



The Boston Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights

**Working in the Field:
Practitioners Discuss UN Security Council
Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and
Security**

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Carol Cohn: My role today will be to provide some background for the work my colleagues will be speaking about. So I will just very briefly introduce Security Council Resolution 1325, and some of the barriers to its implementation.

Resolution 1325 was passed unanimously by the Security Council (SC) in October 2000. It was groundbreaking, a landmark resolution, the first time that the SC recognized women's right to participate as decision-makers at all levels in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and peace-building processes. It calls for UN member states to take special measures to protect women and girls; for an end to impunity for crimes of violence against women and girls; for the mainstreaming of gender issues in peacekeeping operations; and for women's participation in post-conflict reconstruction efforts.

Most crucially, it puts women at the center of efforts to prevent war, to end armed conflicts, and to create sustainable peace. This is very radical, as those of you who work in an academic environment know all too well. It is also extremely significant, for although the wording and scope of the resolution were cut and tailored to meet the SC mandate, the resolution has had an impact beyond the specific wording of the resolution itself. It has become a focal point for women working on issues related to peace and security, and the anchor of a "women, peace and security" agenda which has expanded beyond the boundaries of the resolution itself.

But to what degree has 1325 been implemented? There may be a certain amount of skepticism, given the SC's track record on implementing resolutions in general, or because of what we know about how hard it is to effect institutional change around gender issues. And indeed, progress has been slow and uneven. But after three years of constant, ceaseless effort on the part of women's advocates inside the Secretariat and NGOs outside the UN, some progress has been made. But there are big barriers as well. And it is only through the concentrated efforts of women inside and outside the UN, the actions of some activist member states, that further progress will occur.

I'll just briefly mention a number of the most significant barriers to effective implementation:

- Lack of motivation to implement 1325 on the part of many people in the Secretariat and UN member states;
- Lack of understanding about *how* to implement 1325 even if/when there is a will;
- Lack of understanding of what gender mainstreaming is, and of gender altogether (I think that the default definition many people have of it is probably not the most complex or useful);
- Lack of infrastructure, advisers, and gender expertise, particularly in UN departments involved with peace and conflict;
- Lack of training, rank, status, and long-term contracts for those people who are assigned gender mainstreaming roles;
- Lack of resources;
- Lack of commitment among top leadership, senior management;

- Lack of monitoring and accountability mechanisms.

Given all of these barriers, you will find the successes you are now going to hear about even more extraordinary.

Nadine Puechguirbal: Next, I will discuss what it means to mainstream gender in a peacekeeping operation, with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) as an example, since I was a Gender Adviser there. I was also in Haiti last month as a Gender Adviser on a UN Needs Assessment mission – for the peacekeeping mission that will soon be deployed there. I have with me the report of the Secretary-General (SG) on Haiti (an outcome of the Needs Assessment mission), which shows how we can mainstream gender in a report. This is the report that will be used to prepare the mandate of the mission.

Before I start discussing the DRC, I would like to follow up on something Carol said. We do not give sufficient attention to the importance of the language used to inform decision-makers. If you want better policies, you need to have language on gender mainstreaming in the mandate that creates a UN mission. This applies to all the reporting done at the UN – and I mean the reporting done by the SG. To give you one example, I want to mention that last year, the UN Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues (OSAGI) did a study of the 264 Secretary-General's reports to the Security Council dating from January 2000 to September 2003, to analyze to what extent the report included gender language. The analysis revealed that only 17.8% of the reports made multiple references to gender concerns, 15.2% made minimal reference, and 67% made no or only one mention of women or gender issues, which is of course unacceptable. Of those that mention gender, the vast majority talk about the *impact* of conflict on women and girls, primarily as victims of conflict, and *not* as dynamic actors in peace building or peace resolution processes. So I would like to emphasize that it is difficult when we do not have the proper language in the resolutions; we still have a lot of work to do at the UN itself.

