

Women, Peace and Security: The way forward

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The Swedish Government has declared its intention to intensify its efforts to promote gender equality in national and international policy and as a member of the European Union (EU), Sweden has an interest in and responsibility for, the full implementation of Resolution 1325 and related resolutions in the EU's external relations. The two new UNSCRs on Women, Peace and Security adopted in 2013 – UNSCR 2106 and 2122 – involve a number of undertakings which Sweden and the EU should engage with and translate into practical and progressive actions.

Sweden and the Women, Peace and Security agenda in Peace Support Operations

The focus on women, peace, and security was first formally brought as a thematic issue onto the Security Council's agenda in 2000, following the unanimous adoption of UNSCR 1325. The resolution calls for increased participation by women in conflict prevention and resolution initiatives, such as mediation, as well as their protection during conflict.

Sweden was one of the first countries to adopt a National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325. There have also been initiatives to establish specific gender-related functions in the Swedish Armed Forces, such as Gender Advisers at Headquarters level and Gender Field Advisers and Gender Focal Points at the tactical level. One of the most recent developments is the formation of the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations, which seeks to function as a platform for continuing implementation of a gender perspective in various international organisations. In addition, Swedish authorities offer various forms of pre-deployment gender training to personnel who are sent out on various multifunctional peace missions.

Sweden has thus made progress in the 13 years since the adoption of UNSCR 1325. However, there is more to be done and the Swedish Government has declared its intention to intensify its efforts to promote gender equality in national and international policy.

What is new?

In the decade after the adoption of UNSCR 1325, no less than four additional resolutions¹ were adopted by the UN

¹ UNSCR 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010)

Security Council. These reinforced core parts of the UNSCR 1325, such as women's participation in peace processes and peacebuilding, and addressed conflict-related sexual violence. There has recently been a renewed focus on the Women, Peace and Security agenda, demonstrated by the adoption of the two new resolutions in 2013 – UNSCR 2106 and UNSCR 2122.

UNSCR 2106

UNSCR 2106 focuses on conflict-related sexual violence and reiterates that all actors must do more to combat impunity for these crimes. It also calls for increased use of the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, Women's Protection Advisers and the Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements. The resolution stresses the importance of pre-deployment training on sexual violence for UN peacekeeping personnel.

UNSCR 2122

UNSCR 2122 aims to strengthen the role of women in all stages of conflict prevention, resolution and recovery; for example, by strengthening commitments to consult or include women directly in peace talks. The resolution notes the adoption of the 2013 Arms Trade Treaty, and the provision in the Treaty that exporting states parties must take account of the risk that the conventional arms covered by it might be used to commit serious acts of gender-based violence.

How Sweden and the EU can strengthen implementation

As a member of the EU, Sweden has an interest in and responsibility for, the full implementation of Resolution 1325 and related resolutions in the EU's external relations.

If Sweden and the EU want to strengthen its efforts to promote gender equality in international peace support operations and to ensure full implementation of UNSCR 2106 and 2122, there are number of actions it can take.

Participation of women

UNSCR 2106 and UNSCR 2122 both stress that women's participation is essential in any prevention and protection response. Participation by women is also a main pillar of UNSCR 1325. Implementation, however, is not always as straightforward. A recent FOI-led review of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO's) International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan and Kosovo Force in Kosovo, shows that the missions have not to a sufficient extent recognised women as important actors. Here, Sweden and the EU should set an example and increase its efforts to identify women as key actors in areas of operations. This can be done by training personnel to actively identify women as actors at both the political/strategic level and the tactical/field level, and by developing indicators aimed at the inclusion of women as key leaders.

Furthermore, it is important that the EU actively promotes women's participation in all aspects of mediation, post-conflict recovery and peacebuilding in international diplomacy at the political/strategic level – in both multilateral and bilateral arrangements. In the latter, EU Member States and Sweden in specific, can earmark financial support for the advancement of women's participation in political processes.

At a national level, Sweden should continue its efforts to remove impediments to the recruitment, retention and promotion of women military and civil staff. This includes efforts to actively seek to change stereotypical behaviour among military staff, which is often exacerbated in international military missions.

Monitoring and reporting

UNSCR 2122 encourages UN Member States to continue to pursue the implementation of its resolutions on Women, Peace and Security through strengthened monitoring, evaluation and coordination efforts. Studies conducted by FOI on the Swedish Armed Forces and multifunctional missions have identified the need to improve the use and method of

assessments in general, and specifically assessments on the impact of peace efforts on the vulnerability of women and girls, as well as their protection needs and participation.

Sweden and the EU should make it mandatory to collect sex-disaggregated data on human rights offences and protection needs as part of its conventional intelligence collection. It is important that the information is reported at both the political/strategic and the operational level, and that there are mechanisms for handling the information and translating recommendations into action.

Reviewing training manuals

UNSCR 2106 calls on all the parties to an armed conflict to implement specific time-bound commitments to combat sexual violence. EU Member States should review their military and police field manuals for current and future training missions to ensure that they specify that all parties to an armed conflict must implement clear orders through chains of command prohibiting sexual violence. The training missions should also stress the need to implement specific commitments on the timely investigation of alleged abuses, both internally and externally.

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