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DCAF and International Alert Contribution to the Global Study on Women, Peace and Security

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Promoting Gender Equality through Security Sector Reform

The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) and International Alert (IA) welcome this opportunity to share recommendations and good practices from our work in the field of gender equality and security sector reform (SSR).

Security sector reform is explicitly mentioned in many of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCRs on WPS): UNSCRs 1820, 1888, 2106, 2122. It is also implicitly mandated in the UNSCRs on WPS' calls for reform within peacekeeping, armed forces, police services and the judicial system, as well as increased collaboration with civil society. From the full and equal participation of women in decision-making to ending impunity for sexual and gender-based violence, security sector reform that is designed and implemented to promote gender equality is absolutely necessary for the successful implementation of the UNSCRs on WPS.

Focus on gender equality in addition to women

While the UNSCRs on WPS serve as a pivotal international policy framework for taking action for gender equality within SSR, there are certain fundamental omissions in the Resolutions that urgently need to be redressed. As called for in the UNSCRs on WPS, addressing the specific security and justice needs of women and girls, as well as supporting women's empowerment and participation at all levels, are extremely important goals and require more serious and sustained efforts.

However, the nearly exclusive focus on "women" rather than "gender" and using the term "women" as an abstract, homogenous category denies the opportunity to address root causes of inequality, violence and other forms of insecurity. The UNSCRs on WPS also tend towards essentialising women as peacemakers or victims and men as perpetrators of violence, rather than acknowledging their diversity of roles. This effectively silences male victims of violence as well as men as agents for peace, security and equality. Moreover, by denying the diversity of identities and access to power within the category of "women", it condones misleading generalisations that do not reflect the actual needs and priorities of a diverse population. For instance, access to justice varies not just on the basis of gender or sex but on the intersection of other factors including age, ethnicity, class, religion, sexual orientation and gender identity, ability, language, location and nationality. The focus on "women" as a homogeneous group also marginalizes sexual and gender minorities who not only face specific threats to their security and justice but also might not identify with the categories of "women" and "men". Finally, the focus on women rather than on the more complex power dynamics between people has enabled a "tick the box" approach where the aim of gender equality has all too often been reduced to a de-politicised numbers game rather than addressing the need for a transformative approach to SSR that seeks change within the broader mission and mandate of institutions as well as institutional culture.

Promoting people-centred SSR in Lebanon ^[1]

In order to better understand perceptions of security and of security providers in Lebanon, International Alert in partnership with the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies carried out a three-year research project funded by the European Union, which included a gendered analysis of the data. The aim of this research is to understand what these gendered perceptions would mean for a SSR process in Lebanon and to promote dialogue with those involved in security provision. The project demonstrated that a broader and more people-centred approach that takes into account security perceptions disaggregated along various parameters, including gender and geographical location, can lead to a more nuanced understanding of security needs. Examples of issues raised during the research process include different gender-based security concerns and their regional variance (e.g. in some areas men were more afraid to go out at night and in other areas it was women), gendered patterns of (not) accessing official security services, and whether a more gender-balanced force would be regarded as being more accessible by the public. This research process has in turn allowed for a more open dialogue with security sector institutions, including the police and army, on improving their understanding of public perceptions of insecurity and helping them to better respond to these needs.

The first phase of the research consisted of focus group discussions and a nationwide survey on the perceptions of security and insecurity among the Lebanese public. The focus groups were held in nine locations with representatives of the four biggest confessional groups, covering both genders and three age groups. During the second phase, further research was conducted on pertinent topics including [people's perceptions of security institutions](#) and [gender, security and SSR](#). Consultation meetings, workshops and a [national conference](#) provided fora to discuss the findings with security providers, including the Lebanese Armed Forces, Internal Security Forces and General Security Directorate, as well as civil society organisations interested in security-related issues. The project has resulted in unprecedented data and information on what has hitherto been a restricted field of research, garnering interest among the public, academics and policy-makers alike, and has created the space for discussions on improving security provision among security sector institutions.

