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INSTITUTE NOTE

GENDER MAINSTREAMING: IMPLEMENTING UNSCR 1325 IN ESDP MISSIONS

The European Council in December 2005 welcomed the paper produced by the Council General Secretariat on *Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the context of ESDP* (doc.11932/2/05). The EU Institute for Security Studies was invited to conduct a case study on gender mainstreaming in ESDP operations, with specific reference to the missions in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The findings of that study are presented in the attached report by Professor Judy Batt, Senior Research Fellow at EUISS, and Dr Johanna Valenius, Senior Research Fellow, University of Turku and EUISS Visiting Fellow.

Nicole Gnesotto

Analysis

GENDER MAINSTREAMING: IMPLEMENTING UNSCR 1325 IN ESDP MISSIONS

by

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I. Introduction: Gender Mainstreaming – What and Why?
II. Background to the Case Study
III. Research Findings
(i) Attitudes to women's participation in EUPM and EUFOR
(ii) Women as 'civilisers' of men's behaviour
(iii) Prostitution and crisis-management operations
(iv) Women as role-models for local women
(v) Dialogue with local and international women's groups
(vi) Obstacles to women's participation in operations abroad

IV. Recommendations
V. Bibliography
VI. Annexes
I: Statistical tables
II: UNSCR 1325 *On Women, Peace and Security*

I. INTRODUCTION: Gender Mainstreaming – What and Why?

> Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated (UN ECOSOC, 1997).

'Gender mainstreaming' is a concept that still does not enjoy wide currency, and its purposes are often misunderstood. Among the uninitiated, it tends to elicit reactions ranging from amused bafflement to scepticism, irritation and outright hostility. For many, the term has off-putting connotations of sterile 'political correctness' and strident 'feminist dogma'. This is unfortunate, because, once the objectives are explained in plain language, the vast majority of people readily accept the point of gender mainstreaming.

'Diversity' is the keyword. In today's world, there are many ways to be a good soldier. Since the end of the Cold War, the international security environment has become more complex, and modern armed forces are now required to perform diverse tasks. The focus has shifted from fighting high-intensity wars of national territorial defence to crisis management, peace support and humanitarian operations. There will always be a need for physically tough fighters for combat tasks, but the traditional monolithic ideal of the soldier as warrior is not well suited to the tasks of peace support, which often have more in common with policing, training/re-education, and even 'social work' in the midst of fragile, traumatised post-conflict societies. Indeed, today's conflicts do not only call for military responses, but, as the EU's Security Strategy notes, 'we need greater capacity to bring all necessary civilian resources to bear in crisis and post-crisis situations.' Such diverse tasks demand diverse skills, which women are just as likely to possess as men. Only an organisation that truly respects and fully exploits the diversity of backgrounds, skills and experience of its members can operate effectively in a complex security environment.

Gender mainstreaming is not only about women and increasing the numbers of women in the armed forces. While UNSCR 1325 *On Women, Peace and Security* (see Annexe II) rightly draws attention to the 'special needs' of women as victims of armed conflicts, and highlights the specific roles women can play in peacemaking, it is not enough just to 'add women and stir'. Women are no more homogenous a group than are men, and – like men – by no means all of them are natural peacemakers, with an inborn aptitude for crisis-management operations. Moreover, realistically (and despite the efforts of many troop contributors to increase female recruitment) the personnel of crisis-management operations are overwhelmingly male, and seem likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. They have to change some of their assumptions and practices too.

Gender mainstreaming is a means of both improving the **operational effectiveness** of crisis-management missions and enhancing **human rights.** It is a matter both of better exploiting the human resources available for such missions, and equipping them appropriately to meet their fundamental purpose, which is the protection of human rights in complex post-conflict situations.

If gender mainstreaming is properly to address the issues that UNSCR 1325 alerts us to, **it must be understood as a matter that involves everyone, and that permeates all fields of**

action. Increasing the participation of women in ESDP missions is only one part of a wider effort to **change the culture** of the military and civilian organisations that are involved in planning and implementing such operations. Diversity is an asset that needs to be better mobilised in the interests of ESDP. Disregarding diversity – of age, social background, ethnicity and religion as well as gender - makes for less effective policies and fails to make best use of human resources.

II. BACKGROUND

Bosnia-Herzegovina as a case study

Bosnia-Herzegovina is a prime site for the investigation of how gender mainstreaming can contribute to improving the performance of ESDP missions. Bosnia-Herzegovina was host to the first ESDP mission – the EU Police Mission (EUPM) launched at the beginning of 2003 – and now hosts the largest-ever ESDP mission – Operation EUFOR Althea, which took over from NATO's SFOR in December 2004. Moreover, since March 2002, the international community's High Representative in BiH has been 'double-hatted' as EU Special Representative. The latter function is now to grow, in line with the planned draw-down of the OHR. The aim of the current HR/EUSR, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, is to complete this transition over the next year, if conditions in BiH permit. It is thus an opportune moment to review the place of gender mainstreaming in all three missions.

