
WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY. THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION UN SCR 1325

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PALABRAS CLAVE

Mujeres, Seguridad, Conflicto, Naciones Unidas.

RESUMEN

Este año se celebra el décimo aniversario de la adopción de la Resolución del Consejo de Seguridad de Naciones Unidas (UN SCR) 1325 sobre Mujeres, Seguridad y Conflicto. Esta resolución es considerada por muchos como “el hito” en el abordaje del impacto de la guerra sobre las mujeres y su contribución a la solución de conflictos y a la paz sostenible. La resolución SCR 1325 de las Naciones Unidas es una respuesta a una realidad concreta. Reconoce a las mujeres más allá del punto de vista tradicional como meras víctimas, sino también como testigos, perpetradoras de violencia y elementos cruciales de cambio.

ABSTRACT

This year celebrates the tenth anniversary of the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UN SCR) 1325 on Women, Security and Conflict. This resolution is by many considered to be

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RÉSUMÉ

On célèbre cette année célèbre le dixième anniversaire de l'adoption de la Résolution du Conseil de Sécurité de Nations Unies (ONU RSC 1325) sur la Femme, la Sécurité et le Conflit. Cette résolution est considérée par beaucoup de personnes comme un événement marquant dans la lutte contre l'impact de la guerre sur les femmes et sa contribution à la résolution des conflits et à la paix durable. La résolution ONU RSC 1325 des Nations Unies est une réponse à une réalité concrète. Elle reconnaît les femmes au-delà du point de vue traditionnel comme simples victimes, mais aussi comme témoins, acteurs de la violence et des éléments essentiels du changement.

This year celebrates the tenth anniversary of the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UN SCR) 1325 on Women, Security and Conflict. This resolution is by many considered to be *the milestone* addressing the impact of war on women, and women's contributions to conflict resolution and sustainable peace. UN SCR 1325 is a response to the reality on the ground. It recognises women as more than the traditional view as mere victims, but also as female witnesses, perpetrators of violence and crucial drivers of change.

Today UN SCR 1325 is a central piece in any discussion on conflict, women and security. During the last decade much international effort has been invested in the implementation of the resolution. Many national governments have incorporated UN SCR 1325 to their international development agenda and a number of governments have linked the issues with their own emancipation legacy. Politically the resolution has enjoyed full support and is backed by many influential national governments. For example, seventeen national governments have presented official actions plans for the implementation of UN SCR 1325¹. In spite of the ten years of political buy-in the questions of its operational impact still remain somewhat unanswered.

1. See www.operationUNSCR1325.se

In some cases UN SCR 1325 is making the move from being a policy issue to become an operational tool, capturing the dynamics of a post-conflict situation and improving the delivery of sustainable peace. One main challenge has been that since its origin, the Resolution has been battling with the connotations of political correctness or feminist dogma². The operational reality has been reflected by the fact that individuals in decision-making positions who have not understood the added value of UN SCR 1325 have found it easier to symbolically tick off the gender box, by for example appointing a female individual or establishing a gender unit, rather than ransacking what gender mainstreaming is about and how it can contribute to the work at hand. As a result, operationally the issue has in many cases tended to tilt towards symbolism and has in some cases effectively undermined the agenda of women, peace and security.

UN SCR 1325 is as relevant and as important as ever. The question is how do we progressively move the agenda of the Resolution forward as an operational tool? A tool that will assist us in understanding the differences in women's and men's experience and behaviour during armed conflict and how this is related to the delivery of sustainable peace operations. First, more must still be done in order to get women in strategic positions in decision making-contexts and in peacekeeping operations. This is very basic, but the record of two international key players, the EU and the UN, is dismal in this respect. Second, there is a need to move beyond numbers, as an improved gender balance will not automatically advance the implementation of UN SCR 1325. We need to learn from gender sensitive policies that have actually worked. Third, we must all leave the binary world. Both the detractors and the "blind" believers of gender mainstreaming are undermining the gender aspect. Gender is important, but it is not – and this is a hard sell for some of us who propagate the issue – always *the* determining factor. As we progress, the issue must gradually find its rightful place among other important considerations in designing peace-promoting missions and in addressing conflicts.