And now, I will give you the concrete example of our attempts to mainstream gender in the UN mission in DRC. The Senior Gender Adviser was only appointed to the DRC peacekeeping mission in mid-March, 2002. The mission had been in place since 2000, so the appointment of the Gender Adviser came quite late. The sooner a Gender Adviser arrives, the better. Why? If you arrive too late, you realize that you are not welcome. Why? In the case of the Gender Adviser in the DRC mission -- when she arrived, she found out that people thought she was in charge of investigating sexual harassment within the mission, which did not exactly make her popular. She was given no space, no computer, no car. In short, she was not made welcome. She was supposed to work within the Office of the Special Representative to the SG, but found out that her position had been downgraded to the Civil Affairs office. Why? Because people thought she would be better off there, since one of her responsibilities is to work with women's groups, civil society, etc. That might make some sense, but we have to insist on having Gender Advisers located at the highest level, to have the authority to carry out her mandate. It is difficult enough when you *have* authority and people do not know what you are doing; at least if you are at a higher level, you have enough internal support to do your job. So, from now on, we will try to ensure that the Gender Adviser will be located at the highest level of the mission.

That said, when the Gender Adviser arrived in the DRC, she spent about six months just trying to justify her presence in the mission. Her strategy was to use the peacekeeping radio of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to organize special broadcasts on what it means to be a Gender Adviser, what it means to mainstream gender in a peacekeeping mission, and eventually in this way she built up some confidence and trust. But this took six months, during which time she could not do other things.

When I arrived, we decided to adopt a twofold strategy. The first part of the strategy was to encourage the mainstreaming of gender within the mission itself (*i.e.*, to raise awareness of gender issues and to build the capacity of mission staff to mainstream gender into their work). I have been using 1325 as a tool a lot, since you have so many things in 1325 that you can use to justify your work a bit. We also used the resolutions that consolidated the mandate of MONUC, and we disseminated information on gender issues to civilian police, national and international staff. People have to really understand what it means to mainstream gender – the Gender Adviser role is to make sure that all the main substantial components of a mission take gender into consideration -- for example, that they understand what it means to collect gender-disaggregated data and why this is so important to our work. People do not understand why it is so important to us, that such data is necessary for us to have a better picture of what is happening on the ground.

As one example, we visited the demobilization center set up by the Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) Department of the mission, in order to make sure that it was equipped to welcome female combatants as well. Maybe this seems obvious, but it was a very lengthy process for us to make sure that people understood that “former combatant” could also mean female former combatants – meaning all women who played a role in, or in some way were involved with combat, not only as combatants but also as messengers, cooks, sexual slaves, etc. So for us, it was very important to give a status to these women. It took a while to make the DDR colleagues understand what we were talking about. You may remember that DRC had been occupied by different foreign armies. Uganda had soldiers occupying eastern DRC. When they were asked to go back home, they received instructions from their own authorities to leave their Congolese “wives” and children behind. The vast majority of these “wives” and children had nowhere to go: they were abandoned by the soldiers, but could not go back to their own communities. But some UN staff did not see what the problem was, because these women and children were not a defined part of their “caseload.” So we tried to explain to them that it is the responsibility of the mission to take into account the needs of those who were accompanying the soldiers as well.

There was one case in Gbadolite, DRC of women and children who were living under hardship conditions without any assistance except from a local NGO, with no resources. So we tried to advocate on their behalf, to give them options, to discuss with them where they wanted to go. Some wanted to go back and wanted our assistance to help prepare their communities to welcome them back. You will miss this type of community if you take an overly-narrow interpretation of your mandate.

We also became involved in providing gender training for peacekeepers (military and police). We spent a lot of time explaining the roles of women and men in post-conflict situations. These things were not obvious for peacekeepers that arrived with assumptions about gender roles. They had a very limited understanding of the relationship between gender and power, and of the situation in the DRC itself. So we took the initiative to build up a checklist of different questions to assist the military and police in bringing a gender perspective to their work. These people were deployed all over the country with access to remote situations, and they had to report in on a daily basis, but very often, they reported that they had nothing to report -- which we found unacceptable. So we asked them to talk to the women as well. Until then, they were talking to the men who were visibly holding power in the community, but we all knew that women also had access to a lot of information. So step by step, we tried to help them become interested in talking to the women as well as the men.

We also introduced a context-specific code of conduct. It was important to do damage-control because of abuse of local women by UN peacekeepers. We are trying to improve our action in that field, and now we have more tools to do so.

