

WOMEN IN MULTILATERAL PEACE OPERATIONS 2023: WHAT IS THE STATE OF PLAY?

In the year 2000, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women and peace and security stressed the link between gender equality and international peace and security. The resolution underscored the importance of the full and equal participation of women in all efforts towards the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, including UN peace operations. Following the resolution, organizations and member states involved in multilateral peace operations affirmed their commitment to increase women's participation in these activities. Increasing the number of uniformed and civilian women at all levels has since become a priority of the UN Secretariat. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Secretariat and, more recently, the European External Action Service (EEAS) of the European Union (EU) have followed suit and developed strategies establishing specific targets and deadlines to enhance women's participation in their respective personnel. More than 20 years after the adoption of the resolution, some progress has been achieved in enhancing women's representation in multilateral peace operations, but much remains to be done.

This overview of women's representation in multilateral peace operations presents data on aggregate personnel trends, annual snapshots of data on women's representation in leadership, and annual averages of women in the personnel of peace operations and in member state contributions. It looks at UN peace operations (i.e. both UN peacekeeping operations and UN special political missions), EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations, and OSCE field operations. The objective is to support the efforts of multilateral organizations and their member states to increase the representation of women in multilateral peace operations.

The statistics presented here aim to inform and foster the debate on the future of the women and peace and security agenda within the context of multilateral peace operations. They illustrate to what extent the organizations deploying multilateral peace operations and their member states are making progress towards increasing women's representation. Having a better perspective about the status of women's participation in multilateral peace operations and keeping track of its progress contribute to refining strategies to target potential shortcomings. This overview also enhances the transparency of multilateral peace operations and provides insights into their recent trends and developments.

Dr Claudia Pfeifer Cruz

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN MULTILATERAL PEACE OPERATIONS: UN MILITARY

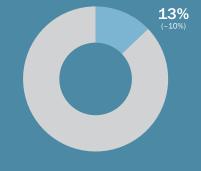
The UN's 2018 Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy established the goal of reaching 25 per cent women among military experts and staff officers and 15 per cent among troops in UN peace operations by 2028. Under the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) Declaration of Shared Commitments, the UN has advocated for broadening the role and participation of women in its operations, including uniformed women. Through the A4P implementation strategy for 2021-23, 154 UN member states committed to increasing the number of uniformed women personnel in UN peace operations. The proportion of women among military experts and staff officers is nearing the strategy's target, whereas the proportion of women among troops remains significantly below the 2028 goal.

Women in UN military: Totals

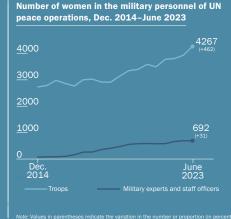
In 2023, both the number and the proportion of women in the military personnel of UN peace operations increased. This trend has continued since the launch of the 2018 Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy. In June 2023, women constituted 7.3 per cent of the total military personnel deployed in UN peace operations (68 333), which was an increase of 0.6 percentage points compared with the previous year. In the military, the proportion of women serving as experts and staff officers remained higher than for troop positions, at 21 per cent.

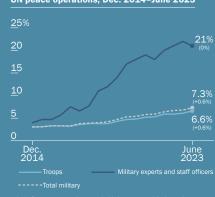
Women in leadership

On 1 October 2023, 13 per cent of (1 out of 8) force commanders in UN peacekeeping operations were women. This was a decrease of 10 percentage points compared with the previous year. The decline can be attributed to the naming of a new force commander for MINURSO, a position held in the previous year by a woman serving as the deputy force commander.



Proportion of women in the military personnel of UN peace operations, Dec. 2014–June 2023

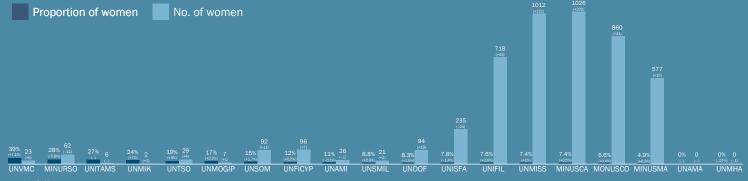




Women in UN military: Operations

UN peace operations with relatively high proportions of women in the military personnel tend to be relatively small in terms of deployment. The largest UN peace operations in terms of military deployment—UNMISS, MINUSCA, MONUSCO and MINUSMA, respectively—are among those with the lowest proportion of women in the military personnel. With the exception of MINURSO, UNAMI, UNISFA and UNMHA, the proportion of women in the military personnel has increased in all UN peace operations over the past year.

