

Foundations for Peace

UN SCR 1325 & 1820 Transnational concerns

In Nepal, the process for National Action Plan for the Resolutions on women, peace and security picked up in April. Having gone through a consultative process, it will be adopted by the Government this October. Checking in with colleagues of the Foundations for Peace, major transnational hurdles and gaps came up.

Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, considering the 30 years long conflict, notes that the consultations did not adequately include women on the ground, and the implementation of NAP is very slow. Reconstruction Women's Fund is concerned with 20 years long work of Women in Black in Serbia against the wars being written out. NAP responsibility is located with the Serbian Ministry of Defense, which makes it totally unacceptable due to Serbian recent history. In Georgia, related agencies and activists are applying SCR 1325, but this has not influenced the government.

Both Nirnaya, a women's fund based in Hyderabad, and the Dalit Foundation, based in New Delhi, India, feel that despite the relevance of the UN SCR 1325 & 1820 in terms of their work with women and Dalits, the NAP was nowhere in the making at an official level. Similar reports come from the Monusher Jonno Foundation in Bangladesh and the Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust in Sri Lanka. They expressed how this would not help to further equity and justice issues, particularly in Sri Lanka as human rights violations and a state of impunity goes unabated.

Another 20 years may speed by unnoticed unless nation states are called to books – and the UN and all responsible parties do a better job of dissemination, support and monitoring the Resolutions. The benefits and relief from the implementation need to be felt and experienced where the shoe pinches the most, as FFP collective experience demonstrates.

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Work in progress

Voices from the ground: UNSCR 1325 in countries familiar with conflicts

This is a working report on progress of the Resolution 1325 on the ground and is submitted by members of Foundations for Peace network. Inputs came from places familiar with wars and conflicts: Northern Ireland, Serbia, India and Georgia.

The trigger for our survey was the finding that India promotes the UN Women's Battalion as their highest peace and security achievement. The fact that out of 1000 women nominated in 2005 for the Nobel Peace Prize, 91 were from India has been erased from the context. So, what does the resolution tell, to whom and by whom? Is the Resolution militarized? Who is appointed, who is excluded?

The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (CFNI) came to existence in 1979 during their conflict with the aim to engage in peacebuilding and social justice work, and, alongside other beneficiaries, to support locally based women's groups working in times of conflict on domestic violence, health related issues, family support and advice, human rights and social justice. Their experience represents a clear case of a human security approach implemented in the middle of conflict.

CFNI says: (in relation to progress on UN 1325)

About peace and security concerns: we have communicated with local women's groups, with the Human Rights Commission and with other organizations in Northern Ireland, the UK and the Republic of Ireland that are committed to human rights and social justice.

Currently, we are in a post-conflict situation with a peace agreement in place but progress on delivering the Agreement in full is slow. There is still a level of threat as sporadic violence is ongoing but in comparison to what happened previously, the level of threat is much reduced.

We believe that governments and others should do more to engage with and consult those groups of women who are working on a daily basis in communities directly affected by our conflict. We also believe that women should be more formally involved in building the peace process here. Since our Peace Agreement, women have become almost voiceless in this context yet during the height of the conflict, their role was crucial to helping communities to survive.

We were aware of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and monitored the progress being made by both the British and Irish Governments in relation to it. However, we expected the consultation in Northern Ireland to include wider and more representative groups of women in formulating the Action Plans. In that sense, we are disappointed with progress as the level of awareness-raising is very low among women most directly affected by conflict.

Both the British and Irish Governments have subscribed to the Resolution 1325 and have formed Steering groups and developed Action Plans. These are monitored but progress on implementing the Action Plans has been very slow. Given that Northern Ireland was a region that experienced conflict for more than 30 years, and is now in a post-conflict phase where security and the legacy of the conflict are still key issues, both governments should have done more to focus on NI as a region where their Action Plans could have been tested. We have a vibrant and responsive women's sector who could have been a major resource here.

Older women as activists:

The NI Women's European Platform (the consultative body for both the British and Irish Governments on Northern Ireland) focused on older women: Older Women and Armed Conflict; Older Women and Decision Making; Older Women and Institutional Mechanisms. Contributions were made by: NI Women's European Platform, the Association of Bahai's Women NI, the Sperrin Lakeland Senior Citizens Consortium, the Women's Resource and Development Agency NI, Older Women's Network Northern Ireland, YouthAction Northern Ireland, Older People's Advocate's Office. This was a very small body of response from a region where women experienced directly the impact of conflict for more than 30 years. More should have been done to consult with women at the local level.

Concerning allies for 1325, we need feminist activists groups who have progressed work on the resolutions and who could guide and advise our local groups. **Message** to international forum

concerning women, peace and security: To be more proactive in promoting the resolutions within governments, institutions and at the local grass-roots level with women's groups and in developing follow-on strategies that will make the resolutions relevant on an ongoing basis. Otherwise subscribing to the resolutions is tokenistic.