It was the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the 1990s that decisively raised international awareness of the changed nature of armed conflict after the end of the Cold War, driven by state failure and economic crisis, leading to brutal internecine strife, in which the civilian population became the primary target of violence. And the gender dimension to that violence was unmistakeable. War rapes and other kinds of sexual violence towards women received wide media coverage. For the first time, it was recognised that rape in armed conflict was not just 'something that happens', an unfortunate side effect of the general mayhem of war, but an organised activity, even a tactic of warfare. As a result, rape is now designated as a war crime. However, it should not be overlooked that civilian men and teenage boys were also victims of gender-based violence, subjected to various forms of sexual humiliation, mutilation, and genocidal massacre that targeted men as potential belligerents and as bearers of ethnic identity (what one researcher calls 'gendercide'; see Carpenter, 2006).

However, a gender perspective was notably absent from the Dayton Peace negotiations, and was not incorporated into the mandates of the military and civilian peace-implementation missions. Ethnicity was given pride of place in defining the conflict and prescribing what had to be done to end it. Yet the post-conflict Bosnian society into which the peace-implementation missions were inserted was deeply scarred by the legacies of gender-based violence, no less than by ethnic conflict. Deaths among the male population resulted in a rise in the number of female-led households. Women were left to search for missing menfolk, to find food and shelter for their families, and to reclaim and rebuild devastated homes and farms.

At the same time, the status of women in society suffered severe setbacks. Exacerbated nationalism and authoritarianism driven by war were accompanied by a reassertion of the traditional, subordinate role of women. Violence was checked on the battlefields of Bosnia, but it persisted in the domestic context as families struggled to cope with post-conflict trauma and stress.

The massive international security presence failed to address adequately these dimensions of post-conflict stabilisation of Bosnian society, and may even have contributed to consolidating women's subordinate position: neglecting to consult women's groups, and insensitivity to the gender dimension missions' activities and policies, may in fact reinforce traditional gender stereotypes. Equally distressing, the international presence was also accompanied by a proliferation of serious problems such as prostitution, trafficking in women and children, and other forms of exploitation of vulnerable local people (see Human Rights Watch, 2002).

Instead of securing human rights, the missions themselves could prove to be a source of abuses.

Military Culture and Masculinity

Such abuses cannot be accepted as the inevitable consequence of missions being overwhelmingly male, of 'boys being boys'. The problem resides in the tendency of some men in missions to adopt a perverted ethos of 'hypermasculinity', emphasising male heterosexuality, brute physical strength and aggressiveness, and the denigration of women and all things considered feminine and therefore 'soft'. This perverted ethos undermines the legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness of international missions.

The military has traditionally been a very masculine institution; it was created by men to be a men-only institution. The qualities needed to become a good soldier – courage, physical strength and stamina, determination and discipline – are more readily attributed to and expected from men than women. The readiness to defend one's own country with arms, and even to die for one's nation is considered the privilege and responsibility of adult men, hence male-only conscription in many states. Military service may be regarded as a 'rite of passage', the place where boys become men. However, this gives rise to a military culture that is not only inimical to the effective functioning of an organisation in which both men and women must work together, but also, if unchecked, may lead to disastrous abuses of the local population.

One example of where this happened concerned a group of Canadian peacekeepers in Somalia in 1992–1993. The *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces to Somalia* (1997; see also Winslow 1998) stated, among other things, that at least some components within the Canadian Airborne Regiment remained overly aggressive in their conduct and bearing during training exercises, and that 'eleventh-hour attempts to instil an orientation appropriate for peace support missions cannot counterbalance years of combat-oriented socialisation'. The soldiers arrived in the desert trained and mentally conditioned to fight in a situation where there was no war for them to fight and no enemy to kill.

UNSCR 1325 *Women, Peace and Security* adopted in 2000 signalled the international community's determination to do better (see Annexe II). Since 2003, the EU has embarked on increasing numbers of crisis-management operations under ESDP, and it is obliged to ensure effective implementation of UNSCR 1325 in its missions.

III. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Our brief was to investigate what impact gender mainstreaming might have on the ESDP missions in BiH, and how it might be implemented. The research findings presented in this section are based on the two authors' fieldwork in BiH in spring 2006 (29 March-7 April), but they also draw heavily on existing research literature on gender and the military and on the gender impact of peacekeeping on post-conflict societies elsewhere in the world. We also used previous research done by one of the authors (Valenius) on the Finnish peacekeeping force in Kosovo in November 2004. In addition, valuable information was provided by Member States in response to a questionnaire on implementation of UNSCR 1325, conducted by the Council Secretariat and presented to the PMG on 25 April 2006 (see Council Secretariat, *Compilation of Replies*). Annual reports to the Committee on Women in NATO Forces (CWINF) proved to be very useful.

Quantitative data are presented in the tables in Annex I. Below, we present the major qualitative findings of our research. The authors met with EUPM, EUFOR, and EUSR personnel in Sarajevo. Fieldwork started with a visit to EUFOR Headquarters at Camp Butmir (on the outskirts of Sarajevo), where the researchers had an Office Call with the Chief of Staff, followed by a meeting with about 20 female soldiers convened by the Chief of Staff. It must be noted that two male officers sat in on the meeting with the women soldiers, which had an impact on the dynamic of the discussion. We also spent three hours on patrol with peacekeepers (all male). One of the authors also visited a LOT (Liaison and Observation Team) house in the town of Foca, some 60km from Sarajevo; and talked to several women's NGOs in Sarajevo. Overall, the data gathered from interviews in BiH corroborated research findings from similar studies done elsewhere, as we show below.