Proportion and number of women in the military personnel of UN peace operations, 2023 monthly averages



.. = not applicable.

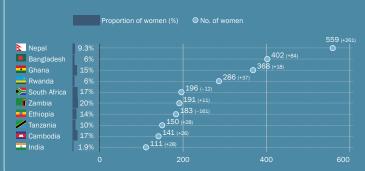
Notes: The 2023 monthly averages are based on the months from Jan. to June. The average numbers of women personnel are rounded to the nearest integer. Values in parentheses indicate the variation in the number or proportion (in percentage points) of women personnel compared with the previous

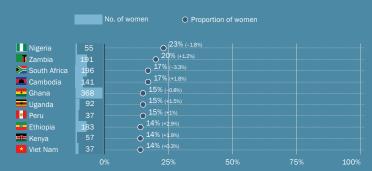
Women in UN military: Contributors

Five of the top 10 contributors by number of military personnel to UN peace operations also feature among the top 10 contributors by number of women to the military personnel of UN peace operations: Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Nepal and Rwanda. Ethiopia continues to be among the top contributors of women to the military personnel of UN peace operations but is no longer among the top 10 contributors by total number of military personnel. Six of the top 10 contributors by number of women to the military personnel are sub-Saharan African countries and four are Asian. Five of the top 10 contributors by number of women are also among the top 10 contributors in terms of proportion. However, the list of top contributors by proportion of women is dominated by countries that deployed smaller numbers of personnel. Ghana is the only country which is both among the top 10 contributors by total number of military personnel to UN peace operations.

Top 10 contributors of women to the military personnel of UN peace operations, by highest number of women, 2023 monthly averages

Top 10 contributors of women to the military personnel of UN peace operations, by highest proportion of women, 2023 monthly averages





WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN MULTILATERAL PEACE OPERATIONS: UN POLICE

The UN's 2018 Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy established the target of reaching 20 per cent women in formed police units and 30 per cent women among individual police officers by 2028. The A4P initiative reaffirmed the commitments of the UN and its member states. In 2021, the UN reached the 30 per cent goal for the proportion of women among individual police officers. In 2023, this proportion reached 31 per cent, which was a decline from 32 per cent in 2022. The proportion of women in formed police units increased in 2023 and it is closer to meeting the strategy's 2028 target.

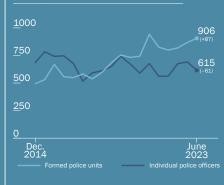
Women in UN police: Totals

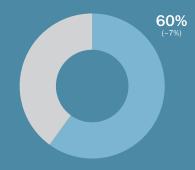
The total number of women in the police personnel of UN peace operations increased in 2023 compared to the previous year. In June 2023, the proportion of women in the police personnel of UN peace operations remained stable at 19 per cent, showing no significant change since 2021. Both the number and the proportion of women in formed police units in UN peace operations increased in comparison with 2022. The proportion of women in formed police units reached 16 per cent in June 2023. In contrast, both the number and the proportion of individual women police officers decreased.

Women in leadership

On 1 October 2023, 60 per cent (3 out of 5) of all chief police officers (4 police commissioners and 1 assistant police commissioner) were women. Of these, 2 held the position of police commissioner and 1 that of assistant police commissioner. This was a decrease of 7 percentage points compared with the previous year due to the closing of MINUSMA, which had a woman police commissioner.

