

II. The 15th anniversary of Resolution 1325: global perspectives

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The 15th anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 presented an opportunity to celebrate its achievements as well as reflect on the current challenges facing implementation of the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda. Formally, the Security Council marked the anniversary with a High-level Review on Women, Peace and Security at which the independent global study on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 was published.¹ The WPS agenda was also expanded by the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2242.² This section provides an overview of these activities and reviews that took place in 2015.

UN Security Council Resolution 2242: a new resolution is adopted

On 13 October 2015, during the Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security in the UN Security Council, Resolution 2242 was unanimously adopted. This eighth resolution on the WPS agenda reflects some of the new challenges in global peace and security, including climate change, the increasing number of refugees and internally displaced persons, and violent extremism.

Compared to the earlier resolutions discussed in section I, which focus specifically on single aspects of the WPS agenda, Resolution 2242 adopts a more holistic perspective and a cross-cutting theme, addressing all four pillars of the WPS agenda: participation, protection, prevention and peacebuilding. In addition to its more holistic approach, Resolution 2242: (a) strengthens the commitment to integrate a gender analysis of the drivers and impacts of violent extremism and urges greater consultation with women's organizations affected by this violence; (b) sets new targets for the number of female peacekeepers in UN peacekeeping operations, including through the use of incentives for troop-contributing countries; (c) stresses the need for more senior women leaders in all levels of decision-making on peace and security; (d) emphasizes the need to address the lack of funding for implementation of the WPS agenda; (e) highlights the importance of increasing the meaningful engagement of civil society, including women's organizations, in peace and security processes; and (f) reiterates the important role of men and boys' engagement in promoting women's participation in the prevention and resolution of armed conflict and in peacebuilding.

¹ United Nations, *Preventing Conflict Transforming Justice, Securing Peace: The Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, UN Women, 2015.

² United Nations Security Council Resolution 2242, 13 Oct. 2015.

In acknowledging for the first time the role of women in countering violent extremism, Resolution 2242 also calls for greater consultation with women's organizations on developing strategies to counter terrorism and support for building their capacity to be able to do so. However, this aspect of the resolution has raised concerns among women's organizations. The main concerns are that the integration of counterterrorism measures within the WPS agenda might lead to such measures being prioritized over other urgent issues, and that counterterrorism measures may be justified in the name of 'protecting women'.³ In several cases, women's organizations and sexual minorities have been caught between being victims of antiterrorist measures and targets of terrorist groups.⁴ The UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, has indicated how strategies that link the fight against terrorism with gender equality tend to reinforce gender stereotypes or increase the vulnerability of people working on such issues.⁵ Civil society organizations have also raised similar concerns, especially on the use of anti-terror laws and policies to prevent access to funding for women's organizations working under extreme conditions, with the consequence of shrinking an already limited space where women operate.⁶ Finally, the lack of definitions of 'terrorism', 'counterterrorism' and 'countering violent extremism' within the resolution, raises additional concerns as to how it will be implemented in practice.

The 2015 High-level Review of Women, Peace and Security, and the Global Study

To mark the 15th anniversary of Resolution 1325 the UN Security Council held a High-level Review of Women, Peace and Security on 13–14 October 2015 during the annual Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security.⁷ Over the two days of the debate, a record-breaking 110 statements were made, the most ever in the 70 years of the Security Council. After renewing their commitments, member states focused on how to improve the implementation of commitments that have yet to be realized, and the key obstacles and constraints encountered. Their statements often referred to significant

³ United Nations (note 1), p. 222.

⁴ Center for Human Rights and Global Justice, *A Decade Lost: Locating Gender in U.S. Counterterrorism*, (NYU School of Law: New York, 2011), p. 67; and United Nations, General Assembly, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms While Countering Terrorism*, A/64/211, 3 Aug. 2009, p. 14.

⁵ United Nations (note 4).

⁶ WILPF and Global Justice Center, Civil Society, 'Open briefing of the Counter-Terrorism Committee on "The Role of Women in Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism"', 9 Sep. 2015.