Recommendation:

Urge Member States, United Nations bodies, donors and civil society to ensure that SSR processes and initiatives promote gender equality, including within the broader mission and mandate of security sector institutions as well as within their institutional culture.

Redefining SSR priorities through conducting participatory assessment

UNSCR 1889 (2009) “*Urges* Member States, United Nations bodies, donors and civil society to ensure that women’s empowerment is taken into account during post-conflict needs assessments and planning.” More specifically, the Resolution encourages post-conflict Member States, in consultation with civil society, including women’s organizations, “to specify in detail women and girls’ needs and priorities and design concrete strategies... which cover inter alia support for greater physical security and better socio-economic conditions... including... gender-responsive law enforcement and access to justice.”

Despite this excellent mandate, security sector reform initiatives continue to be planned and implemented without comprehensive assessment of the security and justice needs of the population, including diverse groups of men, women, girls and boys as well as sexual and gender minorities. This is a missed opportunity to ensure that SSR initiatives not only are aligned with UNSCRs on WPS, but are

^[1] Lana Khattab and Henri Myrntinen, *Gender, Security and SSR in Lebanon* (Beirut/London: International Alert, 2014). Available at: http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/Lebanon_SSRGenderSecurity_EN_2014.pdf

designed to meet the diverse needs and priorities of the population they seek to serve. For instance, security sector institutions such as the police service and the justice system are on the front-lines of prevention and response to domestic and sexual violence; yet reform initiatives within these institutions are often designed without a clear understanding of the specific needs of victims or an accurate profile of the perpetrators, including how gender roles determine access to safety and justice. Dominant gender norms within society and gendered institutional cultures may even act as barriers to service provision. This includes tendencies to view domestic and sexual violence as ‘domestic’ issues outside the sphere of law enforcement, of ‘blaming the victim’ and the lack of recognition that a significant number of men are victims of sexual and domestic violence.¹

In order to strengthen participation and equal access to security and justice, SSR actors need to prioritize the time and funds necessary for national and community-level security and justice needs assessments. These assessments will complement current political and institution-focused analysis as well as create an opportunity for participatory self-identification of needs, priorities and actions. By moving towards a bottom-up approach to SSR, we acknowledge the agency and authority of people who experience (in) security and (in) justice as well as create the space to understand the diversity of needs depending on interconnected factors such as gender, age, ethnicity, class, religion, sexual orientation and gender identity, ability, language, location and nationality.² Participatory assessment processes can also create the space to question current approaches to peace and security and voice alternative visions, thus provide a platform for civil society and other actors to call for a transformative approach to SSR rather than more narrow technocratic approaches.

Sierra Leone Police’s gender self-assessment as a catalyst for change

In 2011, the Sierra Leone Police undertook an institutional gender self-assessment to measure their achievements and gaps in promoting gender equality and responsiveness since the police reform process began in 1997. The assessment was administered by a group of eight police personnel from support services, corporate affairs, family support units, community relations and the operations planning and policy department. The working group first developed an internal survey based on DCAF’s *Gender Self-Assessment Guide for the Police, Armed Forces and Justice Sector*³ and then piloted it at the police headquarters using qualitative (literature reviews, focus groups, interviews) and quantitative techniques (survey). There were also consultations with academics and civil society organisations. The process itself therefore served as an institutional capacity building exercise. Over the course of five months, the assessment was conducted in all four regions of the country.⁴

¹ Callum Watson, *Preventing and Responding to Sexual and Domestic Violence against Men: A Guidance Note for Security Sector Institutions* (Geneva: DCAF, 2014). Available at: <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Preventing-and-Responding-to-Sexual-and-Domestic-Violence-against-Men-A-Guidance-Note-for-Security-Sector-Institutions>