The second part of the twofold strategy of the Gender Unit was to conduct outreach outside the mission. We worked on capacity-building of civil society women's groups in particular. One important point to note is that the gender office functioned without any proper budget, making it difficult to carry out activities. And this was a big problem because our having an office raised big expectations on the part of local community. They see the UN waste a lot of money, and they wonder why some of it is not reaching them. So we tried to use our own capacities and resources, by organizing debates around 1325 (having had it translated into the four major languages of DRC), using the radio, organizing consultation meetings, field trips, talking to women about their needs and problems, and communicating them to other organizations that did have resources. We supported the participation of women in the peace process leading to the transitional government, but women were very poorly represented there, in fact, so there is still a lot of work to do; DRC will probably have elections in two to three years, so we will have a lot of work to do there.

We have also been doing a lot of work on sexual violence, especially in eastern DRC, though we had no resources to do so. We had to build up a strategy to do some fundraising at the international level. For example, there was one center in eastern DRC that provided health assistance and counseling to rape victims, but with very limited resources. The UN suggested that the international community should support a new center: a completely new, conspicuous place, guarded by peacekeepers. But of course this was absurd -- it is unlikely that local women would want to go to a big, conspicuous center guarded by men in uniforms. Other strategies have to be developed that are more sensitive to the local context.

The Commission on the Status of Women has talked a lot about the situation there, trying to raise the profile of the local groups that are working there. We are talking more and more about this problem. We do not know what will happen (because of lack of resources), but we at the Gender Unit are trying to help them raise their profile and raise the international profile of the problems they are dealing with.

Nathalie Gahunga: I am going to discuss how the women of Rwanda and Burundi (and also, briefly, of Congo) try to implement 1325 and to mainstream gender in their societies. The histories of women and of 1325 are closely interlinked: Women have been trying to win their rights at local, regional and national levels. There has been violence against women in the region for years, all characterized by a regional dimension, and by gender and sexual violence against women. In the Great Lakes region in 1998, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda for the first time brought a conviction for sexual violence in civil war and found rape to be an act of genocide. This was a result of the lobbying and activism of local and international women. In all three countries, women's organizations have implemented many programs, In Rwanda, the national women's organization has joined with female parliamentarians and government officials, and they are beginning to play a significant role in post-conflict governance. There are 22 articles on gender equality in the new Rwandan Constitution, including one establishing a gender observatory. Greater representation has been required: a minimum of 30% of parliamentary positions must be held by women. Following the October 2003 election, women hold nearly 49% of the seats in parliament, which is a greater percentage than anywhere else in the world.

Currently in Burundi, they are trying to bring communities together to talk – you have female mediators at the grassroots level trying to solve tensions among communities. Another significant step: Between 1997 and the signature of the Burundian peace agreement in 2000, Burundian women fought to win a place as observers at the peace talks – and some of their recommendations were included in the final peace agreement, such as the establishment of a mechanism to punish war crimes. But one key recommendation was not taken up by the male negotiators: that a minimum of 30% of all decision-making positions should be occupied by women during and after the transition. Still, these recommendations played an important role in bringing the SC to convene its first debate on women, peace and security, which resulted in the development and passage of 1325.

So these are significant developments in the region. Since the genocide, not only have we seen the formation of transitional institutions in Burundi and the conclusions of a peace agreement in the DRC, but the language people use has also changed. Now, women discuss openly the need to ensure that women take a greater part in decision-making and leadership.

Here, I would like to point out the key role played by international organizations. Most local organizations suffer from the problem that they are competing with other local organizations for funding. And local organizations feel that their own priorities are not taken into account. Instead, they are obliged to write proposals around the priorities of donors to get funding. And often donors' priorities change very quickly. In 1998 in Rwanda, for example, local organizations were encouraged to submit proposals to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), but in the end none of them received funding.

More and more organizations are working in synergy to implement 1325. And it is important to recognize that women traditionally play a role in peacemaking/ peace building in the region. So this should be an important area for future feminist research.

