

EUMS focuses on Women Peace and Security

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Women are disproportionately affected by armed conflict. They also play an important role in conflict resolution. The 17 CSDP Missions and Operations heed to the principle of gender equality in all activities. Not only because it as a fundamental EU value, but because gender mainstreaming renders crisis management more efficient.

Twenty years ago, the United Nations Security Council adopted the historic Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS). This resolution addressed for the first time women's unique experiences in conflict and crises, including increased risks for gender-based violence. The Resolution also emphasised the important contributions women make to peacebuilding and conflict prevention, resolution and transformation.

With the adoption of the resolution, international actors were urged to promote women's meaningful participation in all efforts to prevent and resolve conflict, and to ensure the protection of women and girls from all forms of gender-based violence. They were also called to increase the representation of women in international peace operations and ensure that a gender perspective guided all aspects of their work.

Since 2000, a further nine resolutions related to Women, Peace and Security have been adopted by the Security Council, strengthening and reinforcing this broad framework.

Enforcing the Women, Peace and Security agenda

The European Union (EU) is fully committed to promoting and implementing the Women, Peace and Security agenda as outlined in its EU Strategic Approach to WPS and its Action Plan, which recognises gender equality and women's empowerment as a prerequisite for dealing with the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.

Currently, around 5000 women and men work in the 11 civilian and 6 military crisis-management missions and operations, which the European Union deploys under the framework of its Common Security and Defence Policy. Promoting global stability, assisting our partners in addressing their security challenges and enhancing their resilience are key components of the EU's foreign policy, as is the promotion of core values such as the respect for human rights and gender equality.

Promoting Women, Peace and Security is key to increase the operational effectiveness of EU security action and achieve more comprehensive and sustainable results in crisis-management and post-conflict stabilisation.



For the EUTM Mali the resolution 1325 has a unique importance and is echoed in the action plans. We are fully aware that integrating of gender perspectives into operations is critical to the success of our mission.

We focus on enhancing and strengthening dialogue on gender within Malian defence and security forces based on priorities set by Malians themselves and built upon their dynamics, engagement and analyses while conscious of the existing limitation.

We understand how vital is to support local women's groups, which are in the forefront of promoting a culture of non-violence and peace in society, and also schools and childcare facilities. Proactively, via financial help of our troop contributing states, we assist particularly women and children in need which account for the vast majority of those affected by armed conflict in Mali. We contribute to creation of working opportunities and improved standard of living by providing equipment for hairdressing and tailoring workshops. We believe that not only women, but the whole community will benefit from these services. And these are just some of the examples of our work when implementing the resolution 1325.

Gender mainstreaming increases the efficiency of crisis management

The reform of the security and justice sectors is key to ensure stability and sustainable peace in conflict-affected regions. However, such transformation can only be successfully achieved if the rights, needs and perspectives of the entire population are considered and addressed. With women constituting half of the world's population, their participation, experiences and perspectives are paramount to a fully inclusive and integrated approach.

Gender Mainstreaming involves the integration of a gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes, with a view to promoting equality between women and men, and combating discrimination.

European Institute for Gender Equality

Working with an integrated gender perspective positively contributes to the achievement of the objectives of crisis-management missions and operations through improved situational awareness and comprehensive understanding. It also fosters a more comprehensive engagement with different parts of the population and strengthens the credibility of a mission by clearly signalling the EU's determination to promote solutions that benefit all: men, women, boys and girls.

Supporting host states in the inclusion of women in law enforcement structures

The EU's CSDP missions and operations promote actively the principles of UN Resolution 1325 with tangible effects on the ground. Through systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective, our missions and operations help create opportunities for gender transformative policies and actions, addressing structural inequality and gender-based discrimination in the security sector and judicial reform of host countries.

They also advise and support local counterparts in developing and implementing policies and strategies to enhance the representation of women in law enforcement, security and justice institutions. And they identify and address gender inequalities, supporting gender-responsive approaches when women seek security and protection.



UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 established a powerful normative framework to ensure women's needs, voices and perspectives to prevent, resolve and recover from conflict and build sustainable peace.

Even though Operation Atalanta is a naval military operation with a mandate in the field of maritime security, we have dedicated our efforts since its beginning to leave a footprint in gender mainstreaming affairs. The meetings between Operation Atalanta and the female Somali stakeholders emphasize the important role women have in society to promote and enact change in the administration, the justice system and local economies, in this particular case, the fishing industry.

Perpetrators of acts of piracy are predominantly male. Winning the hearts and minds of local women is a determining factor to change the mind-set of the Somali population and turn it against illicit activities. The changes are catalysed by the empowerment of local women. Experience has shown that the economic independence of women and an increasing presence in their local economies help reduce the levels of piracy and other illicit activities by discouraging men from justifying resort to piracy as an excuse to support his family.

Major Rodrigo Lorenzo Ponce de León, Legal and Gender Advisor operation ATALANTA



For instance, activities of missions and operations include advising and training local counterparts on international standards, as well as promoting survivor-centred responses to the handling of sexual and gender-based violence. Beyond that, missions and operations promote women's meaningful participation and empowerment through an active engage-



It is not easy to take stock of the changes that UNSCR 1325 has brought about in these twenty years. The precious, but sometimes subdued role, that women bring to society and especially in conflict resolution and in peacekeeping activities is not told enough.

Among the staff who work in the Operational Headquarters in Rome there are women in almost every field starting from operational sectors, intelligence, personnel management, the legal sector, media and logistics. All specialized figures in their field.

Rear Admiral Fabio Agostini, Operation Commander EUNAVFOR IRINI

ment with civil society and women's organisations in security sector reform processes where trust-building between security actors and local population is important.

The cooperation and coordination with EU delegations, member states and other international partners, as well as local civil society organisations, is paramount. That is why the Women, Peace and Security agenda has become part of the strategic frameworks of both the EU-UN and EU-NATO cooperation on crisis management.

Promoting gender mainstreaming within CSDP missions and operations

The EU is committed to improve its internal gender balance within the EU institutions, including in CSDP missions and operations. Currently, women constitute 24% of international staff in civilian missions, while in military missions and operations women make up 7% of total staff. Efforts to ensure gender balanced teams enhances the effectiveness of the mission diversity and will continue on all EU Missions

and Operations. It is also important for the image of the Missions and Operations, to set a good example and show that women are represented at all levels and in all functions.

A gender perspective is considered a cross-cutting element to be integrated in all aspects of the mandate delivery. A range of specific projects and activities related to human rights and gender equality are carried out in parallel. In addition, dedicated Gender Advisers and focal points are strategically positioned in all 17 CSDP missions and operations to facilitate gender mainstreaming, while the overall responsibility for gender mainstreaming lies with the Heads of Mission and Commanders.



The EUTM RCA incorporates a gender perspective in its staff procedures and assessments, which brings efficiency to the actions on the ground.

Thus, to implement this perspective with a special focus on women (but not only), the MFCDR relies on the Gender Advisor. Under the guidance of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security, EUTM RCA has been working on the three fundamental pillars of the resolution - prevention, protection and participation. Training sections have been given to ensure the integration of the gender perspective and to guarantee that the old gender stereotypes are not present.

Contacts with local associations in RCA have contributed to raising awareness on this issue and the women that integrate EUTM RCA, play prominent roles in the staff and pillars and are an example of parity and participation in which the commander proudly relies upon.

Gender equality is one of the core values of the European Union and has over the last two decades become increasingly important in the EU's external action agenda.

