8 August, the Resident Representative of the **National Democratic Institute (NDI)** in the DRC met with the Senior Gender Adviser. He explained the work done by NDI to engage women in taking their place in the decision-making in the context of the African political culture. He stressed out that it has been around 30 years since the last “elections” and that all actors, political parties, potential candidates and population needed to be prepared for the coming elections and the meaning of democracy.

b) The Senior Gender Adviser met with a **delegation of women activists from the Ituri Province** (north-east) on 09 September. The meeting brought together women from the two ethnic groups, the Hemas and the Lendus, that are fighting against each other in the region. They explained that violence against women in the region continues, e.g. rape, women buried alive, women murdered for refusing to have sex, etc. Some women have been forced to flee their homes into the bush for four years now, thus making it difficult to work and earn a living. They reported that 80% of the displaced persons in the region are widows and children. Most NGO activity has been hindered because of the high level of insecurity.

c) The Senior Gender Adviser started **meeting with academic institutions and universities** in Kinshasa in November to launch a series of seminars and workshops with students and professors on information and sensitization on gender, CEDAW and integrating gender modules into their study programmes (see below Projects, a, page 13). The OGA agreed in a meeting with civil society partners on 10 December on the following lecture themes: sexual violence against women and minors; women’s political participation; the informal sector: women, education and health; women as perpetrators and victims; last theme to be chosen by the university in question. Around 19 universities and institutes of higher education have now been programmed for the seminar series.

d) At the request of the DSRSG, the Senior Gender Adviser attended a UN agencies’ annual retreat on 19 September where she had the opportunity to **promote gender mainstreaming with regard to UN agencies policies and programmes in the DRC**.

e) A meeting was held on 25 November between the International Law Group and the OGA on the plans for **implementation of the Nairobi Declaration in anticipation of a transitional government**. The discussions centered on the type of programmes and trainings that could be put in place on the CEDAW and elections.

f) Meetings have been held between the OGA and the new MONUC Policy Officer on **HIV/AIDS**. There are synergies with gender and AIDS issues in relation to training, sensitization campaigns, mandate and visits to the sectors.

5. **Gender Training:**

Regular induction sessions on “Gender and Peacekeeping” are given to **military observers and civilian police**. For example, a gender training course was conducted for the Kisangani Civpol programme for national police officers on 4 and 5 October. Out of

the 53 participants, only one was a woman. The OGA Training Officer gave a presentation on the recent legal developments of the International Tribunals for Rwanda and former Yugoslavia with regard to sexual violence against women and girls.

The OGA suggested to include a module for the Civpol training programme for criminal investigation police officers focusing on human rights and the recent developments in international law with regard to the basic violation of women's rights, with an emphasis on gender-based violence.

Comments: the "Gender and Peacekeeping" training package was first introduced in the mission in October 2001. The MONUC Training Cell was then required to integrate it as a compulsory component in its induction training for all military and police newcomers. With the evolution of the mission, more emphasis is currently placed on case studies, particularly in relation to the disarmament and demobilization process that has been launched, as well as the current human rights situation in the eastern part of the country. Further efforts to adjust the "Gender and Peacekeeping" package to context specific situations are currently undertaken (with photographs showing men and women in non-traditional roles, through conflict and post-conflict situations) to make participants better understand the impact of war on gender roles.

6. **Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR):**

a) The OGA participated in a **DDR workshop** organized on 15 August and commented on the Joint Operational Plan drafted by the DDR section for coordinating the work of MONUC and other UN agencies. The OGA regularly contributes to the working sessions on identification of vulnerable groups, of "camp followers", on the status of women accompanying ex-combatants, on information sharing, public information campaigns and organization of reception centers for demobilization.

b) The OGA is part of regular training programmes both for newcomers who receive a general briefing on DDR and also for staff volunteering for DDR activities, like the demobilization officers. A session on "**Gender perspectives in the DDR process**" was delivered at the end of October.

c) The OGA and the Child Protection Unit took part in two large meetings with the DDR Unit and UN agencies to prepare for the set up of Beni reception center. A smaller working group was then put in place together with UNICEF, UNHCR and the DDR coordination section to discuss budget issues and **procedures for the reception center children and vulnerable groups**.

d) The OGA participated in two **DDR related missions in Kamina** where a transit center was set up for the demobilization process of former combatants. The team composed of members from the OGA and Child Protection Unit assisted the DDR team in interviewing the caseload of ex-combatants and dependents awaiting repatriation to Kigali. The caseload consisted of 458 persons present on Kamina-Base (201 men, 110 women, and 147 children), and 25 persons awaiting departure at the airport. The same

team went to Lubero, Butembo and Beni at the beginning of December to ascertain the **level of preparedness of the Lubero DDR Center** to receive women and children accompanying ex-combatants wishing to be repatriated to Rwanda.

