



**International School for Security Forces (EIFORCES)
Research and Documentation Centre (CRD)**

CRD/EIFORCES INSIGHTS

N° 012 March 2023

WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE AND SECURITY: UNDERSTANDING THE GLOBAL DYNAMIC

In almost every country in the world, March is considered "women's month", in connection with the "International Women's Day" which is celebrated on 8 March. To mark this day, States, international governmental and non-governmental organisations, public and private institutions, associations and others compete in organising various activities to celebrate women. However, one factor remains constant: women are still under-represented in the decision-making and spheres of influence. Moreover, in the field of peace and security specifically, the under-representation of women gives off a whiff of exclusion, discrimination or marginalisation. However, apart from the fact that women are the first victims of crises and armed conflicts, they also experience their consequences even longer after the conflict is over. Unfortunately, they are hardly, if at all, involved in peace talks, peace operations, planning for reconstruction, etc. The direct consequence is that their specific needs are neither heard nor taken into account.¹

In order to keep alive the gender debate, which is presented in the form of gender equality, authors such as Paul Higate and Henry Marsha have made it a major concern. In a scientific article entitled "Engendering (In)security in PeaceSupport Operations"², they present the gender approach as "the challenge of humanity in the 21st century"³. Marie Vlachova and Léa Biason in *Women in an Insecure World: Violence Against Women - Facts, Figures and Analysis*⁴, make the same point by implying the need for the introduction of a gender approach in peacekeeping operations (PKOs)⁵ in order to

iefh.belgium.be/sites/default/files/downloads/1325_napwps_fr.pdf, accessed on 17 February 2023 at 22:09.

² Paul Higate and Henry Marsha, 'Engendering (In) security in Peace Support Operations', *Security Dialogue*. vol. 35, no. 4, December 2004, p. 143.

³ Ibid., p. 217.

⁴ Marie Vlachova and Léa Bias Women in Women in an Insecure World: Violence Against Women - Facts, Figures and Analysis, Paris: Éditions de La Martinière, 2007.

⁵ Since the end of the 2010 decade, the term peacekeeping operation (PKO) or peace operation (PO) has been used to refer to the same reality. The same will be true in this briefing note. In semantic terms, a "peacekeeping operation" or "peace operation" is a mixed body deployed, authorised or supported by the United Nations and made up of military, police and civilian experts, as appropriate, with the following mandate: to contribute to the prevention of

¹ Belgium, "Fourth National Action Plan 'Women, Peace, Security' (2022-2026)", <https://igvm->

"better care for women victims of sexual abuse and other abuses in wartime"⁶.

From the need to protect women, we have evolved towards the consideration of women as combatants, because they are recruited into armies as soldiers or actors in peace processes. This process culminated in the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which made the role and participation of women in armed conflicts a major issue. One of the resolutions of the Beijing meeting was that women should be given the opportunity to participate more fully in conflict prevention and resolution, peace-building and governance, and that they be protected during conflicts. The outcome of the Beijing conference was a major act and was the first international document to highlight the importance of women's protection and their contribution to peace, security and development. What sense can be made of the gender dynamics in peace operations since the end of the Cold War? How is the normative framework on women, peace and security structured? Is the gender approach a reality in the structural and operational chain of UN peace operations?

In a positivist analytical approach, the purpose of this paper is to explore the factual, contextual or legal elements of the dynamics that have led to the reality of the gender approach in the practice of peacekeeping operations. In concrete terms, it is a question of seizing the opportunity of the celebration of the 2023 edition of International Women's Day to explore the evolution of the normative framework on women, peace and security; the aim being to detect its capacity to positively modify the international rhetoric aimed at aligning it with international security concerns, while guaranteeing 'gender equality'. Moreover, it is a matter of knowing whether this dynamic is capable of positively correcting the practice and

organisational principles of peace operations and dynamics.

I. Normative factors: dynamics of Resolution 1325

The normative framework on women, peace and security aims to instil a new framework of behaviour and legitimate attitudes in the practice of peace operations. It governs the principle of gender equality through a set of national and international rules and conventions. Following this logic, Mariha Finnemore and Katryne Sikkink argue that:

Institutionalizing a new norm requires two distinct phases; the first is the emergence phase, and the second, the cascade one, is the crucial moment when a norm is adopted by a critical level of actors. Thus, in order to become a norm, the idea of taking into account the specific needs of men and women in resolving and managing armed conflict must not only be recognised as a morally acceptable practice (value), but must also be implemented by all actors involved⁷.