² Rahel Kunz and Kristin Valasek, “Learning from Other’s Mistakes: Towards Participatory, Gender-Sensitive SSR”, *Back to the Roots: Security Sector Reform and Development*, eds. Albrecht Schnabel and Vanessa Farr (Geneva: DCAF, 2011) pp. 115-143. Available at: <http://www.dcaf.ch/Chapter-Section/Ch.-4-Learning-from-Others-Mistakes-Towards-Participatory-Gender-sensitive-SSR> and Henri Myrtilinen, Judy El-Bushra and Jana Naujoks, *Rethinking Gender in Peacebuilding* (London: International Alert: 2014). Available at <http://www.international-alert.org/resources/publications/rethinking-gender-peacebuilding>

³ Megan Bastick, *Gender Self-Assessment Guide for the Police, Armed Forces and Justice Sector* (Geneva: DCAF, 2011). Available at: <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Gender-Self-Assessment-Guide-for-the-Police-Armed-Forces-and-Justice-Sector>

⁴ Dr. Aisha Fofana Ibrahim, *The Integration of a gender perspective in the Sierra Leone Police* (Geneva: DCAF, 2012). Available at: <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/The-Integration-of-a-Gender-Perspective-in-the-Sierra-Leone-Police>

The assessment process resulted in gender equality being made a priority in future reform activities and its conclusions were used to determine priority activities. For instance, as a direct result of the assessment process, in 2012 the Sierra Leone Police created a Gender Unit with the mandate to ensure a more gender-responsive police service. One of the first actions of the Gender Unit was a review the existing institutional policies on gender mainstreaming, and on the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. An inclusive policy review process was led by the Gender Unit and the revised policies were both adopted by Sierra Leone Police senior management in 2014. In addition, the Gender Unit and Family Support Units were reorganised under a single Gender Directorate to foster a more streamlined approach to gender mainstreaming within the police.⁵

Recommendation:

Urge Member States, United Nations bodies, donors and civil society to ensure that the security and justice needs of diverse groups of men, women, girls and boys as well as sexual and gender minorities are assessed in a comprehensive and participatory manner as a starting point for post-conflict planning, including SSR.

Support gender equality within overlooked security and justice providers

Comprehensive community-based assessment also provides the benefit of reaching out to both urban and rural communities in order to better understand the variety of existing security and justice providers. For instance, in many countries customary and religious leaders are key actors in providing justice and security services. As is mentioned in UNSCR 1888 (2009), there is a great need to involve these leaders in the fight to eliminate gender-based violence, including sexual violence. Globally, there are more private security personnel employed than police.⁶ While the police are referenced twenty-seven times in the UNSCRs on WPS, there is no reference to private military and security companies. UN Member States need to take measures to ensure that these companies are non-discriminatory and fully respect human rights, including the rights of marginalized groups.⁷ As addressed below, security sector oversight actors, including parliament, ombuds institutions, national human rights commissions, female staff associations and civil society including women's organisations and the media, are another group of important actors that are often sidelined in SSR processes. Finally, though not mentioned in any of the UNSCRs on WPS, the penal system is a crucial part of the security sector. As both a pivotal actor in the criminal justice system and a site of human rights violations during and after armed conflict, including sexual violence, more efforts are needed to promote gender equality and respect for human rights within detention and corrections facilities.

Preventing and responding to sexual violence in South Africa's prisons

The Detention Justice Forum (DJF) is a coalition of South African NGOs, community-based organisations, lawyers and academics formed in 2012 to advance the rights and well-being of detainees in South Africa.⁸ One of its objectives is to prevent sexual violence within prisons, a human rights violation that contributes to the fact that the HIV prevalence of inmates is estimated to be two to three times the

⁵ Personal interview with DCAF staff.