Comments: there is a need to look at special ways to create programmes for those Congolese women staying in the DRC who were accompanying Ugandan or Rwandan soldiers (possibly with UNDP or other UN agencies, funded by the World Bank). For instance, a MONUC humanitarian officer in Gbadolite (north) reported that some Congolese women with their children left behind by Ugandan soldiers had asked to be transported to Kisangani to their families. The humanitarian affairs Section in its investigation to locate the families could not find any information. CARITAS and the ICRC have been contacted to facilitate their stay. It was reported that these women were part of a larger group of 146 Congolese women and children in Gbadolite left behind by Ugandan troops and who have been refused entry to Uganda (more investigation is necessary at this stage to find out about the status of these women and collect information about the children disaggregated by sex and age).

7. Cooperation with UNIFEM:

a) UNIFEM sent a consultant to Kinshasa to mobilize and to finance the participation of ten civil society members in the ongoing **Inter-Congolese Dialogue**. The consultant organized a preparatory meeting with women in civil society on 6 November to discuss activities, report back after the peace negotiations in Sun City, South Africa, and to pull together views and strategies for the next round of talks. The OGA participated in the meeting.

b) The Gender Affairs Officer took advantage of her participation in the DDR exercise in Kamina to visit the UNIFEM Regional Office for Central Africa in Kigali, Rwanda on 7 November and met with the Director, Ms. Baudouine Kamatari. Cooperation around the Peace process was discussed as well as the situation of sexual violence against women in eastern DRC. It was pointed out that UNIFEM's role would be required in **monitoring the reintegration and resettlement part of the DDR process**, since MONUC has a limited mandate to do so in Rwanda.

Comments: particular attention should be paid to programmes and training to be put in place at the local community level and the situation of Congolese or Burundian women who follow their Rwandan partners needs to be monitored. One other concern is the possible lack of benefits to female single heads of households (widows/women whose husbands are missing) since all financial benefits are distributed by the Rwandan demobilization authorities mainly to male former combatants. The MONUC DDR office in Kigali has reported that the Government of Rwanda Demobilization authorities are now considering more training activities for the dependents of combatants.

8. **Public Information:**

8.1. **Radio OKAPI:** the OGA is working closely with the mission Radio OKAPI that broadcasts throughout the country in French and local languages. For example, Radio OKAPI interviewed women participating in the peace negotiations in Pretoria as well as women's organizations in Goma and Kisangani on the peace process.

Radio OKAPI interviewed the main coordinator of the RAF campaign (see above) and prepared a longer thematic programme on the different forms of sexual violence against women. This included testimonies of victims from Kinshasa, Goma, Bukavu, Kisangani and the medical and psychological consequences of sexual violence.

Radio OKAPI-Kananga (centre) organized a one-day workshop on 2 October at the request of the OGA in preparation for the radio series on **conflict resolution for women**. The workshop mainly addressed the daily problems and conflicts faced by urban women (housewives, working women, female single heads of household and the girl child). Four working groups wrapped up the most faced problems in three categories, i.e. legal (women are ignorant of their rights and the community is ignorant of women's rights); economic (poverty, lack of access to credit and women's work undermined and undervalued); social (women's lack of access to medical services and drinking water, lack of pre-and post natal care, illiteracy due to the lack of education for the girl child).

8.2. **MONUC weekly newsletter/Bulletin/Magazine:** the OGA published two articles on gender perspectives in the DDR and on the status of women in the UN system based on the last General Assembly's report on the "Improvement of the status of women in the United Nations System".

Comments: more dissemination work through the mission's media is required at this stage to keep both MONUC staff and the local population informed about the role and activities of the OGA. The use of local media (TV, radio, newspapers) requires a budget that the Gender Office does not have for the time being. As a result, working relations with MONUC's Public Information Office are currently being strengthened to expand the scope of the dissemination work of the Gender Office in Kinshasa and in the field.

9. **Code of Conduct:**

The OGA contributed to the creation of the MONUC Code of Conduct that was sent to all MONUC Military, civilian and Civpol Personnel. Drawing on rules and regulations of the UN including the UN Charter, Staff Rules and Regulations, Ten Rules Code of Conduct of Blue Helmets, etc., the MONUC Code of Conduct calls for the **prohibition of sexual abuse and/or exploitation by all members of the Civilian and Military components of the mission**. The violation of the Code of Conduct leads to sanctions and disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal and repatriation.

Comments: consultations between the OGA, Office of Legal Affairs, the Legal Adviser, the Civpol, the Head of Security, the Military Adviser to the Force Commander and other

relevant bodies should be undertaken with the aim of setting up a mechanism to monitor the implementation of the Code of Conduct.