You are on your own

Dalit Foundation envisions a society in South Asia where Dalit Communities, especially women, live with dignity, have equal opportunity and social and economic justice. DF mission is to eradicate caste based discrimination and atrocities and to ensure equality and equal rights for all. The idea of a Dalit Foundation was conceived of after the World Conference against Racism in Durban (2001). A group of activists and researchers working for Dalit social and economic empowerment got together and held a discussion on how to take the movement forward.

Here are some of the factors Dalit Foundation identified for the survey on 1325, very helpful in our analysis.

The response from the **grassroots women** was unanimous in one thing - **none of them have worked on or heard of the UNSC R 1325**. None of the grassroots activists look upon the government, police or UN as responsible for maintaining peace; in fact some of them even consider the police and government to be their greatest source of insecurity along with poverty, ignorance and illiteracy. Mostly they wish alliances with other human rights organizations and almost none with the government or policy makers.

Isolation and fear also seems to be higher for grassroots activists with mostly 5-15 years experience. Academics, urban human rights workers with 25-35 years of experience seem to feel less isolated and less fearful.

Most of the **women academics, urban human rights workers** have heard of the resolution in most cases and have even worked on it and they wish alliances with policy makers.

Prof Anuradha Chenoy (School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi) has worked on the UNSC R 1325 in India and written a booklet on it. She advised the following on how in India Dalit women's issues could benefit from UNSC R 1325:

1. Increasing Dalit women's roles in all decision making structures.
2. For mobilizing when there are caste conflicts and oppressions, women should be part of the grassroots peace and reconciliation process.
3. Train women to understand their rights and role in peace, politics and participation. Mount a campaign that the local security forces-police, para military etc should have more women but more importantly be trained on gender sensitivity.
4. Popularize 1325 so that the decision makers start implementing it.

Only Pre and Post

Taso Foundation from Georgia is an independent women's fund and memory research center operating since 2007. The report comes from the director of Taso Foundation:

In years 2001-2006 within women's movement, I participated in the regional program of UNIFEM Women for Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in South Caucasus, which aimed awareness raising of UN SCR 1325, capacity development for its implementation, women's peace dialogue and including women in formal peace negotiations.

Open Society Georgia Foundation Women's Program had supported number of peace negotiation initiatives of women's NGOs and in years 2000-2006 continuously supported the team of trainers in implementation of Empowering Education project in Georgia (the peace education program).

During the August 2008 war and afterwards Taso Foundation, together with citizens and civil society organizations had been involved in emergency humanitarian activism and since March 2009 we started working in conflict zone for empowerment of women for economic, social and political activism. In conflict zone we implemented the educational program for women (total 109 participants) on women's rights with accent on women's involvement in peace building.

Since February 2010 TF, as implementing partner participated in UNIFEM's 3-years project Women for Equality, Peace and Development in Georgia. We aim at mobilization of internally displaced and women in conflict zones (in 5 different geographic locations) for economic and social activism, raising the demand & practical support for HRs implementation and advocacy work for ensuring that the Georgian national policy (Law on IDPs, State Strategy on IDPs, Gender equality Law and Gender Equality Action Plan) are in line with CEDAW and UN SC Resolutions 1325 and 1820.

TF also participates in consultative/capacity building meetings Gender and Security Sector reform organized by UNIFEM.

In 2010 I participated in Russian and Georgian women's peace Dialogue meeting organized by Georgian and Russian women's organizations with support of Kvinna till Kvinna.

Note: I am involved in work for the peace; so far we as civil society actors are distanced from our population which, unfortunately, has no clear demand for the peace as category related, first of all, to the value of human life.

No Lustration, But Erasing

Reconstruction Women's Fund is committed to continuity and intersection of feminist activism, academism and antimilitarism in Serbia. Women in Black, feminist antimilitarist organization who has been working since 1991, was invited to be one of RWF's founders when the concept of the activists' fund was discussed in 2004.

This report draws struggle of Women in Black and allied activists for implementation of R1325 in Serbia. On October 31, 2005 Women in Black submitted draft resolution THE WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY to the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, based on the requirements and recommendation of R 1325, demanding the Assembly to put the issue on its agenda. The proposed draft highlights contextual points in the spirit of 1325 and suggests the Assembly necessary measures to attain security for all citizens, to quote just a few:

- Consistently enforcing the constitutionally established principle of separation of church and state.