The origin of Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security lies in a global dynamic in favour of women's rights that gained momentum around the end of the Cold War. From the beginning of the 1990s onwards, especially because of the East-West ideological confrontation, debates within the major international bodies were dominated by human rights issues. At the level of the Security Council for example, no less than seven resolutions were adopted during this period. All of these Resolutions have in common the issue of the indispensable participation of women in crisis and conflict resolution processes around the world. Such an evolution revealed the UN's new perception of the security threat, which is now multidimensional, as well as the resolution processes.

The climax of this dynamic from the international civil society perspective was undoubtedly the World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China in 1995, inspired by the one held in Nairobi, Kenya in 1985. The 1995 Beijing World Conference resulted in several declarations of intent known generically as the "Beijing

armed conflict by supporting a peace process; to observe or support the implementation of ceasefires or peace agreements with a view to establishing a lasting peace. The size of a peacekeeping operation varies according to the nature of the operation, ranging from small observer missions of sometimes less than 50 personnel to large multidimensional operations of tens of thousands of personnel. See Paul D. Williams, "Peace Operations in Africa: Lessons Learned Since 2000", *African Security Bulletin*, Africa center for strategic studies, 2013, p. 2.

⁶Marie Marie Vlachova and Léa Bias Women in Women in an Insecure World:, p. 28.

⁷Finnemore Martha et Sikkink Katryne, "International Non Dynamics and Political Change" in *International Organization*, no.4, 1998, pp. 888-916.

Declaration and Platform for Action". A few years later, namely in 2000, the UN decided on the effective implementation of the above-mentioned Declaration and Platform for Action. To this end, a special session of the UN General Assembly was held under the theme: "Women 2000: Gender equality, development and peace for the 21st century". In its final report, it became clear that "armed conflicts have different impacts on men and women. Therefore, humanitarian aid should be provided according to their specific needs"⁸. Moreover, according to the same report, the promotion of equality and peace was seriously undermined by the targeting of women and children in particular during armed conflicts.⁹ In the same vein, a statement by the then President of the Security Council, Anwarul Karim Chowdhury, on the sidelines of the International Women's Day celebrations, made peace an inseparable element of equality between men and women¹⁰. Anwarul Karim Chowdhury's statement had the effect of facilitating recognition by all other members of the UN Security Council of the need for equal access and full participation of women in power structures and their contribution to global efforts to promote peace and security. In this respect, the action of Kofi Annan, then UN Secretary General, was decisive. He had multiplied acts and declarations towards promoting gender equality and the primordial role of women in the promotion of peace and conflict resolution. All of these actions made the beginning of the 2000s an opportune time for women's participation in peace processes around the world. The UN had made this a priority, as did many world leaders.

Beyond the role of institutional actors such as the UN, that of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) in this normative evolution of the role and place of women in peace operations should be highlighted. INGOs¹¹ took an

active part in the process leading to the adoption of Resolution 1325. As grassroots organisations and therefore in direct contact with the populations, these INGOs had for years been prominent in lobbying or pressuring the UN General Assembly and Security Council to change the perception of the role of women in peace processes. A major requirement of their actions was the need to integrate women into peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction in terms of role and impact of their actions or influence on society. NGOs' lobbying actions in defence of women's rights received a positive response from the international community, which enabled them to gather a maximum of resources and technical and strategic support in their advocacy with the United Nations and the States. They also enjoyed a favourable global context, characterised by the end of the Cold War, which lifted some of the weight of the United Nations. One of these constraints at the level of the Security Council was, for example, the abusive use of the veto by the United States of America and the Soviet Union whenever an issue under discussion was contrary to their interests. The UN was now more open to dialogue with civil society, mainly NGOs. All these factors combined led to the adoption of Resolution 1325, the legal basis for women's participation in peace processes and thus in the PKOs, thereby placing the UN at the heart of gender equality issues.

II. Transformation Dynamic Instilled by International Conferences

To better understand the dynamics that led to the development of a normative framework for gender policy in UN peace operations, it is useful to look back to the mid-1970s. The surge of women's issues at the UN at the end of the Cold War was not only a continuation of a number of actions taken a decade earlier, but also a sign of a new era. Women were to play a more significant role in the world organisation. This culminated in the adoption of Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. It also followed a number of debates and reforms in the conduct of business within the organisation, which paid particular attention to actions related to the promotion of gender equality within the UN, its specialised agencies and globally. This means equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities without

⁸A/S-23/10/Rev.1. United Nations. *Report of the Ad Hoc. Committee of the Whole of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.*

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ See the press release of the President of the Security Council, 8 March 2000 (SC/6816)

http://www.un.org/News/fr-press/docs/2000/20000308.sc68_16.doc.html. Accessed on 16 Feb 2023 at 11:11pm.