On the regional dimension of the conflict: it is very important for women of the region to work together and to complement the other activities carried out at the local and national levels. I was involved in working at the regional level. One of my responsibilities was to bring together women of the national networks for Burundi (CAFOB) and Rwanda (PROFEMME), and a regional network for DRC (North and South Kivu) – and this was during a period of conflict, when it was impossible to talk about peace. One year later, these women produced a series of regional documents, and they also decided to create a regional forum, called COCAFEM/GL (*Concertation des collectifs oeuvrant pour la promotion de la femme dans la région des Grands Lacs*). They called for the recognition of women as a partner during peace discussions, and worked to analyze the root causes of conflict in the Great Lakes region.

The contribution of women's organizations at the national and local levels is being recognized more and more by the population at large and by the government, as well as by the international community. However, the importance of regional women's organizations in the implementation of 1325 is often undervalued, and there is a lack of commitment from international donors. Another problem at the regional level is that sometimes people who play an important role at the national level are reluctant to work with women from other regions.

Women have also met with obstacles in developing national lobbies, and the impact that they have had is still narrow and still limited to the area of social conflict. So women's organizations should define their own perspective on security – including on the military dimension of security – and should think about regional and national integration.

Angela Raven-Roberts: The challenge now is how to make this less an internal and more an external conversation, with more than one man in the room. Later this week Amartya Sen is coming to Tufts to speak on feminism and development, so maybe with people like him taking notice, we can attract a wider and more mixed (male and female) audience.

My role today is to discuss the role donors and national governments are being asked to play in implementing 1325. At the close of the twentieth century, we could have been excused for feeling comfortable because at least there were a whole series of protocols recognizing “1325-type issues” – women and children in armed conflict, trafficking, the role of international criminal/mafia groups and their participation in global disorder and use of different vulnerable groups. All of this has built up to a more nuanced understanding of human security, a concept which we, as part of this advocacy effort, began to develop – “human security” being an understanding of security as meaning more than the conventional “international borders and armament,” but also encompassing the human security of populations, and the perspectives of populations on their own security issues. Unfortunately, that turn to human security has now been hijacked or pushed aside by concerns of homeland security, and I think that this is one of the first issues that we need to address.

This more nuanced understanding of political conflict and human security that I referred to – understandings of who is affected in conflict; who wins, who loses; of how the political economy of war feeds off the exploitation of women and children; but also how women and children and

marginalized communities respond to the political economies of violence, how they adapt, how they respond, how do they use it -- these are all issues we thought we were getting close to understanding. And we were beginning to be able to feed those understandings into the response system, which requires a nuanced understanding of what is happening in a country as a result of a recent conflict. We thought we were getting close as a result of bringing together local issues of power with international issues and assessing how all of this feeds into what the international, local, and national communities have to do. And just as we were getting at this level of nuanced response, and training people into developing this sensitivity at the UN/policy level, we are now being swept aside by another set of issues which are forcing us back – which is not permitting us to make use of the nuanced context, but is instead looking at “black and white” issues of terrorism. These are the risks we have to look at.

Having said that, what is the role of donors and national governments, and what is Resolution 1325 asking them to do, and how can we (researchers at universities, lobbyists at grassroots level, people working at international organizations) monitor and foster this dialogue?

I want to talk about Resolution 1325, and also about the resolution on children and youth in armed conflict. This is perhaps a little politically incorrect because people like to keep them separate, but if you look at the demography, we are looking at sections of the population that make up 75-80% of the population, which does not find expression in policy documents, dialogue, courses on international relations and political science, etc. And therefore, demography and mainstreaming are linked – the people you are making policy about are not there. That is why I put them together. Also because when you read the two resolutions – and the reports upon which they are built and the studies that preceded them – you see that they put across a world of immense knowledge and nuanced issues of what happens to communities in crisis and the interplays of issues of power, identity, economics, etc..

Therefore, the challenge has been that as a result of the implementation and recommendations of both of these reports, covering a huge area – health, nutrition, education, judicial reform, assessment, economic policy – there are over 200 sets of issues in the policy environment that these two resolutions address. This is a very tall order for anyone to comprehend, let alone to be able to implement, but that is the challenge. The resolutions say that at all levels, there are a series of many, many issues which need to be addressed in the conflict, and most particularly in the post-conflict environment in which you are helping communities recreate and re-imagine themselves.