(i) *Attitudes towards women's participation in EUPM and EUFOR*

On the whole, the interviewed personnel from the top level to the rank-and-file demonstrated positive attitudes towards women's increased participation in both missions, but all agreed that female police officers and soldiers should not be recruited 'just because they are women'. For instance, one EUPM staff member stressed that it is a question of 'putting the right person into the right spot'. Female police officers could be just as good – or as bad – as male police officers. Women were capable of doing all jobs in the police, except those like riot control where physical, upper-body strength is required. Some of the female EUFOR soldiers we talked to were of the opinion that men and women do indeed bring different qualities to bear on crisis-management operations, and that women in general can be better, for example, in 'multi-tasking'.

While the top-level officers in both missions demonstrated a positive disposition towards women in the missions, **one could not avoid the impression that they had very little knowledge of what gender mainstreaming actually is and what purposes it serves**. Voicing support for gender mainstreaming may seem to be the politically correct thing to do to when faced with a female researcher asking questions. There is clearly the danger that introducing gender mainstreaming practices and increasing the numbers of women participating in operations will turn into hollow 'tokenism' with no value at all if the people concerned do not fully understand what the objectives are.

Although senior military officers tend to be supportive of women's participation in operations abroad as a rule, there is often a 'but…' Their reservations cluster around two concerns: firstly, that the presence of women may adversely affect the cohesion of the mission; and secondly, that female military personnel would not be well received by men in 'traditional' and/or Muslim societies. If either of these were the case, then the presence of women could indeed jeopardise the security and effectiveness of the mission. But neither concern seemed to us well founded, as we indicate below.

In our case study, we heard reservations of the first type mainly from members of the Liaison and Observation Team in Foca, who were all male (this was because LOT members have to be officers, and almost no women had reached officer rank in this particular national army). The team were all of the view that the presence of women colleagues would unnecessarily complicate life in the LOT house. This is a normal house located in the town, which accommodates the 8-member team who have to take care of the cleaning, food shopping and cooking for themselves. The members of the team argued that the architecture of the house precluded women, as, according to the national military standards, male and female soldiers cannot share a bedroom or bathroom, so each sex needs their own rooms and facilities. Unless there were equal numbers of men and women, the women would get much better living conditions at great additional expense. Women soldiers back at Camp Butmir also said that male soldiers were sometimes resentful that the separate provisions for the needs of women as a minority could mean the women got better treatment than the men. This issue clearly touches on certain sensitivities, but our feeling was that **if the political will is there, it should not prove an insuperable problem to organise living arrangements to accommodate both sexes.**

Also in the LOT house, we heard the argument that women soldiers would not be appropriate for the LOT's task of liaison with the local authorities in Foca, because these are all-male, and they would not readily deal with women soldiers. **However, even if the local officials in the host society are predominantly male, this does not necessarily mean that men have all the power and that they are the only key interlocutors**. This is not the case in Kosovo, for instance. There a male officer realised that in order to make some progress in negotiations with Kosovo male villagers he had to acknowledge the presence of female villagers because they exercised power 'behind the scenes'. (Ivarsson 2004).

More importantly still, LOTs should be engaging not only with local officialdom, but with the wider civil society – including women – if they are to be effective in their tasks of information-gathering, interacting and communicating with the host society. In our view, the specific tasks of LOTs certainly call for the inclusion of women soldiers. And Foca, in particular, was the site of one of the most notorious rape-camps during the war. A large part of the local society, therefore, could be expected to have mixed feelings (at best) about the presence of men in uniform.

In general, the notion that women soldiers may be inappropriate in the context of 'traditional' or Muslim societies, is not supported by research evidence – rather the contrary. For example, research on the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH) found that even the male local population regarded the female peacekeepers more 'approachable' than their male counterparts - and Hebron is a predominantly Muslim society where many women are veiled in the traditional *hijab*, some of them covering their entire faces (Hostens 2004). Several Member States also reported interesting information on this issue in their replies to the Council Secretariat questionnaire. The Hungarian military has

some anecdotal experience that female soldiers are more accepted in conflict areas than their male colleagues, and that female military police are particularly suited in Muslim countries because they can handle intercultural communication better. Some Member States deliberately place female soldiers in certain positions in operations in Muslim countries: Finland has reserved one assignment for a female CIMIC in Afghanistan; the Netherlands has proposed the use of female military personnel for house searches and road-blocks in Iraq; and Belgium has used female NCOs to search female civilians who want to enter the airport. In all cases female military are reported to have had a very favourable impact on the local population.

The fear that female soldiers might encounter resistance from the men in Muslim societies is not justified. In fact, many states that have Muslim majorities or that define themselves as Muslim states, such as Iran, Syria, Indonesia, Libya and Pakistan, have women in the military and sometimes women even serve in combat units. In those societies men react to the uniform, not to the sex of the soldier (Karamé 2001).