Number of women in the police personnel of UN peace operations, Dec. 2014–June 2023





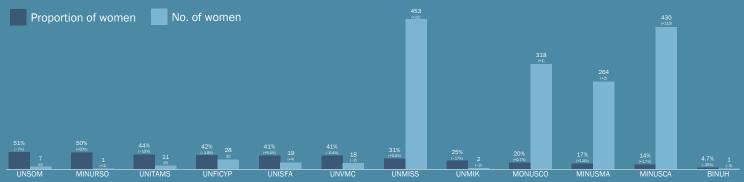
Proportion of women in the police personnel of UN peace operations, Dec. 2014–June 2023



Women in UN police: Operations

UN peace operations deploying smaller numbers of police personnel tend to have higher proportions of women in their police personnel. Some of the UN peace operations deploying the largest numbers of police personnel, such as MINUSCA, MINUSMA and MONUSCO, are among those with the lowest proportions of women in their police personnel. In UNMISS, the percentage of women in the police force stands at 31 per cent, making it relatively high compared to other large UN peace operations. UNMISS ranks as the fourth largest UN peace operation in terms of police personnel deployment.

Proportion and number of women in the police personnel of UN peace operations, 2023 monthly averages

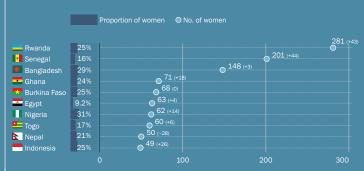


Notes: The 2023 monthly averages are based on the months from Jan. to June. Values in parentheses indicate the variation in the number or proportion (in percentage points) of women personnel compared with the previous year

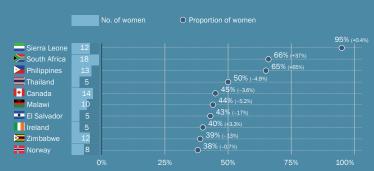
Women in UN police: Contributors

With the exception of Nepal, Nigeria and Indonesia, 7 of the top 10 contributors by number of police personnel to UN peace operations are also among the top 10 contributors by number of women to the police personnel. Six of the top 10 contributors by number of women to the police personnel are sub-Saharan African countries. The top 10 contributors by proportion of women to UN police contingents contributed with a smaller total number of police personnel in comparison with the top contributors by number of women to the police personnel. None of them is in the top 10 in terms of the number of personnel. Four of the top 10 contributors by proportion of women are African countries.

Top 10 contributors of women to the police personnel of UN peace operations, by highest number of women, 2023 monthly averages



Top 10 contributors of women to the police personnel of UN peace operations, by highest proportion of women, 2023 monthly averages



Notes: The 2023 monthly averages as to accept on the months from Jan. to June. The average numbers of women personnel are rounded to the nearest integer. Values in parentheses indicate the variation in the number or proportion (in percentage points) of women personnel compared with the previous

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN MULTILATERAL PEACE OPERATIONS: UN CIVILIAN PERSONNEL

The UN's 2017 System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity set targets for the equal representation of women and men in several areas, including among civilian personnel in UN peace operations. The strategy allows for variation within a 47-53 per cent range as an indication of such parity. However, the goal of achieving gender parity in civilian personnel remains distant for most UN peace operations, and particularly for peacekeeping operations—among the latter, none has reached the target.

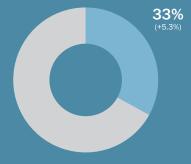
Women in UN civilian personnel: Totals

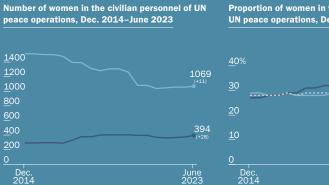
The number of women in the civilian personnel of UN peace operations increased slightly in 2023. The proportion of women in civilian personnel was similar across both UN peacekeeping operations and special political missions. However, over the last ten years, the rate of increase for women in civilian positions in special political missions has outpaced that in peacekeeping operations. In June 2023, the proportion of women serving in civilian roles in UN special political missions stood at 34 per cent, while in UN peacekeeping operations it was slightly lower at 31 per cent.



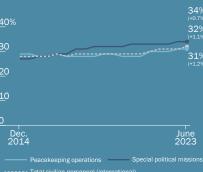
On 1 October 2023, 33 per cent of $(8 \text{ out of } 24)^1$ heads of UN peacekeeping operations and special political missions were women. This was an increase of 5.3 percentage points compared with the previous year.