International donors in many cases have been very imaginative and creative – Canadians, Norwegians, the Department for International Development in the U.K. (DFID), and theoretically the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) (but we know about their constraints). But these donors have taken the lead in creating an environment within the UN (and it is important to see that the challenge of reforming the UN itself is as complicated as reforming countries). They have taken the lead, and this is important in terms of asking for a more nuanced analysis and mainstreaming response.

Level one of the international effort to address gender and security was/is raising consciousness. Level two is implementation, and now we are at the cusp of the implementation period. This is not only important for international advocacy and activist groups; it is also important to persuade and work at the national level. How do you work with very strained government entities, where they do exist (and there are some places where they do not – how do we work with non-state entities)? How do you ask a very stressed-out government, such as Rwanda, Angola, or Mozambique, to prioritize all of these 200 issues in the midst of its own pressures from the IMF, World Bank, etc.?

Donors need to be coordinated themselves; and they need to address all the issues that we are asking everyone else to address. The nuanced approach, mainstreaming, encouraging participation of communities – it all has to be coordinated through the entire apparatus of all the different “regimes” -- the World Bank, and UNDP, and others who are there sinking in funds have to talk the same language. One of the biggest constraints at the national level is the lack of coordination, including conceptual coordination, among donors. When they ask governments to create their policies – how can they ask governments to create coordinated policy when they themselves aren’t coordinated?

Apart from coordination, the other issue at the country level is: How do you create the space in which local communities of action can be enabled to come together to monitor and to hold their own governments (and through governments, donors) accountable for some of the policies – to monitor them? For example, if USAID says something about the importance of mainstreaming gender in its 40 million dollar agreement with Ethiopia, who will monitor the situation to make sure that this really takes place? How do we create the environment in which communities themselves can hold their governments accountable for these entitlements they have, for all that these resolutions say are their due? (Because all of the resolutions use human rights/entitlement language.)

What is the role of universities and institutions in this process? As I said earlier, we not only need to mainstream the academic institutions to teach this, but also to do across-the-board nuanced research that brings up good examples of these kinds of issues that can then be fed into the policy environment. Most importantly, our universities have a great role to play in terms of working with universities at the national level – in Africa, in post-conflict countries. They need to be empowered to do the type of nuanced research in their own local conditions that can then be fed into the local communities, to disaggregate information but also to be part of the advocacy to demand and to see that resources are being spent where big resolutions say they ought to be spent.

I think there are a lot of initiatives developing which can be encouraged. Kofi Annan has set up a training center in Ghana. Some African universities are beginning to think about these issues in the context of their own priorities, and we need to link with them and to give those researchers our support. For every person that has published an article in a journal on these issues from the northern countries, there are 20 to 30 good research people in developing countries who have barely been able to publish one article. Find them; help them get their ideas out there; publish them! Do not think of your own name – publicize theirs. Arrange workshops there.

The key point is that we now have the challenge of looking at all the different regimes – human rights, humanitarian, development – and to really analyze what is being asked in these protocols, especially in the post–conflict environment; and to do this kind of nuanced analysis. This requires a great deal of knowledge by people in the field, such as Nadine, people who are being asked to carry different instruments and ways of analysis. There is a great need to support these policy-makers who are often thrown from one country to another. They need our support: to be given the kind of information they need, to be empowered by the latest research and thinking, to be connected to the people in the field who are doing the research.

There is a great need to bring the academic community together with people at the policy level: the government, the ministries of health, economic planning, rural development, etc. Those people need to be assisted in understanding what a complementary planning process is, so they do not just plan sector-wise. They need to be assisted in identifying what these protocols are asking of them, in the context of their own societies. Some institutions are beginning to create these kinds of spaces to have such a dialogue, to bring in the research community to help them plan this kind of thing. There are many kinds of things like this that we are now being charged with doing during the implementation process, and I look forward to having more discussions on this.