(ii) *Women as 'civilizers' of men's behaviour*

Sometimes the case for including women in crisis-management operations is supported in **the expectation that the presence of women will reduce aggressive behaviour among their male colleagues**. When the researchers asked the women in EUFOR what they thought about being 'civilizers', some women saw themselves as 'normalizers' rather than 'civilizers' of men's behaviour. One female soldier voiced her resentment and said that she did not like the role. **The real issue here is who is to be held responsible for men's behaviour.**

A rather dubious argument sometimes put forward in support of increasing the number of female peacekeepers in a mission is that this will deter their male colleagues from associating with local women. There is little evidence to suggest this will be the result. One study of female SFOR soldiers in BiH found that they avoided the company of their male colleagues in their free time because they simply did not want to know whether male peacekeepers solicited prostitutes (Skjelsbæk 2004). Although the men's behaviour bothered them, the women did not want to take on the role of a 'civilizer'; on the contrary, they withdrew from their male colleagues. The issue of men's behaviour thus became a source of tension and mistrust among the women and men in the troops, which may lessen group cohesion.

Bringing more women into crisis-management operations for the purposes of 'pacifying' their male colleagues is dubious not only in terms of practical efficacy but also in moral terms: it shifts the responsibility for men's behaviour onto women. **The real issue is that some soldiers behave unprofessionally**. Violations of the standards of behaviour and professional conduct cannot be shrugged off with the excuse that 'boys will be boys'. This would quite falsely imply that men cannot control themselves, and ultimately cannot be trusted. Responsibility lies squarely with the few misbehaving soldiers and with their superiors, who should be committed to creating a professional and secure work environment. This sends a positive message to both the troops and to the host society, showing the locals that their wellbeing is taken seriously by the mission personnel.

(iii) Prostitution and crisis-management operations

The misbehaviour of soldiers, including acts of violence against the local population, and the linkage between the presence of peacekeepers/ international civilian personnel and the incidence of prostitution and trafficking in women, are well-known and documented. Military peacekeepers and civilian personnel are in a position of power, especially in terms of money, in relation to the local population, which often suffers from acute poverty, unemployment and poor living conditions.

The UN, NATO, the EU, individual Member States and other troop-contributing countries have all reacted to abuses of power on the part of mission personnel by further training and strict Standards of Behaviour/Code of Conduct. The *Generic Standards of Behaviour for ESDP Operations* explicitly stipulates that:

> Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour, is prohibited.

Prostitution and trafficking in humans, especially in women (and children), are the two forms of sexual exploitation that are most often raised in connection with crisis-management operations. There is a difference between forced sexual slavery, or forced prostitution connected with trafficking, on the one hand, and 'traditional' prostitution on the other. In forced prostitution, young women are promised a job as a waitress, baby-sitter etc., in a Western European country, but they end up locked-up as sex-slaves without adequate food, medical care and living conditions. It is not known how many of these trafficked women actually knew what was going to happen to them. In 'traditional' prostitution one could argue that the woman has voluntarily chosen to be a prostitute. Without going into to the question of free will here, it can be said that in poor, war-affected societies 'choosing' prostitution has often been a choice between abject poverty or selling one's body for sex. In both cases the root of the problem is the lack of other ways of earning a living.

In addition to the *Generic Standards of Behaviour for ESDP Missions*, some troop contributing countries have very strict additional regulations and practices concerning soldiers' association with local people. These rules are partly motivated by security concerns and fears of sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS. However, it is important to note that **these rules may apply only to the mission area.** For instance, Valenius' study among the Finnish contingent in KFOR in Kosovo confirmed what had already been reported in newspapers, namely, that Finnish male peacekeepers were soliciting prostitutes on their vacation trips to the neighbouring countries. Because this happened outside the mission area and while they were on leave, their conduct was not regulated.

This is quite problematic. **The same security concerns surely apply also outside the mission area. Tolerance of the kind of behaviour that is prohibited in the mission area only shifts the problem across the border.** How can mission personnel using prostitutes, and their superior officers, be sure that the women in a Bulgarian brothel are not victims of trafficking? Does it make any difference to the trafficked woman whether she is abused by a peacekeeper in Bosnia or in Greece? While UN, NATO and troop-contributing countries' policies to fight trafficking and prostitution seem to have been successful in reducing incidents involving their mission personnel in BiH and Kosovo, the problem itself nevertheless persists. Not explicitly prohibiting the use of prostitutes outside the mission area sends a conflicting message to mission personnel, and thus undermines the policies and progress made by international institutions in trying to eradicate trafficking.

(iv) Women as role-models for local women

An important reason for including more women in the military and police missions is that they can act as role models for local women. **The EU is involved in state-building in BiH with the objective of supporting the transformation of that country into a modern democratic society – and in due course, a Member State of the EU.** In this context, the missions set an example for the local community on gender equality. If the EU itself does not practise what it preaches it loses credibility and effectiveness.