¹ This number includes field offices that are not considered multilateral peace operations according to SIPRI's definition, namely UNOAU, UNOCA, UNOWAS, UNSCO and UNICO.





Proportion of women in the civilian personnel of UN peace operations, Dec. 2014–June 2023



e. Values in parentheses indicate the variation in the number or proportion (in percentage points) of women personnel compared with the same month in the previous year.

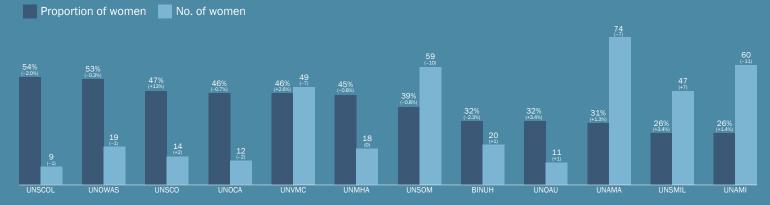
Women in UN civilian personnel: Operations

UN peacekeeping operations generally have a higher number of women civilian personnel compared to UN special political missions, primarily because they typically deploy more civilian personnel on average. However, a greater proportion of women are found in the civilian personnel of special political missions. In 2023, UNFICYP had the highest proportion of women in its civilian staff among UN peacekeeping operations, with 43 per cent. For special political missions, UNSCOL had the highest proportion of women in its civilian personnel, with 54 per cent. UNSCOL therefore overshot the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity goal of having between 47 and 53 per cent women in its civilian personnel. UNOWAS and UNSCO managed to reach the goal, with 53 and 47 per cent respectively.

Proportion and number of women in the civilian personnel of UN peacekeeping operations, 2023 monthly averages



Proportion and number of women in the civilian personnel of UN special political missions, 2023 monthly averages



WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN MULTILATERAL PEACE OPERATIONS: OSCE FIELD OPERATIONS

The OSCE Secretariat's Gender Parity Strategy for 2019–26 set the goal of gender parity across all levels of personnel in its field operations by 2026, allowing for variation within a 45–55 per cent range. Three out of 13 field operations reached at least 45 per cent women in their personnel in 2023.

Women in OSCE field operations: Totals

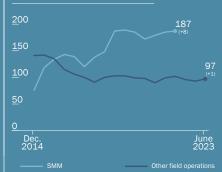
Up until its termination in March 2022, the SMM had been both the largest OSCE field operation and the one with the most women in its deployed personnel. It had shaped both the number and the proportion of women in OSCE operations. Excluding the SMM, the number of women in OSCE field operations has remained relatively constant, registering at 97 in June 2023. Additionally, the proportion of women in OSCE field operations other than the SMM has been fairly stable over the past decade. In 2023, the proportion rose to 38 per cent, a modest increase of 0.2 percentage points from the previous year.

Women in leadership

On 1 October 2023, 23 per cent of (3 out of 13)² heads of mission of OSCE field operations were women. This was an increase of 1.6 percentage points compared with the previous year. The increase was a result of the discontinuation of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine in 2022, which was led by a man.



Number of women in the personnel of OSCE field operations, Dec. 2014–June 2023



Proportion of women in the personnel of OSCE field operations, Dec. 2014–June 2023

23%

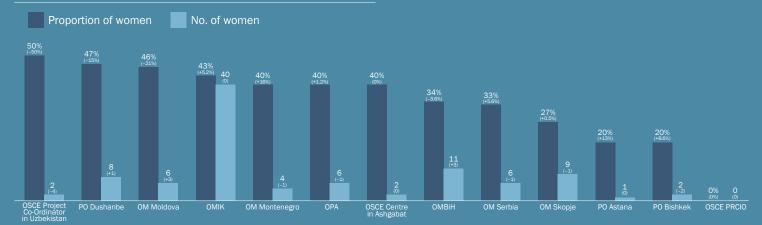


Notes: Values in parentheses indicate the variation in the number or proportion (in percentage points) of women personnel compared with the same month in the previous year. The SMM was discontinued on 31 Mar. 2022.