¹¹These include: Amnesty International (AI), Women's for Peace (WP), Women's International League for Peace and

Freedom (WILPF), Hague Appeal for Peace (HAP), Women's Caucus for Gender Justice (WCGJ) and International Alert (IA). They operated in a coalition in the form of a "Working Group on Women and Security".

discrimination on the basis of gender. To achieve this, the approach was first to advocate in the field of development, human rights and violence against women, followed by the issue of the impact of armed conflict on women as vulnerable persons.

The normative framework for women's participation in peace operations has also evolved over time, and the impact of international meetings under the aegis of the United Nations is to be seen at the root of this dynamic. Thus, the 1975 Mexico City International Conference on Women set the scene somewhat, although it was part of the logic of the International Women's Year decreed in 1972¹² by the UN to contribute to the promotion of equality between men and women. The general status of women was debated at this Mexico City conference, resulting in the adoption in 1979 of a "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women"¹³. Furthermore, it was recommended at the Mexico City Conference that women's involvement in international peace-building should be developed. In 1985, the Nairobi International Women's Conference emphasized on this¹⁴. Its objective was to follow up and review the implementation of the United Nations Decade for Women "Equality, Development and Peace"¹⁵. At the Vienna International Conference on Human Rights in 1993, feminist women's rights groups, noting the slow pace of change in the social status or rights of women, made their voices heard by clearly stating that "violence against women is a violation of fundamental human rights"¹⁶.

After Mexico City in 1975, Nairobi in 1985 and the advocacy at the Vienna Conference on Human Rights in the same year, one of the high points of the women's rights agenda was the 1995 Beijing Conference in China. This conference was unique in that for the first time, it included the issue of women victims or in situations of armed conflict on the agenda. Its resolutions are contained in a document known as the "Beijing Platform for Action". This document clearly mentions that women are disproportionately victimised in armed conflicts, particularly as a result of sexual violence. Moreover, they remain largely absent from conflict resolution processes. With this document, women from all over the world, whose voices were carried by feminist associations and especially the UN, expressed their indignation at seeing other women, the mothers of humanity, suffer the atrocious consequences of conflicts caused by men in particular. Consequently, the time had come to involve women in the various armed conflict prevention and resolution processes¹⁷.

Considering this dynamic, the UN decided to move towards giving concrete form to the provisions of the legal framework established up to then. Thus, in 2000, the Security Council instructed the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to conduct a study on the Namibian case in the light of the Beijing Platform for Action. The report of this study led to the adoption of the so-called Windhoek Declaration and Plan of Action¹⁸ which focused on "mainstreaming a gender perspective in multidimensional peace operations"¹⁹. The

¹² By Resolution 3010 (XXVII) of 18 December adopted by the UN General Assembly, the year 1975 was named "International Women's Year".

¹³ See History of international conferences, gender equality and gender issues. URL <http://www.adequations.org/spip.php?article930>, site accessed on 20 February 2023 at 21:11.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ The 1993 Vienna Human Rights Conference reaffirmed that "The human rights of women and of the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. The full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life, at the national, regional and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex are priority objectives of the international community". cf. <http://www.adequations.org/spip.php?article930>, accessed on 23 February 2023 at 7:10pm.

¹⁷ In concrete terms, the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action calls for peace-building processes to take into account the broadening of women's participation in decision-making in peace processes; the reduction of excessive military expenditure and better control of weapons in circulation; the promotion of non-violent means of conflict resolution; the reduction of human rights violations in conflicts; and the enhancement of women's contribution to the development of a culture of peace. See: Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 4th World Conference on Women, September 1995, URL <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/>. Accessed on 28 January 2023 at 11:40.

¹⁸ Windhoek is the capital of Namibia, a country in southern Africa, the last African country to gain independence on 9 February 1990.

¹⁹ General Assembly and Security Council, "Windhoek Declaration and Plan of Action", A/55/138-S/2000/693 of 14 July 2000, pp.1-7.