Increasing the visibility of women in responsible positions can help offset the tendency to 're-traditionalisation' of gender roles that is often found in post-conflict societies, to which BiH society is no exception. Our interviewees among local women's NGOs told us how the resurgence of ethnic identity has increased the influence of religious conservatism in a society that previously was quite secular (especially in the urban areas). In the Muslim community, there is an increasing tendency to wear the veil, which was frowned upon in the communist era. Although this might be interpreted as the free expression of cultural identity, we were told by one interviewee that this practice was promoted by Saudi *Wahhabi* foundations in BiH who provide funding for mosques and directly to families. Also, former *Mujahedeen* fighters, who came to BiH during the war and thereafter were granted citizenship, now propagate the 'traditional' Muslim way of life – in a form that many Bosnian Muslims find alien to their own particular tradition. But re-traditionalisation affects all religious groups: all now promote pro-natalist policies in part (if not mainly) in order to 'keep up the numbers' of the respective groups. Women are thus once again becoming instruments of ethnic politics, as they were during the war, when rape was the prime tactic.

The EUPM is involved in the police reform in BiH, where gender balancing is unfortunately not (yet) an issue. It should be. The representatives of women's NGOs with whom we talked deplored this, and noted that there had been no attempt to solicit their opinions on police reform. Thinking about the human resources needs and the appropriate composition of the future unified BiH police service seems to be dominated by the question of *ethnic* representation. There is resistance in every ethnic group to local female police officers, but, according to one EUPM officer, the local police forces nevertheless follow EUPM recommendations concerning gender balancing. There has for instance been a campaign to recruit more women for the police (see Annexe I, Table 5 *Gender Composition of the Police in BiH*).

International female police officers are important in BiH because they can act as role models for local women who are considering a career in the Bosnian police force. Local female police are important for a variety of reasons. One is the identification and treatment of the victims of domestic violence, and female victims of trafficking. In post-conflict societies there is often, for various reasons, an increase in domestic violence. **If one specific group comprising a half of the population is in a position of being a potential victim of gender-based physical violence, it is a security issue in the same manner as ethnic violence, and needs to be treated as such.** It is extremely important that there are female police officers in the local police who can handle the female victims of spousal abuse.

(v) *Dialogue with local and international women's groups*

The Council Secretariat paper on *The Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the context of ESDP* recommends that 'the EU should ensure that it solicits and incorporates the views of women and women's rights groups in order to promote their participation'. The point of consultation is to ensure that our programmes and activities really meet the needs of the local society, and benefit women and men equally.

From the point-of-view of Bosnian civil society and the women's groups interviewed for this paper, the EU is, unfortunately, invisible. It seems ESDP missions have not attempted (or if they have, they have not succeeded) to reach the female population in BiH. There is frustration and disillusionment within women's organisations with the EU, which to some local women activists may even appear as arrogant and colonial. Our interviewees complained that the EU (and other international organisations) only work with government officials and politicians, not with grass-roots organisations. On the other hand, they did report fairly regular contact with embassies of some of the Member States, and with the OHR, which invites them to discuss civil society issues.

This finding is not unique to BiH. Similar experience is reported in many post-conflict societies where there is an international presence. As Valenius found in Kosovo, for instance, the women's movements feel betrayed by UNMIK. When the international community first came there, women's rights activists believed that they would be included in the rebuilding of the Kosovo society. This they feel did not happen.

The failure to consult reflects a patronising tendency to take account of local women only as *victims*, as passive recipients of both abuse and the remedies we prescribe to help them. But female victims of violence are also *survivors*. In fact, many women who suffered from abuse in an armed conflict prefer to consider themselves survivors rather than victims, and are quite resentful of the way the international community sees them only as sufferers, rather than active participants. Yet women bear a great deal of the practical, day-to-day burdens of post-conflict reconstruction, and therefore have major responsibilities. **Failure to consult them leads to frustration, a sense that matters that concern them are being decided over their heads, and a loss of trust in the international missions.**

When local women's organisations are not consulted, women's perspectives and interests are not incorporated, to the detriment of the reconstruction effort – for example, in the planned reform of the BiH police, as noted above. Gender-specific issues such as human trafficking, sexual and domestic violence are not considered important enough issues to be tackled in the context of security. *Ethnicity* is regarded as the top priority - but Bosnian society does not consist solely of Muslim, Serb and Croat *men*. There are also the Muslim, Serb and Croat women who, on some issues have more interests in common with each other than with the men of their own ethnic group. Women and women's groups have a record of working together across ethnic divides in order to thwart ethnic and nationalist politics (although, of course, there are also some women's groups that pursue overtly nationalist and/or party-political agendas – which only shows how important it is for ESDP missions systematically to build good local knowledge and contacts in this field).