Women in OSCE field operations: Operations

Most OSCE field operations have a relatively small number of personnel. Therefore, small variations in the number of women can have a large impact on the proportion of women in the personnel of a field operation. In 2023, 3 OSCE field operations (OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan, PO Dushanbe and OM Moldova) had more than 45 per cent women in their personnel, meeting the goal of the Secretariat's Gender Parity Strategy. OMIK, the largest OSCE operation in terms of personnel, had both a relatively high number and proportion of women personnel deployed.

Proportion and number of women in the personnel of OSCE field operations, June 2023



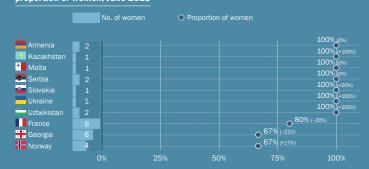
Notes: Values in parentheses indicate the variation in the number or proportion (in percentage points) of women personnel compared with the previous year

Women in OSCE field operations: Contributors

Most countries that contribute the highest number of personnel in total to OSCE field operations also contribute the highest number of women personnel. Three of the top 10 contributors by number of women personnel are also among the top 10 contributors by proportion of women personnel to OSCE field operations. In June 2023, among the 10 top contributors by number of women, 4 had a proportion of women higher than 45 per cent. While most of the top contributors by proportion of women deploy only women, making their personnel 100 per cent women, the overall number of personnel from these countries is quite small, ranging from 1 to 2 individuals.

Top 10 contributors of women to the personnel of OSCE field operations, by highest number of women, June 2023 $\,$

Top 10 contributors of women to the personnel of OSCE field operations, by highest proportion of women, June 2023



te: Values in parentheses indicate the variation in the number or proportion (in percentage points) of women personnel compared with the same month in the previous year.

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN MULTILATERAL PEACE OPERATIONS: EU CSDP MISSIONS AND OPERATIONS

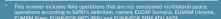
In 2023, the EU renewed the Civilian CSDP Compact to bolster its civilian CSDP missions, committing among other things to increasing women's representation in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1325. By 2025, member states aim to enlarge the candidate pool of women for these roles, striving for 40 per cent in women's participation and gender parity at all levels, especially in leadership. While the previous compact committed to increasing women's representation in EU CSDP missions and operations, the new compact has established a concrete target for doing so. To support these aims, the EEAS plans to update its 2021 Strategy and Action Plan to Enhance Women's Participation in Civilian CSDP Missions.

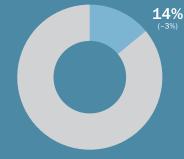
Women in EU CSDP missions and operations: Totals

The number of women in military EU CSDP missions has been increasing over the past few years, reaching 232 in December 2022. The proportion of women in military EU CSDP missions has also increased in comparison to the previous year, reaching 7.7 per cent in December 2022. Similarly, the number of women in civilian EU CSDP missions has been trending upwards, totalling 309 by June 2023. However, this increase was primarily due to an increase in the number of EU CSDP missions and operations. The proportion of women in these civilian missions has remained relatively stable, registering at 24 per cent in June 2023.

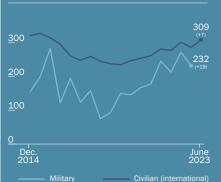
Women in leadership

On 1 October 2023, 14 per cent of (3 out of 22)³ heads of EU CSDP missions and operations were women. This was a decrease of 3 percentage points compared with the previous year. Although the number of women leading EU CSDP missions and operations has remained unchanged, the number of these operations increased.

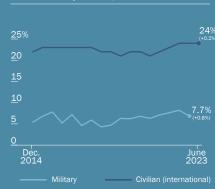




Number of women in the personnel of EU CSDP missions and operations, Dec. 2014–June 2023



Proportion of women in the personnel of EU CSDP missions and operations, Dec. 2014–June 2023

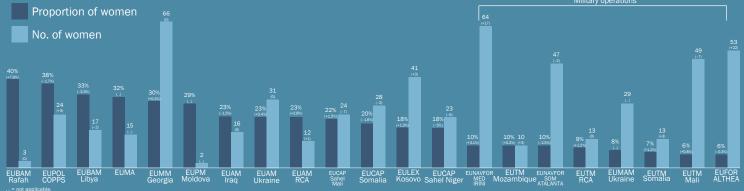


otes: The data for military personnel is not yet available for 2023. Values in parentheses indicate the variation in the number or proportion (in percentage points) of women ersonnel compared with the same month in the previous year.