Windhoek Plan of Action calls not only for a greater participation of women in peace operations as civilian, police and military experts, but also for a more prominent role for them in peace negotiations²⁰. It should be noted that this recommendation to increase the number of women in POs by at least 30% of the overall workforce betrayed the basic rationale for a cross-cutting UN strategy for gender equality, which brings together increased participation of local populations alongside UN personnel in view of the multidimensional nature of PKOs. It also has the advantage of highlighting the role that women could play in PKOs in bringing together the protagonists of peace processes, given the more conciliatory nature of women. Thus, according to the Windhoek Declaration, a greater presence of women in the POs would be a guarantee for the effectiveness of the missions, as women would be more accessible to the population, who would find in them a more attentive ear to their situation and, consequently, would be able to easily denounce crimes and other human rights violations by armed groups. Thus, the United Nations would have served as a framework for gender mainstreaming in the PKOs for which it is the guarantor. This is understandable in light of the many other resolutions adopted beyond Resolution 1325.

III. Strengthening the system through new Resolutions

Although Resolution S/RES/1325 (2000) is considered the normative compass for women's participation in peacekeeping operations, it should be noted that it already presented some shortcomings²¹. These shortcomings were later rectified by numerous other resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council in order to strengthen it as a comprehensive and appropriate legal norm.

Among these Resolutions aimed at strengthening Resolution 1325 was Resolution S/RES/1820

(2008) of 19 June 2008 adopted by the Security Council, which criminalises sexual violence in conflicts. It specifies that the parties to an armed conflict must undertake to protect civilians. This Resolution has the merit of presenting, while denouncing, sexual violence as a tactic of war used by armed groups.

In 2009, two further Resolutions, namely S/RES/1888 (2009) of 30 September 2009 and S/RES/1889 (2009) of 5 October 2009, were adopted. The first was supplemented Resolution 1820 and assigned to PKOs the mission "to protect women and children from sexual violence in armed conflict". It entrusted the UN Secretary General with the task of appointing a Special Representative to combat violence during conflicts. This was a remarkable development, as it allowed the UN to take a stricter look at gender issues and the protection of women in times of conflict. The second resolution emphasised and deepens the need for the UN to develop performance benchmarks to effectively measure progress in gender mainstreaming in PKOs since the adoption of Resolution 1325. The resolution also urged the strengthening of women's participation in peace processes.

In 2010, Resolution S/RES/1960 (2010) of 16 December was adopted with a view to further addressing women's issues in peace and security processes, including those related to sexual violence. The challenge here was to supplement Resolution 1888 and above all to move towards a more effective sanctions mechanism.

In 2013, two other resolutions were adopted in the same vein. These were S/RES/2106 (2013) of 24 June and S/RES/2122 (2013) of 26 February. The former was firmer in tone when it instructed Member States and specialised UN agencies to strengthen the fight against impunity and, above all, to bring to justice the perpetrators of sexual violence against women and girls in times of conflict. Furthermore, this Resolution acknowledged that "gender equality and the political, social and economic empowerment of women are central to long-term efforts to prevent sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations". Resolution 2122 had the merit of highlighting the role and importance of women in "all phases of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding".

²⁰ Henry F. Carey, "Women and Peace and Security: The Politics of Implementing gender Sensitive Norms in Peacekeeping" in Louise Olsson & Torunn L. Tryggerstad (dir.), *Women and International Peacekeeping*, New York, Routledge, 2001, pp. 49-65.

²¹ Especially those related to the care of women victims of sexual abuse, and those related to the training of women soldiers or civilians who are to be deployed in peace operations, etc.

Resolution S/RES/2242 (2015) as adopted on 6 November 2015,

Urges greater participation and leadership by women and women's organisations in development strategies to counter violent extremism and terrorism. It encourages ambitious new targets for the number of women in peacekeeping forces, including the use of incentives for troop-contributing countries; outlines the need to increase the number of senior women leaders at all levels of decision-making; and recognizes the need for training mediators on the impact of inclusive processes and how to achieve them, clearly identifying the strong link between women's participation and increased sustainability of peace agreements. The resolution also stresses the need to close critical funding gaps for women's organisations, recognising that the Global Instrument for Accelerated Action for Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Assistance is one way of attracting resources, coordinating interventions and accelerating implementation.²²

It is therefore part of the continuum of Resolution 1325 and allows for an effective integration of the gender approach in peacekeeping operations.

IV. Restructuring the PKOs' organisational chain

Since the beginning of gender considerations in peace and security issues, the UN has been committed to integrating gender into its policy for the design, conduct and operationalization of peacekeeping. In line with this, a framework for interaction between the various other UN bodies and technical agencies dealing with women's issues was established within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) to work towards their participation in and contribution to peace and security efforts. This resulted in a smoother flow of information and best practices on women, peace and security. Moreover, it has enabled DPKO to develop a comprehensive strategy and expertise for the full implementation of Resolution 1325.