⁶ Nicolas Florquin, "A Booming Business: Private Security and Small Arms," *Small Arms Survey 2011: States of Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Available at: <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/A-Yearbook/2011/en/Small-Arms-Survey-2011-Chapter-04-EN.pdf>

⁷ Sabrina Schulz and Christina Yeung, "Private Military and Security Companies and Gender" *Gender and Security Sector Reform Toolkit*, eds. Megan Bastick and Kristin Valasek (Geneva: DCAF, 2008). Available at: <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Private-Military-and-Security-Companies-and-Gender-Tool-10>

⁸ David Friedman, 'Inmates' rights & sexual abuse in South Africa's prisons', 24 July 2012. Available at: <http://www.genderjustice.org.za/article/inmates-rights-a-sexual-abuse-in-south-africas-prisons/>

national average.⁹ Research at Boksburg Youth Centre also highlighted a link between the normalisation of violent behaviour as part of the prison experience and increased rates of violent behaviour, including against family members, upon release.¹⁰

DJF and its member organisations have taken a comprehensive approach to address the problem. Activities have involved research on sexual violence in prisons to build an evidence base, mapping the legal framework, advocacy for law and police reform, capacity building for prison staff on preventing sexual violence and HIV (resulting in several guidebooks), media campaigns and measures to hold the government accountable. For example, when a police spokesperson wrote a tweet implying that a convicted murderer could expect to be raped in prison, DJF organised a media campaign that resulted in the spokesperson's dismissal.¹¹ In this way, DJF is seeking not just to improve service provision and the protection of detainees' rights, but also to shape attitudes within the security sector and society as a whole regarding the unacceptability of sexual violence in prisons.^{12 13}

Recommendation:

Urge Member States, United Nations bodies, donors and civil society to engage with overlooked actors in the security sector, including customary and religious leaders, private military and security companies, security sector oversight actors and the penal system, in order to strengthen gender equality, including through prevention and response to human rights violations such as sexual violence.

Support institutional transformation with targeted action

The seven UNSCRs on WPS each state the need for training. They employ the term twenty-eight times, including calling for training of peacekeepers and national security sector institutions on the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and on the protection, rights and particular needs of women. In contrast, the term "policy" is only mentioned seven times, "funding" four times and "structure" not at all. There is a tendency when working for gender equality within the security sector to focus on training as a panacea. Unfortunately, much of the gender-related training offered to security sector personnel in post-conflict contexts is *ad-hoc* and externally delivered. For example, in a 2011 DCAF survey of gender equality in the police, defence, justice and penal services in West Africa, *ad hoc* gender training far outnumbered institutionalized courses, and external actors were involved in the provision of gender training within 23 out of 38 security sector institutions.¹⁴ Rather than a one-off training, efforts should be concentrated on building institutional capacities for curriculum review, development, delivery and assessment in order to institutionalize gender-related training. This ensures that all personnel have to

⁹ Sonke Gender Justice Network and Just Detention International, *Addressing HIV and Sexual Violence in Department of Correctional Service Facilities: A guide for working with members of the Department of Correctional Facilities* (Johannesburg: Sonke and JDI, 2012), 8. Available at: <http://detentionjusticeforum.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Sonke-and-Just-Detention-International-Addressing-HIV-and-Sexual-Violence-in-Correctional-Facilities-Guide-for-Correctional-Staff.pdf>

¹⁰ Scott Spiegler, *Mapping the Legal Framework to Prevent Sexual Violence & HIV in South Africa's Correctional Facilities* (Johannesburg: Sonke Gender Justice Network, 2012), 8. Available at: http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Prisons_SV_HIV_Framework.pdf

¹¹ Sonke Gender Justice Network, "Civil society calls Hawks spokesperson, McIntosh Polela, to retract statement, 'I trust that JubJub's supporters gave him a jar of Vaseline to take to prison'", 17 October 2012. Available at: <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/McIntosh-Polela-fired-from-Hawks-20130516>

¹² Sonke Gender Justice Network, "Sexual Violence in Prisons". Available at: <http://www.genderjustice.org.za/policy-development-advocacy/sexual-violence-in-prisons/>

¹³ Detention Justice Forum, "About Us". Available at: <http://detentionjusticeforum.org.za/about/>

¹⁴ Aiko Holvikivi and Kristin Valasek, "Summary and Analysis of Findings", *The Security Sector and Gender in West Africa: A survey of police, defence, justice and penal services in ECOWAS states*, eds. Miranda Gaanderse and Kristin Valasek (Geneva: DCAF, 2011). p. 9. Available at: <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/The-Security-Sector-and-Gender-in-West-Africa-A-survey-of-police-defence-justice-and-penal-services-in-ECOWAS-states>

complete relevant training as a mandatory part of their education and illustrates that knowledge and skills in this area are integral to security and justice provision and oversight rather than just an add-on. Most of all, training is simply one part of the process of institutional change which has as its goal the kind of structural and cultural transformation needed to support gender equality.