- Effectively applying The Family Law, condemning violence against women, and uprooting the culture of war which legitimizes violence against women and other less socially and economically powerful people.
- Revoking The Law on Assistance to The Hague Indictees and Their Families and redirecting those funds to humanitarian usage, most importantly to families of the victims of war and educational projects for peace, nonviolence, and interethnic and intercultural solidarity.
- Establishing democratic civilian control over the armed forces (the army, security agencies, and police). Only the National Assembly establishes the national interests of the country and only it—not the army or police—makes decisions about the security situation in the country.
- Taking more control of security agencies and consistently applying The Law on Lustration and opening secret dossiers, keeping in mind that these agencies do not infrequently endanger the security of a large number of citizens, particularly human rights defenders.
- Stopping the trend towards the privatization of armed forces and security agencies that is shown in the unregulated flourishing of private security agencies and their effort to revoke the state monopoly on the legal use of force.

The UN resolution and the proposed draft from WiB were never discussed in the Assembly, in spite of permanent public pressure and lobbying by WiB. On the contrary, in spring 2010, a process of writing recommendations for drafting NAP started, highlighting Ministry of Defence as the recommended implementer of R1325 in Serbia.

WiB, with cooperation of allied groups and experts, confronted the basic orientation and the process. Following is an extract of WiB's text showing crucial disagreement with the interpretation of R1325, and with the note that: The whole process is developing with the full approval and participation of international organisations, in the first place UNIFEM, which gives to the process all kind of help, and ignores the experiences, knowledge, and commitment of NGOs on Resolution 1325 in the last 6 years, ignoring the contribution of female activists to peace-building in the last 20 years, as well as the security risks of not confronting the criminal past, the condemnation of genocide in Srebrenica, etc.

The Ministry of Defence has been appointed as necessary implementer, which symbolically shifts the meaning of Resolution 1325.

The Ministry of Defence as the implementer of the drafting process of the NAP testifies to the militaristic approach to security, an approach that is, among others, characterised by: army and police dimension, militarisation of society – the transmission of military values and organisation to all spheres of life; absence of civil society in the creation of the notion and practice of security, marginalisation and victimisation of women, etc. In short, in this traditional militaristic approach to security, the main subject of security is not the citizens but the state, or more exactly, its political and economic elite. Apart from that, the experience of the wars of the 1990s in ex-Yugoslavia and particularly the role of the Armed Forces of Serbia that have inherited the burden of the Yugoslav People's Army (of the Military of Yugoslavia, of the Military of Serbia and Montenegro) as one of the main executive organs of the regime of Slobodan Milošević, calls into question the credibility of this institution as the implementer of the drafting process of the NAP, and this is particularly unacceptable from the feminist pacifist point of view.

Namely, the Ministry of Defence is required, on the basis of article 11 of Resolution 1325 (“Emphasizes the responsibility of all states to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls, and in this regard stresses the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions”) to take a clear and unequivocal stance towards the genocide in Srebrenica, in line with the decision of the International Court of Justice (February 2007), to support, following the Resolution of the European parliament, the proclamation of July 11 as the Day of Remembrance of the Srebrenica genocide. In this case, the Ministry of Defence would obtain a higher degree of confidence on the part of civil society organisations that continuously advocate the punishability of all crimes, first of all those committed in our names, and then of all the other ones.

We consider that the Ministry of Defence should work for the amnesty of all deserters of war in the wars from 1991 to 1999, the investigation of the deaths of soldiers in the military barracks of the Armed Forces of Serbia from 2000 on, the revocation of ranks and decorations from all the officers of the Yugoslav People’s Army and Yugoslav Armed Forces who participated in the wars of 1991-1999 and did not distinguish themselves by opposing war crimes. Inasmuch as these conditions are fulfilled, the Ministry would be able to be one of the implementers of the drafting process of the NAP, but never the main implementer of these activities.

Also, the Ministry should recommend the inclusion of women’s experiences from the wars on the territory of the former Yugoslavia in the curricula of military and police schools, in order to heighten the sense of responsibility and recognition of the civil position. With the exclusion of women’s peace experiences, the regional chances are even more substantially impoverished.

Conclusion:

- *Grass roots women are not seen as important contributors to 1325, despite their experience and human security knowledge.*
- *Militaristic and liberal readings of the resolution prevail. Rich resources of women peace activists have been erased.*
- *In spite of high risks in the lives of minority and marginalized groups of women, their exclusion from the debate on women, peace and security is striking.*
- *Timely implementation of 1325 is lacking, it is mostly pre (liberal) and post (humanitarian) structured and scattered.*

In the wake of WWI, suffragettes suffered clashes over priorities: peace or women’s rights. A century of feminist thinking and acting steered clear of the bogus dilemma. Resolution 1325 set women and peace as interdependent and adequate.

The resolution invites new discourses. Far and wide, scattered in four thematic areas, contaminated with militaristic approach, exclusion and gender equality as a “carrot”, the resolution loses the reality. “Technical nature” of implementation/s needs remedy in evolving in depth accountability referring to the starting point – revolutionary demand of the Resolution.

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