Some individual Member States report in their replies to the Council Secretariat questionnaire that they have established cooperation and consultation with national, international and local women's groups (see Council Secretariat *Compilation of Replies*, April 2006). Some states

(e.g. Greece) have cooperation with their national research centres; the UK works with UN and national Working Groups on Women, Peace and Security. Sweden's support for the Swedish NGO *Kvinna till kvinna* is directly related to its efforts to increase women's participation in Swedish and ESDP missions. Austria, the Netherlands and Sweden are collaborating in the 'Genderforce' project that aims among other things at the integration of gender perspective in crisis management operations. NATO member-state militaries also work through the Committee on Women in NATO Forces (CWINF) on issues regarding women in the armed forces. **Thus although overall we can say that there is some cooperation and consultation with national and international women's groups, it is not systematically incorporated within the ESDP framework.**

(vi) *Obstacles to women's participation in operations abroad*

The percentage of women in police and military missions is very low (see Annex I, Tables 1 and 2). In EUFOR, it is less than 6 per cent. In EUPM, the percentage of women is considerably higher in civilian positions than among police officers (where it is under 8 per cent), although even among the international civilians, women constitute only a little over one-fifth of the personnel.

The main reason for women's low participation in ESDP missions is that women constitute only a small minority in the Member States' national forces (see Annexe I, Tables 3 and 4). As one of the top level EUFOR officers among our interviewees emphasised, it is the responsibility the Member States to do their part and provide more women for the missions.

Many states have had to re-evaluate their recruitment, training and employment policies with the abolition of male conscription in the late 1990s and early 2000s and the professionalisation of their armed forces. The armed forces have had to transform themselves into modern work-places that can attract qualified people from various backgrounds. Undeniably the military is a work-place with a very specific *raison d'être*. Even so, the military today should be regarded as a work-place, in which men and women have to work effectively together.

The abolition of male conscription did increase the number of women joining the military. However, many Member States report **serious problems with retaining women in the armed forces.** More women may be joining the military, but they also decide to quit more often than their male colleagues. This not only reduces the overall numbers of women in the military, it also means that there are fewer women to be promoted to the rank of an officer, who are then able to apply for instance for military observer positions, or to Liaison and Observation Teams, in the case of BiH. Another result of women leaving the service is that there are very few women in the higher ranks who could serve as role models to other women. From the efficiency angle, the outflow of capable employees wastes resources because recruiting, selecting and training new personnel is costly.

The critical point at which women abandon their military careers is between the ages of 30 and 40 – the years when they have small children to care for; and family responsibilities are also a major factor deterring women's participation in missions abroad. Although some Member States do have family policies that encourage fathers to stay at home with their children for a period of time, women still are the primary carers for young

children. The militaries are above all national militaries with their own value systems, rationales and expectations of men and women. Therefore, when we address the question of women's participation in crisis management operations and consider policies that aim to increase the number of women in missions, we engage ourselves in a political and societal processes that involve the gendered division of labour and care, family policies and deep-seated attitudes of men's and women's roles in societies. This is not a reason for pessimism about the feasibility of gender mainstreaming. Our societies – and the gender roles they embody - are changing, and gender mainstreaming in the military runs with the grain of broader social change.

The traditional organisational culture of our armed forces is not a welcoming one for women. Even where government policy is committed to increasing women's recruitment and securing equal career opportunities, women will be deterred from choosing a military career, and discouraged from pursuing it if the traditional monolithically masculine (if not 'hyper-masculine') culture of the military does not change. **The pressures on women to adapt to such a culture may constitute forms of harassment**, contrary to the principles of the *Generic Standards of Behaviour for ESDP Operations*:

> The right of all personnel to live and work in an environment free from harassment, abuse, unlawful discrimination, intimidation and bullying must be upheld. This especially includes all forms of sexual abuse and sexual harassment but also the display of pornographic material at the work place and its distribution.

Many male officers signed up for a military that did not allow women in their ranks, and they liked it that way. On the other hand, it may be said that female soldiers knew what kind of an institution they were about to join, and they did so voluntarily. Indeed, many female soldiers are proud of the fact that they made it, that they are tough enough to succeed in a 'macho' institution, as our observations of female soldiers in KFOR and EUFOR indicated. On the other hand, Valenius' research among female KFOR peacekeepers in Kosovo also revealed the case of one female soldier who felt she had actually to hold back, because (she said) some of her male peers found it hard to accept women who perform better than them. Female soldiers who feel insecure in their status may strive to compensate by becoming more 'one of the boys' than the 'boys' themselves, and may even be less critical of the military's practices than their male colleagues (Feinman 2000, 34).

A persisting problem that has an adverse effect on women's motivation to pursue a military career is sexual harassment (which may also affect men, to which we return below). Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance or conduct on the job (e.g. touching, gestures, jokes, display of pornographic material, disparaging remarks) that has the effect of making the workplace intimidating or hostile. Often those accused of sexual harassment justify their actions as 'jokes' or a 'natural flirtation' between the sexes. This is to trivialise the issue. In many countries, sexual harassment is considered a form of illegal discrimination and is a form of sexual and psychological abuse, ranging from mild transgressions to much more serious abuses. In fact, psychologists and social workers report that severe and/or chronic sexual harassment can have the same psychological effects on victims as rape or sexual assault.

Female soldiers are particularly susceptible to sexual harassment because of their minority and subordinate position in the hierarchical and highly masculine military culture. For instance, in 2002, 1,072 Spanish female soldiers submitted a complaint regarding sexual harassment, and in 2005, the British Royal Air Force reported that nearly half of all RAF women had been subjected to sexual harassment. What is typical to sexual harassment is that

the victims feel that it is their own fault, something to be ashamed about, and that they cannot talk about it in public.