Women in EU CSDP missions and operations: Operations

The proportion of women in EU CSDP missions and operations has been consistently greater in civilian missions than in military operations. Over the past year, there has been a general uptrend in the proportion of women across most EU CSDP missions and operations.

Proportion and number of women in the personnel of EU CSDP missions and operations, 2023 monthly averages

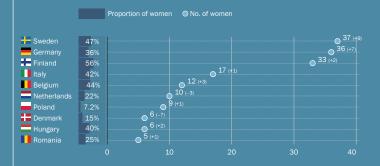


Actes: The 2023 monthly averages are based on the months from Jan. to June. For military EU CSDP operations, the warrages are based on the year 2022 since the last available data is from Dec. 2022. The average numbers of women personal are considered to the nearest integer. Values in parenthese indicates the variation in the number or proportion in percentage points) of women personal compared with the previous year because they were declaration and the number of proportion in in percentage points) of women personal compared with the previous year because they were declaration and the number of proportion in in percentage points) of women personal compared with the previous year because they were declaration and the previous years they are the previous years and the previous years are the previous years.

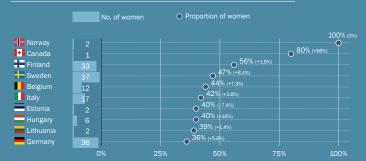
Women in EU CSDP missions and operations: Contributors

Eight of the top 10 contributors of seconded personnel to civilian EU CSDP missions and operations are also among the top 10 contributors of seconded women personnel. Six of the top 10 contributors by number of women personnel also feature among the top 10 contributors by proportion of women in the seconded personnel.

Top 10 contributors of women to the personnel of civilian EU CSDP missions and operations, by highest number of women, 2023 monthly averages



Top 10 contributors of women to the personnel of civilian EU CSDP missions and operations, by highest proportion of women, 2023 monthly averages



CONCLUDING REMARKS

Since the UN Security Council passed its landmark resolution on women and peace and security, organizations and member states have pledged to improve the representation of women in multilateral peace operations. Although there has been a measure of progress, it remains incremental and falls short of achieving gender parity. Overall, women have continued to be under-represented in the field.

In terms of women serving as UN military personnel, strides are being made towards the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy's 2028 targets. Specifically, with 21 per cent women among military experts and staff officers, the organization is nearing its aim of 25 per cent women in this area. However, with 6.6 per cent women among troops, it is still falling short of the 15 per cent target for this category.

More substantive progress regarding women's representation is evident in terms of UN police personnel. Noteworthy initiatives include priority deployment to formed police units that include women. In 2021, the organization successfully met its 2028 target of 30 per cent women among individual police officers. In 2023, the proportion of women in this category reached 31 per cent, which was a minor decline compared with the previous year. At 16 per cent, the proportion of women in formed police units is increasing and closer to the 2028 target of reaching at least 20 per cent.

The participation of women in the civilian personnel of UN peace operations, however, has remained relatively stagnant. At 32 per cent in 2023, this area is falling substantially short of achieving the 2017 UN System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity's goal, which calls for a proportion of between 47 and 53 per cent.

For the OSCE, the proportion of women in its field operations has remained relatively stable in recent years, reaching 38 per cent in 2023. The SMM had a significant impact on the overall figures until it was discontinued in March 2022. This was due to its larger size and its lower proportion of women in comparison to most other missions. Currently, 3 out of 13 operations have reached the 45–55 per cent target set by the OSCE Secretariat's Gender Parity Strategy for 2019–26.