To achieve this, a change in practice and the appointment of experts, including a "Senior Gender Advisor" specifically responsible for gender issues within DPKO, was necessary. Her role is to make proposals to the Security Council

through DPKO and to develop effective strategies for a better gender approach in PKOs. She must support the implementation process of Resolution 1325, while leading the reflection on the concrete implementation of the global normative framework of gender mainstreaming in PKOs. It also serves as an interface between DPKO, other UN bodies responsible for peace and security issues, those responsible for gender issues, UN member states, NGOs and all other partners in the global chain of conflict resolution or PKOs.

In addition to the position of Senior Gender Advisor in DPKO, country "Gender Offices" were also created in relevant missions. The mission of these offices is to ensure the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security programme defined by the Security Council through Resolution 1325. As part of a proximity approach, these Gender Offices are supervised in the field by the Senior Gender Advisor. In concrete terms, the work of Gender Advisers includes:

- Providing strategic advice to senior leadership on advancing gender equality and the women, peace and security mandates and assisting senior leadership in monitoring progress and ensuring accountability and compliance by all personnel;
- Operationalizing, facilitating and coordinating the implementation of gender equality and women, peace and security mandates, as well as supporting all functions and components for the adequate delivery of results, in line with the mission's mandate;
- Strengthening the capacity of all UN Peacekeeping personnel – civilian, police and military – to advance gender equality and the women, peace and security mandates;

Specifically, Gender Advisers facilitate the implementation of gender equality and women, peace and security mandates through:

- Leading and guiding a gendered contextual analysis that informs the various stages of peacekeeping planning, particularly in mission start-ups, strategic

²²See UN-Peacekeeping "Promoting women, peace and security", www.unwomen.org, site consulté le 19 février 2023 à 17h 40 mn.

reviews, mandate renewals, transitions and drawdowns;

- Advocating and promoting the inclusion of women in political and electoral processes, in national governance and security sector structures, in peace processes, as oversight observers in ceasefire agreements and in conflict management and prevention;
- Coordinating efforts to promote a protective environment for women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence;
- Advocating for strengthening and developing gender responsive security, justice and corrections institutions²³

This restructuring of the PKO organisational chain through the DPKO reflects a shifting paradigm in the practice of gender mainstreaming within the United Nations on Peace and Security issues, particularly women's participation in PKOs. Unfortunately, though, all this voluntarism has been hampered by limited financial and human resources available to the Office of the Senior Gender Adviser and Gender Offices. One example is the Gender Office of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), which was established by Resolution S/RES/1704 (2006) of 25 August 2006 to support the government of Timor-Leste in making the country more stable and promoting democracy and political dialogue. However, it failed to achieve its objectives for that reason.

In addition to the lack of resources, it is also worth noting the public perception of these offices as 'women's offices', i.e. places where only women victims of war violence are listened to, far from their original mission. Moreover, gender issues are not always taken into account in the prioritisation of activities, given the emergency context that generally characterises the conduct of PKOs in the field. Nevertheless, one consistent feature is the reorganisation of the organisational chain of PKOs at the UN level, reflecting the institution's ownership of the gender mainstreaming approach in peace

operations. The next step was to strengthen the capacities of the various links in the chain to practice the gender approach.

V. Capacity building for the different links in the PKO chain in gender mainstreaming

The full and harmonious implementation of the normative framework on women, peace and security goes beyond the redesign of the structural and institutional framework, of which the women advisors and women's desks are an example. Equally important is the capacity building component for peacekeeping academics and practitioners. "Gender awareness training for all those involved in peacekeeping operations is essential for the integration of a gender-sensitive approach to peacekeeping. In concrete terms, the aim is to harmonise the levels of ownership and mastery of the gender approach in its gender equality and sexual abuse aspects. This appropriation must be done at the level of the UN, as well as at the level of all the other external partners such as INGOs and partner countries. It also involves training to improve knowledge of the political, social and cultural realities of the countries benefiting from PKOs, with a view to limiting local constraints to a better practice of PKOs. It provides a means for peacekeeping actors to be brought up to speed on their obligations and responsibilities²⁴.

The strategy set up with a view to upgrading and strengthening capacities to achieve the objectives of Resolution 1325, consisted for DPKO in developing, on the recommendation of the Security Council, a series of teaching tools to enable contributing countries to train troops from the ground up. These tools define the standards for training police and military forces on gender issues. Although not mandatory for contributing countries, compliance with these standards in the training of troops is necessary to validate the proposal for the provision of DPKO troops by the contributing countries. It is with this in mind that in 2004 DPKO published the Gender Resource Pack for Peacekeeping Operations, which is both

²³See <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/promoting-women-peace-and-security>.