In order to effect sustainable institutional transformation, a comprehensive approach needs to be taken. This ideally begins not only with an internal and external assessment, but with a nationally-led participatory process of reflection on the mandate and role of the security sector, or a specific security sector institution such as the post-apartheid process in South Africa.¹⁵ Based upon the outcomes of these processes, a range of interconnected reforms can be implemented in areas such as national and institutional policies; protocols and procedures; institutional structures; staffing; capacity-building including training; internal oversight mechanisms and complaints procedures; community outreach; operations; infrastructure and equipment; and budgeting. For instance, in order to improve police response to domestic and sexual violence against women and men, training on interview techniques and investigation is likely to be ineffective without reforms to policy, protocol, institutional structure and culture, staffing and budgeting. In addition, institutional changes need to be linked to sectoral changes and broader social change towards greater gender equality. In order to improve the response to domestic and sexual violence, changes are not only needed in the police services but throughout the criminal justice system including to the judiciary, courts, prosecution and penal system. Institutional and sectoral changes also must take into account the necessity of broader social change in order to address root causes of violence. For instance, police services can play a key role in risk reduction by promoting a social climate where impunity and tacit support for domestic and sexual violence do not exist. Collaboration between police services and education services, the media, civil society organizations and the general public in the implementation of awareness-raising campaigns can importantly contribute toward the prevention of domestic and sexual violence against all members of society, regardless of their sexual orientation and gender identity.

It is not always possible or even beneficial to aim for large scale transformation of the entire security sector. Faced with the multiplicity of actors and issues, gender equality initiatives focused on the entire security sector often end up initiating broad policy reform that in the end have very little effect on the daily insecurities and injustices faced by the diverse general population. Instead, there is a need for targeted action that takes into account the broader institutional, sectoral and social linkages. For instance by championing transformation at the national and institutional level including through changes in the vision, mission and mandates of security sector institutions while also taking targeted action to implement changes such as community-based violence prevention initiatives and reforms to search procedures by border guards.

Eliminating gender bias in Bosnian courtrooms

DCAF and Atlantic Initiative, a Bosnian NGO consisting of academics, journalists and analysts undertook two innovative projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina between 2012 and 2014. The first was an in-depth study on gender and the judiciary which provided qualitative evidence documenting how gender bias

¹⁵ Sanam Anderlini and Camille Conaway, *Negotiating the Transition to Democracy and Reforming the Security Sector: The Vital Contributions of South African Women* (Washington DC: Initiative for Inclusive Security, 2004). Available at: <http://www.inclusivesecurity.org/publication/negotiating-the-transition-to-democracy-and-reforming-the-security-sector-the-vital-contributions-of-south-african-women/>

affects substantive legal outcomes, including sentencing in cases of domestic violence.¹⁶ The second was the drafting of a benchbook developed by and for judges from across the country to improve the judicial response and increase the consistency of judicial practice in domestic violence cases.¹⁷ These two projects identified entry points for future work on gender equality in the region, contributed to meaningful resources specific to the context, and resulted in changes in the values and practices of the judges who participated. The two projects opened the door to additional work on gender equality in the justice system, including the development of an officially endorsed gender training curriculum by the Judicial and Prosecutorial Training Centres and initiatives to address gender bias within institutional culture, such as the development of Guidelines to Prevent Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment in the Judiciary. These Guidelines were adopted by the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council in early 2015 and will be implemented within all courts and prosecutor's offices in the country. Notably, the judiciary is the first state institution in Bosnia and Herzegovina to adopt a policy to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based harassment.