⁷ United Nations, Security Council, 'Women and peace and security', S/PV.7533 (Resumption 1), 14 Oct. 2015.

thematic WPS issues, such as ‘participation’, the importance of including women in all peace processes and decision-making on peace and security. Compared to previous years there was also an increased focus on financing of the WPS agenda, and France, Ireland, Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom pledged funds.⁸

The Open Debate was followed by the launch of the *Global Study of Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325*. The Global Study was commissioned by the UN Secretary-General to inform the discussion around the High-level Review of Resolution 1325 in response to the Security Council’s invitation in Resolution 2122 adopted in 2013. The Global Study was the result of a year-long process managed and coordinated by UN Women and led by the independent lead author, Radhika Coomaraswamy. It was supported by a 17-member high-level advisory group, which included consultations and dialogue with member states, UN agencies and regional organizations, civil society organizations, academics and research institutions.⁹

The Global Study summarizes research and what has been done so far to implement the WPS agenda. Based on data from a wide variety of sources, such as UN and NGO reports, academic studies, key informant interviews and consultations with civil society organizations, the study identifies progress and challenges in the implementation of Resolution 1325. It notes, for example, the increased awareness of the issue of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in conflict. Since the adoption of the resolution in 2000, the international community has embraced a normative framework on sexual violence in conflict, which includes: (a) the appointment of a Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict to report to the Security Council; (b) the establishment of reporting mechanisms at the local level to report on SGBV in conflict to the Security Council; and (c) the setting up of commissions by the Human Rights Council with the mandate to investigate SGBV.

However, the Global Study notes that there have been few prosecutions of SGBV and that impunity for such crimes prevails. For example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), despite a 2006 law on SGBV, most cases of sexual violence are not reported, investigated or prosecuted due to fear of stigmatization and abandonment, weak law enforcement and a weak judicial system. In 2013, a demographic and health survey sampled 18 000 households from all provinces of the DRC and found that 27 per cent of women have experienced sexual violence at some point in their lives.¹⁰ Indeed, while

⁸ Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, ‘Security council open debate on women, peace, and security report’, Oct. 2015.

⁹ United Nations (note 1), p. 386.

¹⁰ USAID, ‘USAID/DRC fact sheet: Sexual and gender-based violence’, 2015.

the Global Study highlights that the normative framework has the potential to deter future crimes, it also acknowledges that the framework has not contributed to any significant change for women affected by conflict.¹¹

To address impunity and improve the situation for survivors of sexual violence the Global Study recommends: (a) greater investment in strengthening national justice systems to investigate and prosecute crimes; (b) increased advocacy efforts for state ratification and domestic implementation of the Rome Statute; (c) the design and implementation of gender-sensitive reparations programmes for survivors of SGBV; and (d) increased participation of women at all levels of justice service delivery.¹²

Another area of progress identified by the Global Study is the increased references to women in peace agreements. New research indicates that women's participation in peace processes increases the likelihood of reaching an agreement.¹³ Between 1990 and 2000, only 11 per cent of peace agreements referred to women. Since the adoption of Resolution 1325 until 1 January 2015, the number has increased to 27 per cent.¹⁴ In 2014, four of the six agreements, peace talks or national dialogues (67 per cent), referred to women.¹⁵ Despite this progress, the Global Study stresses the continuing limitations, especially in peace negotiations. It highlights research showing that for the 31 peace agreements made between 1992 and 2011, only 9 per cent of the negotiators were women.¹⁶ To address this, the Global Study recommends that member states set specific targets for the improved recruitment, retention, and participation of women in their armed forces and leadership structures.¹⁷ To increase women's participation in peace negotiations the Global Study recommends that the UN includes a specific responsibility to this end in the terms of reference of every mediator, envoy, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) and Deputy SRSG.¹⁸

One of the major challenges to the realization of the WPS agenda is the lack of allocated funding to gender equality and the empowerment of women. All resolutions on the WPS agenda since Resolution 1325 have highlighted the need for adequate resources. While the Global Study does highlight the

¹¹ United Nations (note 1), p. 386.

¹² 'Fact Sheet—the Global Study on 1325: Key messages, findings, and recommendations', UN Women, 2015, p. 4.

¹³ O'Reilly, M., Ó Súilleabháin, A. and Paffenholz, T., 'Reimagining peacemaking: women's roles in peace processes', *International Peace Institute*, June 2015, p.31.

¹⁴ Bell, C., *Text and Context: Evaluating Peace Agreements for Their 'Gender Perspective'* (University of Edinburgh: Edinburgh, 2015), p. 1.