Questions

Q: I was curious about the translation of 1325 into local languages – was that decision made based on prior experience with translating human rights treaties/ the humanitarian code of conduct? Was there some cross-fertilization from the human rights office within MONUC to support your gender activities, or did this come out of your own discussions? In other words, are you working with other parts of the UN that might feed into 1325 implementation?

NP: This initiative was not based on “lessons learned.” We took this initiative on our own. We used some students at the University of Kinshasa (DRC) to do it, and they worked on a voluntary basis. The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security has worked a lot on the promotion of 1325, and the PeaceWomen project of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) has assisted with the translation of 1325 into many different languages, so we were in touch with them. When we had 1325 in the four official languages of DRC, we sent it to Peacewomen, which put the translations on their site (www.peacewomen.org). We also created our own website with lots of relevant information: www.monuc.org. We took this initiative, and I would think that this could be replicated – just to disseminate information outside the mission.

CC: The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security is a group of internationally-identified NGOs who work on influencing the UN on gender, peace and security.

Q: Nathalie, you talked about the “traditional role” of women as peace builders. Could you expand on that and give an example?

NG: For example, women in Rwandan culture have come to be seen as peace builders after the war. Following the genocide, women's associations did some research to try to identify what women's roles were in the past. When these associations tried to talk to their community, they started off by explaining women's previous roles. In Burundi, you have the same case. Apparently, in Burundian culture, women can position themselves between, for instance, two brothers who are fighting and say "*Bangwe*" and bring the conflict to an end.

Often, we Africans do not know our own cultures, and our culture is very rich. Moreover, we do not know the importance of our own culture, and I think this may be one of the causes of conflict. We have to have recourse to the "right tradition" – not traditionalization – but to that which was positive in our culture and that can be used in the context of genocide and civil wars.

Q: Angela, you mentioned the human rights and entitlement language of resolutions. Can you expand on what you mean by that? What are the benefits and drawbacks of using a language of entitlement?

ARR: One of the conceptual problems about all of this is that the discourse around gender is wrapped in all kinds of things: in technical approaches of analysis and input which are slightly easier to adopt in some cases in some countries; and now you have an overlay of human rights language, an infusion of entitlement, and these two sometimes come into collision. A key policy person has to be astute in negotiating this in the context of where he/she is working – to implement without offending – and that is what I am saying. It is a conceptual issue.

Writ large, if you are asking for policymakers and government officials to implement a set of rights and entitlements, you have to empower the community to make the corresponding demands; to see this reciprocity. In countries going through decentralization, this problem is more acute. Communities need to know what is in the resolutions, and that they have a right to say, "We are not getting this."

NG: You mention the protocol from the international side – it could also be very interesting to work on the protocol as defined by the community. The community finds it difficult to identify what people want, especially in the aftermath of conflict, because there are many perspectives and positions. It is important to be able to use the 'right' language, because it can complicate things otherwise.

Q: Can you give an example of using right or wrong language?

NG: For example, some women at the grassroots level often talk about very concrete things. There was an international organization that wanted to put a program in place, and they made an evaluation with this in mind. But the local people said they wanted an ambulance. They did not want a program; they wanted an ambulance, because they said, "We cannot bring people to the hospital!" So sometimes, the priorities of the donor and the population are completely different. The question is: How can you put these basic demands into the language of, and at the level of, the people who make policy and donors.

In academia, you use a different language yet again, and sometimes it is very difficult for grassroots activists to interact with people who have very strong theoretical language and background. I do not know if this is a question of capacity building.

ARR: Here is another example. In many countries, the question of burial is a key question because it is wrapped up in local culture, dignity, and social healing, and so communities and often women are left to bury the dead. So here is an example in which communities come to agencies and their first need/question is to finance funerals/burials. But there is no place in your average donor budget for burials – yet, unless this is done first, the community cannot even think about water and shelter.

Q: Nadine, would you say something about the mandate of the peacekeeping mission for Haiti?

Q: And a follow-on question for Nadine: when you were talking about the Senior Gender Adviser coming in, were there already women working within the mission, or was she the lone woman coming in? Particularly because Nathalie said there were many women involved at the grassroots level – is there a big discrepancy between women’s participation in the official UN organizations and in national or local organizations?