Recommendations:

Urge Member States, United Nations bodies, donors and civil society to improve gender equality within the security sector by linking strategic-level transformation that takes into account the institutional, sectoral and social linkages together with institutional-level, practical actions that increase people's access to security and justice.

Urge Member States, United Nations bodies, donors and civil society to support the institutionalization of mandatory gender-related education and training for all security sector personnel through a comprehensive process of curriculum review, development, implementation and assessment in national and regional training academies.

Healthy and non-discriminatory workplaces

Article 9 of UNSCR 2122 (2013) "[e]ncourages troop- and police-contributing countries to increase the percentage of women military and police in deployments to United Nations peacekeeping operations." and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action rightly acknowledges in Article 161 that sexual harassment as well as the "lack of a family-friendly work environment, including a lack of appropriate and affordable child care, and inflexible working hours further prevent women from achieving their full potential". Furthermore, Article 11(c) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women (CEDAW) mandates signatories to provide social services, including child care, to "enable parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities and participation in public life."

Despite the fact that these instruments provide a good framework for taking action to create representative, non-discriminatory workplaces with a healthy work-life balance, calls to apply these provisions to national security sector institutions have been few and far between. UN Member States still lack the requisite numbers of women in their national services which is one of the barriers to increasing the number of women deployed in UN missions. This is in part due to work environments that range from non-family-friendly to openly hostile. During the height of US military operations in Iraq, a

¹⁶ Majda Halilović and Heather Huhtanen, *Gender and the Judiciary: Selected findings and recommendations on the implications of gender within the judiciary of Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Sarajevo: DCAF/Atlantic Initiative, 2014). Available at: <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Gender-and-the-Judiciary-Selected-findings-and-recommendations-on-the-implications-of-gender-within-the-judiciary-of-Bosnia-and-Herzegovina>

¹⁷ Nenad Galić and Heather Huhtanen, *Judicial Benchbook: Considerations for Domestic Violence Case Evaluation in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Sarajevo: DCAF, 2014). Available at: <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Judicial-Benchbook-Considerations-for-Domestic-Violence-Case-Evaluation-in-Bosnia-and-Herzegovina>

US servicewoman was more likely to be raped by a US serviceman than killed in action.¹⁸ Sexual violence within security sector institutions in countries engaged in armed conflict or peacekeeping, including by uniformed- and non-uniformed personnel attached to the missions, is a form of conflict-related sexual violence that is often overlooked within the UNSCRs on WPS. Although gender mainstreaming has been accepted as a goal by many security sector institutions, what is often missing is a critical examination of how dominant notions of masculinity within these institutions (which are overwhelmingly staffed by men) may hinder effective service provision, reduce public trust and confidence in them as well as act as a barrier to establishing a more diverse and representative institution.¹⁹

The UN Secretary General's Report on Women, Peace and Security (2014) notes that "regional and national women police associations have contributed to the recruitment and retention of women and growing recognition of the need to change the working environment and culture of security sector institutions. Armed forces in a growing number of countries, including Australia, are increasingly taking measures to tackle issues of abuse and harassment in their ranks." Necessary measures range from clear reporting and disciplinary procedures in the case of discrimination, harassment and violence to equitable human resource policies that support work-life balance, as well as vetting to exclude perpetrators of human rights abuses. Such practices need to be encouraged in all security sector institutions to promote a healthy and non-discriminatory work environment. Furthermore, policies such as shared parental leave that encourage male personnel to also take on family caregiving roles are critical to ensuring that caregiving duties do not hinder career progression and to reduce the "double burden" placed on many professional women.

Recommendations:

Urge UN Member States to ensure that provisions are made to foster family-friendly and non-discriminatory work environments free of all forms of harassment and violence within security sector institutions, in order to further the goal of gender equality, including increasing the participation and retention of female personnel in the security sector and in deployments.