¹⁵ UN Department of Political Affairs, 'Taking stock, looking forward: implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security in the conflict prevention and resolution work of the UN Department of Political Affairs (2010–2014)', Mar. 2015, p. 14.

¹⁶ Castillo Diaz, P. and Tordjman, S., 'Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations: Connections between Presence and Influence', UN Women, 2012, p. 3.

¹⁷ United Nations (note 1), p. 156.

¹⁸ United Nations (note 1), p. 58.

quadrupling of bilateral aid on gender equality to fragile states in the last decade, it concludes that funding is still low, with only 6 per cent of total aid directed towards gender issues. To meet the financial challenges the Study recommends that the UN member states, the UN agencies and civil society should provide dedicated and predictable funding for the Global Acceleration Instrument (GAI)—a new financing mechanism that aims to overcome the obstacles to implementation of the WPS agenda.¹⁹ The GAI was established on the 24 February 2015 with an end date of December 2020.

Implementation of the women, peace and security agenda in peacebuilding and peace operations

In addition to the Global Study, two other reviews contributed to the understanding of the implementation of the WPS agenda in 2015: *The Report of the High-level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* (HIPPO), published on 16 June 2015, and *The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture* ('the Review'), published on 29 June 2015.²⁰ HIPPO assesses UN peace operations and identifies current and future challenges, while the Review describes the UN's role in active peacebuilding. The reports identify structural challenges and obstacles to implementation of UN peace operations and contribute to a deeper understanding of the challenges faced while implementing the WPS agenda within the UN system. HIPPO also addresses sexual exploitation and abuse within UN peace operations, a subject that is also tackled in Resolution 2242.

Both HIPPO and the Review focus mainly on the lack of gender mainstreaming and cross-cutting approaches within the UN system, as well as women's underrepresentation and the lack of resources and funding to fully implement the WPS agenda.

The Review highlights that discrimination and exclusion specifically affect women during violent conflict. It stresses the link between peace processes and society in general by emphasizing the need to look beyond women's political participation around 'the peace table', and to reform government structures and public administration in order to increase women's political participation more broadly.²¹ A similar point is made in HIPPO, which highlights the failure of UN peace operations to reach out to women

¹⁹ United Nations (note 1), p. 386.

²⁰ United Nations, General Assembly, *Report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: Politics, partnership and people*, United Nations, 17 June 2015; and United Nations, *The Challenges of Sustaining Peace: Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture*, United Nations, 29 June 2015. On the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, see chapter 7, section III, in this volume.

²¹ United Nations, *Report of the Advisory Group of Experts* (note 20).

leaders and to women's civil society organizations, especially at the senior mission level. These missed opportunities to engage with women result in few women leaders and partners in place when the missions leave.²²

To meet the above challenges within peace operations, HIPPO recommends gender mainstreaming measures. Instead of being integrated across and within UN entities, gender issues are too often assigned to staff in gender units. The report notes that instead of being recognized as a security issue for both men and women, there is still a notion that the WPS agenda is a 'women's issue' that can only be addressed by women. To strengthen the implementation of the WPS agenda in UN peace operations, the panel recommends that the UN Secretariat carry out a gender-sensitive analysis of the different processes carried out by missions. The panel also recommends integrating gender expertise into all the functions of the missions that require gender knowledge. Specifically, the mission's senior gender adviser should report directly to, and be placed in the office of, the SRSG. Moreover, the panel recommends that the Secretary-General and the head of mission specify gender relevant performance indicators.

Despite several efforts to increase the financing to implement the WPS agenda, HIPPO found a financial gap between policy and practice. To ensure that financing for peacebuilding is assigned to promote gender equality, the Secretary-General adopted a 'gender-marker' in 2009 to ensure that at least 15 per cent of UN peacebuilding expenditure is allocated to activities that address gender equality or women-specific needs.²³ The Review states that the UN has failed to reach this target in all countries of engagement, and raises concerns about the limited progresses in tracking resources allocated for gender-focused interventions.²⁴

²² United Nations, *Report of the Advisory Group of Experts* (note 20).

²³ United Nations, General Assembly/Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women's Participation in Peacebuilding*, A/65/354-S/2010/466, 7 Sep. 2010.

²⁴ United Nations, *Report of the Advisory Group of Experts* (note 20), p. 33.