The emergence of UN SCR 1325

The variety of roles that women (and men) take on before, during and after conflict was neglected for a long time. Historically, men have been given and have taken on the belligerent roles to fight and be fought in wars and armed conflict. Women's relationship and connections to conflicts was associated with the stereotypic roles of peaceful women, nurturing and caring, and always the victims

2. Johanna Valenius, "Gender Mainstreaming in ESDP missions", *Chaillot Paper* - n°101, May 2007.

of wars. As such women (and children) have historically been labelled as weak and fragile with the systematic categorisation of being part of a 'vulnerable group'. This narrow analysis has led to policy decisions with limited operational impact, as it has failed to capture the entire spectra of specific experiences that people carry with them in post- conflict situations. In the early Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) efforts the focus was only on men as combatants and they were hence the key beneficiaries of the process. The design of DDR processes disregarded women that had been in combat as well as the role of women in the reintegration process, both as combatants and as civilians.

The recognition of women's participation in armed conflict only started as late as in the 1980's, and then as part of a research component in a broader study on peace and violence³. Since then much consideration has been given to the multiple roles that women have in wars and conflicts, and the contribution of women as stakeholders of peace, disarmament and conflict prevention. This understanding culminated in the United Nations Security Council resolution UN SCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, adopted on the 31st of October 2000.

Ten years down the line, the result of the resolution has unarguably been a greater awareness of the gender dimensions in conflict and post-conflict situations throughout the international community. For example, out twelve out of twenty 20 peacekeeping operations, have full-time gender advisory capacity, which includes formalised units or single gender advisors⁴. Further, UN pre-deployment courses include gender sessions and gender is often included in the UN mission mandate. However, the operational impacts of the resolution are not as visible.

Not merely about a head count

One of the objectives of UN SCR 1325 is to respond to the challenges of leadership through applying gender balancing as a practice. The Resolution recognizes that although women display important leadership roles on the community level, women are generally not prominent in the decision-making discussions following a ceasefire they, seldom enjoy strategic positions within political parties in the aftermath of conflict, nor are they generally included in

3. Pax online *Bulletin Peace Studies Group*, October 2004, n. 3. <http://www.ces.uc.pt/nucleos/nep/pages/en/newsletter-px.php>

4. As of May 2008. <http://www.peacewomen.org/un/pkwatch/facts.html>

5. NOELEN HEYZER, Gender, Peace and Disarmament, Published in *Disarmament Forum Women, Men, Peace and Security* 2003 n°. 4 pp. -16 UNIDR, 2003.

security structures⁵. The Status discussions leading to the independence of Kosovo is a clear example of this. The UN-led negotiation delegation and the official Kosovo delegations brought together no women on either side of the negotiation table, not taking in to account women carrying out administrative or advisory roles. les.

The United Nations has recognized the importance of addressing the gender dimension in all aspects of its work and the need to fully involve women into this process. Recently we have seen a number of female appointees to senior positions in the UN⁶. Despite these efforts, out of thirty peacekeeping missions there are still only three women that serve as Special Representatives of the Secretary General (SRSG) and four women serve as Deputy SRSGs⁷. Furthermore, only thirty percent of the workforce in international peacekeeping missions are women and only four percent of the UN civilian police. Out of the UN military peacekeepers a mere one percent are female. The European Union has not performed significantly better, in fact in some respects even worse. Over the past decade the EU has appointed more than a dozen EU Special Representatives- senior diplomats that are the face and voice of the EU's foreign policy establishment in crisis situations across the globe. To the embarrassment of the EU,- not a single woman has held this position.

In a perfect world we would not have to point out the sex of people holding important and strategic positions within the international or regional organisations. Competence should be the key consideration and gender should not have to be a concern, or even less a criteria. However, given the reality we live in, such appointments serve as an inspiration for women all over the world and put pressure on leaders refusing to shoulder the responsibility of including over 50% percent of the population into meaningful positions in society.

It is important to remember that the ability to truly implement the Resolution does not come automatically with a set number of female SRSG's, the inclusion of female staff, the establishment of gender units or the number or existence of gender advisors to a mission. Appointments to top positions in the global peace and security organisations are often a symbolic gesture, which contrary to public belief, in practice changes little on the ground.

6. Margot Wallström as the SG's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, 2 February 2010 and Ann-Marie Orle as the top United Nations Police Official, 8 March 2010.

7. Special and Personal Representatives and Envoys of the Secretary-General, version cited March 2010, www.un.org

To truly succeed in the implementation of UN SCR 1325, insight and attitude change are fundamental. Every day, in our lives; in our work; in our contexts; in peacekeeping missions, in hiring and interviewing individuals; in the planning of peacekeeping operations; in the collection of information and in the analysis of contexts we have to be aware of the gender constructions that we operate in. We must aim for a joint effort to change existing structures that only provide a fraction of the answer, and replace these with new and more inclusive arrangements. Only then can we actually reform the view of women and men and their experiences of conflict. And that is how we can make UN SCR 1325 relevant and sustainable in all contexts. We will not get there by only counting heads.