The display of pornographic material in public places in camps may be interpreted as sexual harassment, as the *Generic Standards of Behaviour for ESDP Operations* recognise. Our research among the female soldiers in EUFOR revealed different views about pornographic material: some took a more lenient line and said they wouldn't mind putting up their own pin-ups on the wall (perhaps a case of being 'just like the men'), while others thought that it wholly unacceptable to have pornographic material in a professional work place. A similar range of attitudes was found in 2004 research among female soldiers in Kosovo.

The majority of harassment cases never come to light for various reasons; the lack of knowledge of how to and to whom to file the complaint; belittling and even hostile attitudes among the superiors and peers; fear that the victim is labelled as a troublemaker and that his/her career is going to suffer if he/she pursues the case. **In our discussion with the female EUFOR soldiers, the women told us that if they were harassed, they would not know to whom to report the incident.**

As Valenius' research on KFOR discovered, sometimes even female soldiers will discourage a female colleague from reporting harassment because they feel that speaking publicly about ill treatment would just make women's position even worse. Some think that sexual harassment of women is an inevitable part of the military and women should just accept it.

Mental harassment of women appears to be common in military and police organisations everywhere. A survey among female cadets conducted in the Finnish National Defence College revealed that the belittling and denigration of women, their exclusion from the student circles, constant surveillance and telling lies about women happened on a daily basis. Sometimes such harassment took place in front of their subordinates, which undermined their authority. Also, the women felt that their superior officers did not know how to handle mental harassment (Ojala 2004).

The harassment of female cadets by their male peers should wake everyone up to the cold fact that hostility towards women does not go away by itself when the older officers, who may have negative feelings towards military women, retire. There are unfortunately many young men, between the ages of 20 to 30, who have opted for a military career, but cannot accept female soldiers as their equals.

Equally important is to root out various 'hazing' practices and initiation ordeals that affect mostly young male conscripts. The recent Council of Europe report on *Human Rights of Members of the Armed Forces* (PACE, 2006) highlights the abuses in Russia and ex-Soviet republics, but points out that such cases have also been uncovered in France, Poland and the UK. As with sexual harassment, there is tendency to dismiss degrading initiation practices as a part of military tradition and 'boys just being boys'. Military tradition or not, hazing violates the victim's human rights.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) Gender mainstreaming needs to start at the top. It requires the commitment of EU Member States at the highest level.

Increasing the participation of women in ESDP missions depends on Member States' national policies for recruiting and retaining women in their military and civilian crisis-management forces. It is for Member States to implement 'family-friendly' policies to enable capable women to pursue successful careers in the forces, and to minimise the obstacles to their participation in missions abroad.

Member States' capitals should demonstrate their commitment to gender mainstreaming by **appointing more women to ESDP decision-making bodies**. For example, at present, there are only two women among the 25 Permanent Representatives in the PSC. No women, to date, have been appointed as EUSRs, and there are very few female Heads of Mission (Bet-El, 2006). The Council Secretariat appears to be doing somewhat better, with two women in senior positions, and progress towards gender balance in some directorates (see Annexe I: table 9)

The civilian and military Headline Goals should include targets and milestones for improving gender balance in ESDP missions. **Force generation**/call for contribution conferences should include gender indicators.

Changing the culture of military and civilian crisis-management organisations is a fundamental, long-term challenge that each Member State will tackle in its own way. Nevertheless, **regular, systematic exchange of 'best practice' among Member States is an invaluable means of mutual learning and support.**

Training of personnel for crisis-management operations needs to be strengthened in order to enhance sensitivity to the whole range of gender issues, and appreciation of the value-added that women's participation brings to the effectiveness of missions. Personnel need to be aware of the full implications of UNSCR 1325, and of the reasons for insisting on the codes of conduct and standards of behaviour. The European Security and Defence College now includes a module on gender issues. Such training programmes should make use of experts in gender issues, not just in the preparation and delivery of special training modules on gender, but in reviewing the whole programme of training.

(2) Gender mainstreaming cannot be simply 'bolted on' to operations at the last minute

A gender perspective must be included systematically at every stage of an operation: in planning (including fact-finding missions), implementation, monitoring and 'lessons learned'. A **'check list'** for the use of military and civilian planners in Member States and in the Council Secretariat will provide systematic guidance in this process.

The gender perspective needs to be more explicitly included in the developing EU policy framework for security sector reform. Gender mainstreaming is wholly compatible with the recent concept papers on SSR produced by the Council and the European Commission, and welcomed by the General Affairs Council on 12 June 2006; yet it is hardly mentioned. It needs to be flagged up more prominently to ensure that security dimension of gender issues is

taken fully into account (for example, as we noted above, the EU has so far *not* done this in police reform in BiH, where the main emphasis is on ethnicity).

(3) A Personal Representative of the SG/HR for Gender Issues would provide leadership and coherence in gender mainstreaming in ESDP.