Urge UN Member States to ensure that security sector institutions critically assess their internal institutional cultures and modes of operation from a gender equality perspective, examining inter alia whether or not these are reinforcing gender inequality, hampering effective service, undermining public trust, and obstructing the recruitment and retention of a more diverse base of talent.

Changing institutional culture through the Swedish Gender Coach Programme

Sweden's Gender Coach programme was first run in 2007 within the framework of the Gender Force project, a cooperative initiative between security sector institutions and non-governmental organisations active in the field of international relief operations and post-conflict peacekeeping missions. The programme involved assigning a personal coach – usually a senior gender expert from an NGO – to high-level members of Swedish security and humanitarian agencies. Through one-to-one meetings as well as through group seminars held with other leaders and institutional gender advisors, each leader would develop a personalised action plan specific to their functions and areas of responsibility in their organisation. These plans were aimed at implementing gender equality laws and policies including each organisation's obligations as set out in the Swedish National Action Plan to

¹⁸ Jane Harman, 'Finally, Some Progress in Combatting Rape and Assault in the Military', *Huffington Post*, 25th May 2011. Available at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rep-jane-harman/finally-some-progress-in_b_125504.html

¹⁹ Henri Myrtilinen, *Poster Boys No More – Gender and Security Sector Reform in Timor-Leste* (Geneva: DCAF, 2009). Available at: <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Poster-Boys-No-More>; Lana Khattab and Henri Myrtilinen, *Gender, Security and SSR in Lebanon* (Beirut/London: International Alert, 2014). Available at: http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/Lebanon_SecurityGenderSSR_EN_2014.pdf

Implement UNSCR 1325. In addition, transformative learning techniques were used to build the capacity of leaders to apply gender perspectives to their daily work. Progress on implementation of each personalised action plan was reviewed the following year.

The programme was successful in raising the visibility of gender equality considerations in the Swedish Armed Forces and the involvement of the Supreme Commander and the Head of the Swedish Armed Forces Headquarters in the first iterations boosted its reputation. The process was lauded for the way it encouraged leaders to reflect on how their personal frames of reference influence their thinking, beliefs and actions. By changing the mindsets of senior management, the programme was able to move beyond simply building capacity to instilling long-term changes in the institutional culture of security sector actors.²⁰

Strengthen security sector oversight and accountability mechanisms

UNSCR 2151 (2014) is the first UNSCR to specifically dedicated to the topic of security sector oversight. It states “that good governance and oversight of the security sector is important in ensuring that security institutions are capable of protecting the population”. In a similar vein, in Article 3 of UNSCR 2106 (2013), the Security Council “*reiterates* its intention to continue forcefully to fight impunity and uphold accountability with appropriate means” in relation to “the most serious crimes of international concern committed against women and girls”. Furthermore, Article 21 of UNSCR 1888 (2009) “*urges* troop and police contributing countries to ... action to ensure full accountability in cases of such conduct involving their personnel”.

While Resolution 2151 identifies oversight as being essential to achieving the twin goals of SSR, namely an effective and accountable security sector, oversight has not yet been explicitly mentioned in any of the UNSCRs on WPS. Moreover, despite calls to ensure full accountability for misconduct involving deployed personnel, the report of the UN Secretary-General on *Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse* indicates that sexual exploitation and abuse by both uniformed and non-uniformed UN personnel and those associated with missions (such as contractors) persists and that internal accountability mechanisms need to be strengthened.²¹

Individuals and units tasked with internal accountability, oversight and control of security institutions need to ensure that they have the policies, protocols, resources, skills and expertise to implement their obligations with regards to gender equality as well as other provisions outlined in the UNSCRs on WPS. Consultation with female staff associations, as well as those representing other groups who may be subject to discrimination (e.g. ethnic minorities, gender and sexual minorities, disabled people) is crucial.