NG: I was working as a human rights/gender officer. And you have some organizations which are focused on women’s issues that are very efficient – they help these local women’s associations and play a key role. But again the problem (and I think Angela said it very well) is this question of coordination. The problem of lack of coordination among donors causes a lot of problems for the women’s organizations and organizations in general. And also, there is the problem that priorities may change each year so that you do not have time to act and react effectively. At the same time, these associations are very young. These two kinds of problems make things very complicated. I am thinking here especially of DRC and Burundi – the needs are tremendous and there is just no appropriate reaction of the international community.

NP: As far as MONUC was concerned, before the arrival of the General Assembly, there were other women in other capacities, but not enough women occupied positions of responsibility at the highest levels. We find this over and over again. No women in key positions, it is a military environment. The majority of women in MONUC were employed at the lowest level (the P2 level): almost 50%. Only 25% at P5 level. Only 14% at D1 (directors) level. So the percentage of international women working in these missions has increased, but they still occupy mostly administrative positions at the lowest levels.

As of August 2003, on the military side, there were only 114 female military personnel out of 17,500, including military observers, and only three out of 90 police officers. The SC passed a new resolution last year, asking MONUC to increase the deployment of women as military observers and in other capacities. This is the first time we have had this language. So now we can work with member states and contributing countries to ask them to send more women on missions.

ARR: It is important to understand the hierarchy of positions, of relationship to management and accountability within management within the UN. It is only at certain levels that programs are created and then implemented. And then the question is who holds whom accountable in the process of implementation? If I am charged with a specific task under the resolution, then someone has to be on top of me to make sure this is done. The system of accountability is very weak within the UN for all sorts of reasons. Sometimes, the person in charge of implementing a program leaves and no one follows up, holds people accountable, asks did this take place, and if not, why not?

NP: I have found that it is very important to have the top management level on board in supporting gender issues; otherwise, you can have a great Gender Adviser, but it is still very difficult to work. In MONUC, the Head of Mission and his deputy did support our work – maybe not enough, but still. Some of the senior officers were really resistant, and if you cannot work with those people, it is very difficult. But if the Head of Mission (HOM) says yes, people will follow his orders. We would like to have HOMs briefed on gender issues – as a compulsory matter – at UN headquarters in NYC.

CC: It is a real problem to have people at high levels leaving, to have rapid turnover. There is nothing – no system in place – to make sure the next person who fills the position will be interested in gender at all. Above and beyond the normal rotation and turnover, at this point the UN is “de-funded,” which means that something like half of the positions in New York are short-term, temporary, two-month contract positions. So if you are on a two-month renewable contract, you will spend a lot of time trying to get that contract renewed, and you will be reluctant to rock the boat (and to work on gender is to rock the boat). This obviously has very negative effects on programs, not to mention on accountability and monitoring.

Q: Jane Holl Lute’s arrival as Assistant Secretary-General for Mission Support in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) – has this made a difference?

NP: I do not think one person can make a difference.

Q: Nadine, I really respect your work in DRC because I saw the experience of MINUGUA (the United Nations Mission for the Verification of Human Rights in Guatemala). They had only one person, with zero resources, trying to support local women’s groups. It is not possible to do anything in this way; it is a nominal position. After peace agreements, when a UN mission arrives, timing is crucial. So in efforts for advocacy at the international level, it is crucial that when a mission is deployed, there must be a Gender Unit with enough resources. Implementation of peace agreements weaken with time. When the mission in Guatemala was deployed, there was no Resolution 1325, but there was no change after the resolution was passed either!

So timing is crucial, and it is crucial as *part* of the implementation of gender agreements, but also implementation of the whole accord. There is a tendency to think that women will benefit only by implementing only gender provisions – but we need to be present in the whole peace agreement.

1325 provisions have to be disseminated among *internationals* working on implementation of peace agreements. I went to Columbia in 2000, and none of these high-level internationals knew about 1325.

Also, we need to promote the special measures to be put into practice from the beginning. I am so impressed with the results of the Burundian peace process. But it is impossible to understand that outcome without taking into account the UNIFEM gender expert team that took part in that peace process, who helped Burundian women, who worked with the negotiators/mediating group/among the 19 parties. Without external support, it would not be possible. So it must be a priority when you are talking about the beginning of peace negotiations.