The landscape is quite similar for EU CSDP missions. In its 2021–24 strategy, the EEAS acknowledged a stagnation in terms of women's participation in civilian CSDP missions—which reached 24 per cent in 2023—and set a target of 40 per cent participation by 2024. The EEAS plans to revisit this strategy given that member states are expected to increase the roster of women candidates in 2025. However, it is important to note that term-limited appointments of women can create a short-term illusion of progress, diverting focus from the sustainable, long-term changes needed across various peace operations.

Overall, organizations are still falling short of their own strategic targets for women's participation in peace operations, signalling a clear need to redouble efforts to achieve these goals. Gender equality remains particularly elusive within leadership roles across all organizations. The UN's military personnel have the lowest proportion of women leaders at 13 per cent, while its police personnel fare better at 60 per cent. Tackling women's underrepresentation in senior and intermediary positions calls for sustained commitment and targeted strategies. However, merely increasing the numbers without fostering institutional change would fail to address the issue of women's meaningful participation in peace operations. Such a narrow focus could lead to a scenario where women are present but not enjoying equal status. Under-representation at various tiers of leadership not only contravenes the commitments of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, but it could also limit the scope and success of peace operations. Given these disparities, a focus on leadership should be a critical component of any strategy aimed at enhancing women's participation in multilateral peace operations.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A4P Action for Peacekeeping (of the UN) BINUH

UN Integrated Office in Haiti Common Security and Defence Policy (of the EU) European External Action Service **CSDP**

EEAS

EU European Union

EUAM Iraq

EUAM RCA EUAM Ukraine

European Union
EU Advisory Mission in Iraq
EU Advisory Mission in the Central African Republic
EU Advisory Mission Ukraine
EU Border Assistance Mission in Libya
EU Border Assistance Mission to Rafah EUBAM Libya EUBAM Rafah EUCAP Sahel Mali EUCAP Sahel Niger EU Capacity Building Mission in Mali EU Capacity Building Mission in Niger EU Capacity Building Mission in Somalia EU Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina EUCAP Somalia EUFOR ALTHEA **EULEX Kosovo** EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo

EUMAM Ukraine EUMM Georgia EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia EU Naval Force Mediterranean **EUNAVFOR MED IRINI**

EUNAVFOR SOM ATALANTA EUPM Moldova EU Naval Force Somalia
EU Partnership Mission in the Republic of Moldova **EUPOL COPPS**

EUTM Mali EUTM Mozambique

EU Training Mission in Mali EU Training Mission in Mozambique EU Training Mission in the Central African Republic EU Training Mission in Somalia UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara **EUTM RCA** EUTM Somalia MINURSO

MINUSCA MINUSMA UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali

MONUSCO UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

OM Moldova OM Montenegro OM Serbia OSCE Mission to Moldova
OSCE Mission to Montenegro
OSCE Mission to Serbia OM Skopje OMBIH

OSCE Mission to Skopje
OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina

OMIK OSCE Mission in Kosovo

OSCE Presence in Albania
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe **OSCE** OSCE PRCIO OSCE Astana OSCE Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office

OSCE Programme Office in Astana OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek PO Bishkek OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe
OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine PO Dushanbe SMM

UN United Nations

UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan UN Assistance Mission for Iraq **UNAMA** UNAMI **UNDOF** UN Disengagement Observer Force UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus UN Interim Force in Lebanon UN Interim Security Force for Abyei **UNFICYP** UNIFIL **UNISFA**

UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan **UNITAMS UNMHA** UN Mission to support the Hudaydah Agreement UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo UN Mission in South Sudan UNMIK UNMISS

UNMOGIP UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan

UN Office to the African Union UN Regional Office for Central Africa UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel UNOAU **UNOCA UNOWAS**

Office of the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Office of the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon **UNSCO**

UNSCOL

UNSCR UN Security Council Resolution UN Support Mission in Libya **UNSMIL** UN Assistance Mission in Somalia **UNSOM UNTSO** UN Truce Supervision Organization UN Verification Mission in Colombia UNVMC

Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, accessed Oct. 2023.

The SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database is the only database on multilateral peace operations in the world that combines sex-disaggregated data on UN and non-UN peace operations. It allows users to track progress on efforts to increase women's representation and achieve gender parity in these operations.

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