Projects

- a) **Implementation of 1325:** the OGA plans to launch a series of seminars and lectures in the main universities of Kinshasa with the aim of sensitizing educational institutions on the implementation of Resolution 1325, CEDAW principles and the **importance of integrating gender in policy analysis, reconstruction and rehabilitation programmes in the framework of the Congolese peace process**. The strategy includes making use of local Congolese experts from various academic fields and civil society who are well grounded in the local realities. The next steps of the project in late spring 2003 will target public legal professionals; public administration officials (ministries, secretary generals and directors); private sector and unions. Funds are being currently raised for the first phase of this project that is planned to begin around mid-January-February 2003⁶.
- b) **Inter-Congolese Dialogue:** the OGA will continue to mobilize and to facilitate the participation of women in the **formal and informal peace talks**, in collaboration with UNIFEM and UNDP. It will also continue information dissemination of major instruments and policies of the UN to ensure a rights-based approach to all human interactions and of major provisions of the Sun City and other processes to accelerate and consolidate the peace.
- c) **Transitional Government:** the OGA will ensure and facilitate training activities for women leaders and political candidates for elections in collaboration with international partners and UN agencies. In a related matter, it will facilitate the **integration of the principles of CEDAW** – ratified by the DRC in 1986 - into any new Congolese legislation (as requested by Congolese groups of women in the Nairobi Declaration).
- d) **Peace with Justice:** action needs to be taken **to address the many human rights and other gender-based violence** especially since the 15 women in Balega and Babembe were raped and buried alive in 1999. In line with the SG's Study on Women, Peace and Security (2002), the OGA will work on identifying cases of gender-based violence within MONUC and on the Congolese population and promoting policies to minimize gender-based violence.
- e) **DDR Process:** the OGA will continue to be involved in the planning and monitoring of DDR activities to ensure that female former combatants are consulted in the process and that the needs of vulnerable groups and dependents are taken into consideration either by MONUC, other UN agencies or NGO. It will be of the utmost importance to ensure the **collection of gender-disaggregated data** on each of these

⁶ Funding is sought through the Quick Impact Projects (QUIPs) of the mission that can fund activities of support to civil society, including women's groups, in peace promotion activities.

groups by MONUC civilian and military staff. The OGA will make sure that local civil society, especially women's groups will be heard in the process, particularly close to the Reception Centre where former combatants will gather and to ensure that these groups will be used as information sources in local communities.

f) **Gender Training:** the OGA will continue to participate in the Civpol training programme according to the MONUC mandate to cover gender aspects in armed conflicts, **CEDAW**, **rule of law** and discussion on rape as a war crime. The OGA will explore possibilities to give training to MONUC contingents on gender awareness together with other sections of MONUC and the **HIV/AIDS** adviser. There is a need also to organize training for MONUC local and international staff on implementation of 132 and to brief civilian newcomers on the role of the OGA in cooperation with the Office of Personnel. Furthermore, there is a need to evaluate at this stage the impact of the gender training both on the behavior of peacekeepers and the local population, especially women and girls. The OGA will think about a way to conduct an **evaluation of the Gender Training** in cooperation with the DPKO Training and Evaluation Service in NY.

g) **Network of Gender Focal Points:** the idea was launched a few months ago to develop a MONUC Gender Focal Point network at headquarters in Kinshasa and in the four sectors (in the different field stations throughout the country) including personnel in all substantive areas such as Humanitarian, Human Rights, Child Protection and Political Affairs, but also military and Civpol. The OGA plans to revive this idea in light of the new SC Resolution 1445 and design a plan of action and adequate guidelines for the network. The initiative should help pay more attention to the **gendered organization of the local society** and make women more visible as agents of change, not simply victims of war. The aim will be to document the lives of men and women, boys and girls and use gender-disaggregated data from the field to better target the mission's programmes and activities.

h) **Cooperation with MONUC Human Rights Section:** The OGA has developed close working relationship with MONUC's Human Rights Section, especially as regard awareness raising on **sexual violence against women and will continue to work on joint projects** (see above point 3). The OGA will cooperate with the Human Rights Section to set up a gender-disaggregated database and related reporting system that could be used by the entire mission.

Conclusion

The content and the scope of the OGA continue to grow. The skepticism, which was exhibited at the outset when the OGA was inaugurated, is slowly giving way to a readiness to listen and get involved in the process of reflection and analysis by many staff members within MONUC and the Congolese population (men and women). **Support provided at the highest level of the mission by the SRSG and his Deputy was of major importance for the OGA to gain credibility and respect.**

As the staffing profile increased with the arrival of the two UNVs last September, it is hoped that gender considerations in MONUC will take root and be reflected in the programmes and activities reported both by the military and the civilian components of the mission. The Security Council integrated twice a gender concern in its resolution 1445 (2002) for MONUC (in points 12 and 19). This new resolution gives the OGA a justification for expanding its activities and increasing its staffing. In addition, in order to monitor the situation in the sectors, the OGA continues to see the necessity of having a presence in the East where the brunt of conflict is mostly borne by women.