²⁴MinnaLyyttiläinen, *Gender training for peacekeepers: Preliminary overview of United Nations peace support operations*, New York, INSTRAW Gender, peace & security working paper 4, 2007, p. 7.

a catalogue and a best practice guide to raise awareness and explain the need for women's participation in peace operations, and to combat sexual abuse and all forms of violence against women in conflict situations. Moreover, this guide is intended for all stakeholders in PKOs as well as for other independent partners in the conflict resolution chain at both national and international levels. In the same vein, DPKO supervised training programmes in various countries, including Canada, South Africa, Mali, etc.²⁵ on "gender and support to peace operations". These were aimed at achieving the objectives of Resolution 1325.

Beyond the overall issue of gender mainstreaming in PKOs, a closer look at the content of the Gender Resource Pack for Peacekeeping Operations reveals its gender dimension, as it focuses exclusively on women and their role and place in peace processes. The document seems to ignore the situation of men and children in conflict situations or in resolution processes, all of whom are victims of war and armed conflict as much as women. It is worth noting that, despite its relevance, the Gender Resource Pack for Peacekeeping Operations is somewhat intriguing in that it does not provide enough information on the process of altering the relationship between men and women in situations of armed conflict, or on the respective capacities of each of the two sexes to mobilise the specific resources inherent in their nature in order to influence peace processes.

Nevertheless, this Resource Kit on Gender Equality in Peacekeeping Operations describes the specific role that women can play as both protagonists and actors in the conflict resolution process, although they appear in the document as naturally more fragile. This could lead to the idea that the UN is reproducing a discourse towards women that would normalise gender stereotypes and thus run counter to the rationale of Resolution 1325.

It should also be noted that capacity building of participants in peace operations is not only

theoretical and does not only take place in contributing countries during training of troops to be mobilised for PKOs. In the operational field, short training sessions are usually offered by the Integrated Training Units²⁶ in the classic areas, including rules of engagement, communication systems and all other topics related to PKO practice, with the addition of specific gender issues. This is a precision tool adapted to the socio-political and cultural realities of the countries of deployment. Due to these socio-cultural specificities, the duration of these short gender trainings can vary from one operational field to another, ranging from one to three hours depending on the case. Given their importance, these trainings should be extended to all PKOs established and deployed by the UN or any other organisation entitled to do so, such as the African Union and others. Beyond the UN's responsibility as a global peacekeeping institution, the issue of gender in peace processes or in PKOs must be made a major concern. Those in decision-making positions in the PKO chain, soldiers, police officers, civilians and all other national, international and independent actors must feel challenged as a priority. This will allow women to be more present, more visible and have a greater impact on the outcome of PKOs. Indeed, this is what is at stake.

Conclusion

On the occasion of the celebration of the 2023 edition of International Women's Day, it seemed useful to examine the dynamics of the normative framework of the gender approach in peacekeeping operations. It emerged that the mobilisation of the entire international community was part of a dynamic driven by both national and international civil society organisations, with the aim of raising awareness of the gender approach among all the competent decision-making bodies. With regard to peace and collective security, the international community has been very active in creating an appropriate normative framework symbolised by numerous resolutions adopted at the UN. One of the most important of these was Resolution S/RES/1325 (2000). It served as a basis for accelerating the process of gender mainstreaming, not only in

²⁵ These were training or capacity-building programmes for peacekeeping personnel (military, police and civilians) on gender and the protection of women in conflict situations. These programmes were organized by the contributing countries and/or donors and supervised by the DPKO.

²⁶United Nations, DPKO, *Gender Resource Kit for Peacekeeping Operations*, p. 12.

national armies and Security Forces, but also at the international level in the context of peacekeeping. Moreover, based on Resolution 1325, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations was obliged to restructure itself to match the dynamics of the feminisation of peacekeeping operations.

This dynamic has the effect of giving contributing States and International Organisations in charge of peace and security issues the possibility to better address them by taking into account the gender approach. One of the positive effects already perceptible is the creation of "gender offices" housed within peace operations and exclusively in charge of everything related to women, both from the standpoint of the staff deployed and the populations to be assisted. Also, efforts are being made to increase the number of women in National Defence and Security Forces and in contingents deployed in peace operations by these States.

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