UN SCR 1325 and gender mainstreaming- operational challenges

There is limited research and only partial information about the operational impacts of UN SCR 1325. Has it really made any change in the lives of men and women in post-conflict settings? If so, what has this meant for the individuals and the society as a whole? One of the main challenges in operationalising UN SCR 1325 is that the Resolution itself provides little guidance as to the “how?” The gap between policy and practice continues to confuse decision-makers on the ground as they are grappling with many competing issues and political pressure to mainstream gender in their operations. In some cases this has resulted in a symbolic approach to UN SCR 1325 in particular, and gender issues in general.

Central obstacles in practically applying UN SCR 1325 and hence the gender mainstreaming agenda can be attributed to the “blind” believers and the detractors of gender mainstreaming. As for the blind believers, there has been a rightful crusade in making the role of women visible in the work of peace and security. However, as the issue is firmly grounded in policy agendas there is still a tendency to refer gender as only women’s issues. The fact that some women’s organisations fear that giving too much space to men in the gender discussion would diminish women’s issues has prevented a wider systematic approach to what gender is, what it means and why gender is relevant to peace and security. This approach can be ideologically intimidating for many practitioners, as it can be equated to a feminist dogma, and also creates practical constraints, thus preventing practitioners from creatively thinking about how to resolve operational gender mainstreaming challenges, and how to truly advance the operational implementation of 1325. Those who slander gender mainstreaming, on the other side, have not understood the added value of gender

mainstreaming and have easily dismissed these efforts. The gender agenda has been an easy target for mockery and ridicule, albeit very seldom officially. This is especially the case when facing decisions related to hard-core security, traditionally viewed as the domain for men in uniforms. There is also a third group; those who have felt sympathetic with the gender mainstreaming agenda but have not fully grasped the methods but due to the political correctness that the issue is surrounded by not dared to seek clarifying answers. This has resulted in the previously mentioned symbolic approach to the challenges a tokenism approach to the issue.

The main problem is that here has been a tendency to focus on the gender dimension as an isolated issue thereby at times providing an inadequate approach to the delivery of peace in post-conflict environments. The fact remains that societies are formed and built by men and women, but they are also shaped by old and young, by the division of wealth and power and by ethnic belongings and loyalties.

Emerging best practice show that the operational integration of Resolution UN SCR 1325 “is a multidimensional process that requires a comprehensive strategy” and has many interconnected areas⁸. These interconnected areas are crucial for the success of gender mainstreaming. For example, the delivery of security might seem as a rather straightforward issue. Security is security. However, once we start thinking about what security means for whom, for whom and for what are we providing security, and what practices should be used in delivering security, the straightforward becomes rather complicated. The gender mainstreaming perspectives will unarguably provide valuable information and analysis; nonetheless, the interlinkages to other issues determining the social fabric of the context at hand should not be forgotten, or underestimated.

Gender and UN SCR 1325 remains a crucial tool, but it is only one instrument in the toolbox. To better understand which role the Resolution can play and how to capitalise on its potential there is a need for an honest analysis of the operational relevance. We need to learn from gender sensitive policies that have worked. It would be a good idea to gather the experience of gender advisors, gender units, gender departments and other key players in order to analyse challenges and successes. These findings could form the basis of a more robust and relevant operational framework, from which gender mainstreaming work could be coordinated in a sensible and coherent manner.

8. LOUISE OLSSON AND JOHAN TEJPAN (eds.) Operational Effectiveness and UN Resolution UN SCR 1325- Practices and Lessons from Afghanistan. FOI. 2009.

UN SCR 1325 – relevant and present

As the Resolution is approaching its 10th anniversary we can conclude that our understanding of conflicts has become more complex. With that understanding we also have an increased need for more sophisticated tools to understand where the root causes of a conflict lie. The gender lens has provided us with one such tool.

UNSCR 1325 continues to be a powerful instrument, and to better cater for the delivery of peace in conflict torn societies, the implementation of 1325 is crucial. Ten years have passed and women are still disproportionately affected by the social and economic impacts of armed conflict and are still not included at the negotiating table. To advance the operational implementation of 1325 we must continue to support its implementation with political leadership. However, at the same time we must stop treating gender as an isolated issue. Gender is always important and is always a factor, but it is not always *the* determining factor in the design of responses to a conflict setting. To be truly effective, 1325 needs to be complemented with other analytical instruments and approaches. By doing so we will fully understand different post-conflict dynamics and be able to design responses that make sense to the victims, perpetrators and victims of armed violence, regardless of whom they may be.