However, **the OGA functions without a proper back-up from DPKO in New York** and does not know to whom to turn to at HQ for guidance, advice, policy papers, to exchange information and best practices and, therefore, increase its efficiency on the ground. The OGA relies on its own informal network of committed people to get support, information and exchange ideas and views instead of receiving institutional support. **The weakness of the system may jeopardize the work of the OGA in the long run since its work is not acknowledged and disseminated outside the mission's area.** The OGA's monthly reports sent by the mission to DPKO HQ are neither read, nor exploited, and a lack of understanding on the role and function of the OGA continues to prevail at the decision-making level among the political circles in New York, thus preventing the institutional integration of a gender dimension in peacekeeping missions.

The Needs of the OGA

1. **At the mission's level:** in the 2003-2004 mission's budget, the OGA has requested an additional **Gender Affairs Officer at P4 level** who will be tasked with opening a Branch of the OGA in the East in view of the expansion of the mission. This is seen as highly important so that the OGA could have a presence in the East, both to interface with the civil society there and to ensure that gender perspectives are integrated into MONUC DDR activities. Also, an additional General Service Staff (administrative assistant) has been requested.

In the near future, the OGA will need to recruit also a **statistician** to conduct/coordinate gender analysis throughout the country and exploit gender-disaggregated data and indicators in building up studies and reports. There is a need for a **Legal Officer/Lawyer** with an advocacy function to assist in capacity building of local groups of women and advise them on further strategy on the drafting of the new Congolese Constitution as well as the revision of all texts of law that are discriminatory to women.

2. **In New York, DPKO headquarters:**

In light of the above, **it is of the utmost importance for DPKO to get a Senior Gender Adviser posted in the USG's office in New York to provide an institutional backup to the OGAs in peacekeeping missions.**

That person should be at the minimum level of P5 to have enough authority when representing DPKO in meetings and when liaising with outside partners. Among other things, the Senior Gender Advisor would be in charge of:

- Setting up a mechanism for communicating with the Senior Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points in peacekeeping missions;
- Keeping them informed about policies at headquarters and major developments that may affect their work;
- Making sure that there is a flow of information between HQ and the field and that the work of the OGAs is visible and disseminated among key partners;
- Liaising with other UN Departments (OCHA, DPA, DPI), including the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women, UN agencies, NGOs, the Academia and member states;
- Making sure that programmes and activities implemented at the mission's level include a gender concern;
- Making sure that the inputs from the OGAs are integrated into each SG's report;
- And visiting the peacekeeping missions to keep the DPKO USG abreast of concrete developments related to gender mainstreaming with the aim of building up on good practices for future references.

For more information, please contact Amy Smythe, Senior Gender Advisor at (243) 982 78 554, smythea@un.org, or Nadine Puechguirbal, Gender Affairs Officer, at (243) 81 509 69 79, puechguirbal@un.org

Annex

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SENIOR GENDER ADVISER (MONUC)

Objectives

The objectives of the Senior Gender Advisor include:

- Advising and assisting the SRSG/Chief of Mission in promoting the integration a Gender-based rights approach into the substantive work of the Mission;
- Ensuring that a gender perspective is included in the development of mission policies and activities, building competence on gender mainstreaming in the wo of the mission, and monitoring successful implantation of gender mainstreaming
- Interfacing with civil society organizations as well as Government institutions a agencies;
- Conducting gender-sensitive research and analysis on relevant issues to better direct the mission's policies.

Core functions

The Core functions of the OGA will be as follows:

1. Policy Development:

The OGA will provide expert advice to the senior management of the mission including the SRSG, Force Commander, Civpol Commissioner on the mainstreamin of gender issues. It will analyze policy to ensure that gender is mainstreamed with design, implementation, promotion and monitoring of the mission's policies and programmes.

2. Gender situational Analysis and Data Collection:

The OGA will develop comprehensive knowledge base on the gender situation of th DRC as well as of the mission.

3. Mainstreaming Gender with the Political/Legislative Process:

Where applicable, the OGA will advise the mission on strategies to facilitate the involvement of local women, groups and networks in the peace process including reconstruction, reconciliation and rehabilitation and other processes leading to sustainable peace.

4. Evaluation/Monitoring:

The OGA will develop mechanisms for monitoring and accountability of gender mainstreaming.

5. Capacity Building and Awareness Raising:

The OGA will raise awareness on gender and build the capacity of UN mission staf international and national, to mainstream gender into their work.

6. Network and Outreach:

To facilitate the gender mainstreaming process and share information, the OGA will develop a network of gender focal points both internally within the mission as well with relevant partners externally.