NG: It is true, international support is important. You can see this in the huge difference between the Burundian and DRC peace process. Some Burundian women involved in the process told me that Nelson Mandela, who was the mediator, and Museveni, whose vice-president is a woman - both pushed the issue of women's participation at the regional level. We also had strong participation from UNIFEM and a regional women's NGO and Femmes Africa Solidarité. So you had a strong network. In contrast, in the DRC process, Congolese women who participated to the negotiations said that South African women tried to press the issues, but it was really difficult because the international organizers/conveners did not play this constructive role. They also reported that the UN representative did not help and the facilitator did not do anything. Women were only allowed into the room when they were already putting signatures on the agreement, to put pressure on the men who did not want to sign!

NP: I think the UN has not been very supportive of the participation of women in peace processes, and very often it has been too late. And this reminds me of Cynthia Enloe's question: "who is deciding about what" in a peace process? Very often, it is the war-makers who are making peace. Who is in charge during the post-conflict period? We ask women to be representative of their community, but are men representative of their communities? The UN has not been supportive in this sense. Or they impose women's participation only at the end of the process, and this is not sustainable; these women will disappear.

Q: Your examples and your analyses are so good about what needs to be done. Could you comment on what requires *no* pushing because it is just part of the institutional culture? What sorts of things seem to require no organization – they just happen? What are the things that are just so accepted, powerful, widely assumed to be logical/ rational/ "the way we have always done things" that they just flow through these peacekeeping and reconstruction operations? Could you name one or two each?

CC: That the parties at the negotiating table will be the former combatants.

NP: It is taken for granted that the men who were combatants are going to be the ones who are going to bring the peace. We take for granted that we do not need any additional players at the table; that we do not need more actors and participants; that the combatants know how to go through the peace process, and women's voices do not count. So when you do manage to

impose women, it is thanks to external pressure or their own pushing. And even then they are invited, but only as observers.

NG: Yes, it is true: women are invited as observers, and they always come afterwards, later than the men.

ARR: One of the things that happens with great ease is the actual architecture of international intervention. I mean the apparatus – the bringing in of the international organizations, the hierarchy, the way it is established, the visible symbols that you see – the cars with their logos, the flags, the gates, and the office structures. And here you get into the militarization of this environment. Because you then have the police and military to guard and “protect” and the notion that protection means, first and foremost, the security of the international operators. Haiti showed very clearly the discourse that the human security and protection of the citizens was last on the agenda, including Bush getting up and warning the Haitian people that they should “think twice about getting on a boat,” in violation of the right of refugees to leave and of the “give me your tired, your poor, your hungry” mythos.

NP: I was part of this UN Needs Assessment mission that was deployed in Haiti, as the Gender Adviser on the team. In Haiti, we have a unique opportunity to do something different. It is important to have a gender perspective at the planning phase. We failed in Haiti in 1995, so we really want to start over. We would like to have a Gender Adviser on the team every time there is a planning/assessment mission. This is a major improvement: that a Gender Adviser should be considered as important as a political advisor, advisor on disarmament, etc.

My role in the Assessment Mission was twofold: first, to collect information on the situation of women and girls. Haitian women are well-organized and powerful, but there are not many resources, and it is a macho society, so they are not well-treated. They have tried to move on some issues but have not been very successful. My second task was to make sure that all of my colleagues (the military advisors, police advisors, etc.) understood what it meant to have a gender perspective on their work. In my report, I presented findings and recommendations. The recommendations were intended to influence the report of the SG (which, in turn, shapes the terms of the peacekeeping operation). And you can look at the language of the SG’s report and see that we have done quite well; we have come a long way. It is the first time we can make people understand what it means to have a gender perspective at the very beginning. This report will feed the new resolution.

The peacekeeping mission will be deployed soon. Our strategy is also to have the Gender Adviser deployed in the very early phase, with the first team of substantial staff, so that she will be able to open the gender office, make her job known among all peacekeepers, start to train peacekeepers about gender issues within the Haitian context, etc. This is important. My colleague in DRC arrived too late, so we should avoid this mistake again.