It is also vital that institutions tasked with external oversight, including parliaments, ombuds institutions, national human rights institutions and the justice sector, hold the security sector accountable for responding to the security and justice needs of all of the different groups of women, men, girls, boys, sexual and gender minorities who make up the population. In many contexts, this will require technical support and capacity building for oversight institutions, including support for the recruitment of staff

²⁰ Based on the keynote speech delivered by Cpt Anna Björsson, Gender Advisor in the Swedish Armed Forces. See Annex F of Security Sector Reform Working Group and Education Development Working Group of the Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes “Gender-Responsive Evaluation in Military Education: Fourth Workshop on Teaching Gender to the Military”, Workshop Report (Geneva: DCAF, 21-24 July 2014). Available at: <http://www.dcaf.ch/Event/Gender-Responsive-Evaluation-in-Military-Education-4th-Workshop-on-Teaching-Gender-to-the-Military>.

²¹ UN General Assembly, ‘Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse,’ Report of the Secretary-General, UN document number A/69/779. Available at: <http://reliefweb.int/report/world/special-measures-protection-sexual-exploitation-and-sexual-abuse-report-secretary>

with gender expertise, as well as in some cases expanding jurisdiction to cover the security sector or gender equality.

Article 10 of UNSCR 1820 “Requests the Secretary-General and relevant United Nations agencies, inter alia, through consultation with women and women-led organizations as appropriate, to develop effective mechanisms for providing protection from violence, including in particular sexual violence... in justice and security sector reform efforts assisted by the United Nations.” Despite the acknowledgement that women’s organisations are key oversight actors and service providers, SSR initiatives rarely substantively involve women’s organisations. Closed SSR processes, mutual distrust and lack of a shared language/vocabulary are a few of the obstacles to increased involvement of women’s organisations and therefore there is a need for open SSR processes and capacity and trust building.²² Supporting local mechanisms for interaction between security sector institutions and civil society, including women’s organisations, is another effective way to bridge the gap, for instance in the form of local policing boards and citizen security committees

Serbian Commissioner for Equal Protection tackles discriminatory policies in the security sector²³

In March 2013 a Serbian NGO, the Belgrade Centre for Security Policy (BCSP), submitted a complaint to the Commissioner for Equality Protection concerning discriminatory criteria for enrolment of candidates at the military and police academies. Both institutions had set a fifteen per cent admission quota for women as state-funded students. Although these quotas had initially been designed to encourage greater admission of female cadets, over time they had become a glass ceiling, being treated as the maximum number of women that might enroll. BCSP also drew attention to the Ministry of Defence’s prohibition on civilian candidates enrolling if they were married.

Within three months of the complaint, the Commissioner for Equality Protection issued an opinion that the academies violated the provisions of the laws on anti-discrimination and gender equality. The Commissioner issued a recommendation that the student admission processes must comply with anti-discrimination legislation, that the limit on the number of female students be removed and, in the case of the military academy, that the condition concerning marital or family status be revoked.

Recommendations:

Urge UN Member States to ensure that internal accountability, oversight and control mechanisms are equipped, trained and mandated to uphold laws and policies aimed at maintaining a non-discriminatory work environment free of harassment and violence as well as ensuring professional service provision to all women, men, girls, boys, sexual and gender minorities.

Urge UN Member States, UN agencies and donors to ensure that all institutions responsible for external oversight, including women’s organisations, are equipped, trained and mandated to hold the security sector accountable for its obligations in respect of gender equality and service provision to all women, men, girls, boys, sexual and gender minorities.

²² Megan Bastick and Tobie Whitman, *A Women’s Guide to Security Sector Reform* (Washington DC: Institute for Inclusive Security and DCAF, 2013). Available at: <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/A-Women-s-Guide-to-Security-Sector-Reform>

²³ Megan Bastick, *Integrating a Gender Perspective into Oversight of the Security Sector by Ombuds Institutions and National Human Rights Institutions* (Geneva: DCAF, OSCE, OSCE/ODIHR, 2014) p31. Available at: <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Integrating-Gender-into-Oversight-of-the-Security-Sector-by-Ombuds-Institutions-National-Human-Rights-Institutions>