Gender is a major field of concern in its own right, and it is also a wide-ranging, multi-dimensional field. It is a matter of both the *operational effectiveness* of crisis-management missions and fundamental *human rights*. There is already a PR for Human Rights in CFSP, including ESDP; but gender is not only a human rights issue, and gender is only one aspect of human rights. Clearly, there are some overlapping fields of interest, and careful consideration will need to given to how a PR for Gender Issues could work effectively in partnership with the PR for Human Rights in such common fields of interest.

The appointment of a PR for Gender Issues must avoid falling into the trap of 'sidelining' rather than mainstreaming gender. The PR must be given appropriate competences in order to insert the gender perspective into the full range of ESDP activities. These could include:

- input into early warning and situation analysis;
- consultation on peace negotiations, reconciliation processes and EU security sector reform projects (eg police reform in BiH);
- participation in fact-finding missions and planning teams;
- involvement in the appointment of senior mission personnel;
- involvement in the processes of mission review, mission report evaluation, and 'lessons learned' exercises;
- input into the conceptual development of the EU policy framework for security sector reform;
- contribution to the design and delivery of ESDP training on gender issues;
- collection and dissemination of information on gender issues, including gender-disaggregated statistical data (which is not always readily available as a matter of course);
- act as the focal point in the Council for the exchange of 'best practice' among Member States; and (potentially) report on fulfilment of gender targets in the Headline Goals;
- on the basis of information from Member States, compile a roster of women candidates for key ESDP posts (EUSR and HoM);
- ensure proper consultation and regular dialogue with international and national NGOs with a gender remit, including those in host countries of ESDP missions;
- liaison and exchange of information with international organisations (UN, OSCE, NATO etc) involved in crisis-management and peace-support operations in order to improve collaboration and consistency in policies relating to gender issues.

(4) Gender Advisers within ESDP missions

Our conclusions from the case study of BiH were:

- that the scale of the ESDP commitment in that country warrants the appointment of a Gender Adviser (GA); and
- that this person should be located in the office of the EUSR at the level of Deputy Head of Mission.

The post should be adequately resourced and given appropriate competences to ensure that gender issues are indeed 'mainstreamed' and not 'sidelined' in the work of all the EU missions in BiH. The GA's responsibilities would include:

- coordination and monitoring of gender mainstreaming implementation in EUFOR, EUPM and the EC Delegation to ensure coherence;
- collecting gender-disaggregated data on the mission's work and information on gender aspects of the local situation, reporting to the PR for Gender Issues;
- advising and assisting the EUSR and HoMs on reporting gender aspects of their work;
- convening regular meetings (a consultative committee) with local NGOs, which should include representatives from all the EU missions, keeping Member States' embassies informed and/or involved as appropriate;
- liaison on gender issues with other international actors in the field (e.g. OSCE, UN, Council of Europe);
- advising on EU project funding priorities and individual project applications;
- ensuring adequate coverage of gender issues in the induction and training of mission personnel.

Not all ESDP missions will be of the size to justify a dedicated post of Gender Adviser. Thought could be given to the possibility of 'double-hatting' with a Human Rights Adviser (while bearing in mind that gender and human rights are not coterminous). Alternatively, the HoM could include gender issues as part of the duties of the Deputy HoM, in close coordination with Human Resources officers and Legal Advisers, all of whom must be adequately trained in gender issues.

Finally, no mission should leave any of its members in doubt about which senior officer they can and should turn to in the event of sexual harassment or other breaches of the standards of behaviour (as we found was unfortunately the case in EUFOR). This is obviously the responsibility of the Human Resources officer; but s/he may also find it appropriate to designate an officer of the opposite sex to her/himself to assist in this field. Whatever the arrangement, all personnel should be fully aware of who that person is.

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Annexe I: Statistical data

Table 1: Women in EUPM (April 2006)

	Total	Women	% of women
Police officers	191	15	7.85
International Civilians	32	7	21,85
National Staff	207	126	60,86

Table 2: Women in EUFOR (April 2006)

Taskforce	**Number of women**	**% of women**
MNTF (SE)	143	5,79
MNTF (NW)	99	9,47
MNTF (N)	68	5,26
EUFOR HQ	9	4,15
IPU	2	0,44
Camp Butmir (HQ SPPT etc)	38	7,51
Total	**359**	**5,88**

Table 3: Women in some EU Member States' Armed Forces 2001-2005

COUNTRY	***2001***	***2003***	***2004***	***2005***
Belgium	*7,6*	*8,2*	*8,26*	*8,3*
Czech Republic	*3,7*	*10,0*	*12,3*	*12,21*
Denmark	*5,0*	*5,0*	*5,0*	*5,0*
France	*8,5*	*11,2*	*12,79*	*12,8*
Germany	*2,8*	*4,4*	*5,2*	*6,0*
Greece	*9,6*	*10,0*	*10,0*	*4,3*
Hungary	*3,8*	*3,8*	*4,2*	*16,0*
Italy	*0,1*	*0,5*	*0,53*	*1,0*
Latvia	-	-	*13,5*	*20,0*
Lithuania	-	-	*6,04*	*9,07*
Netherlands	*8,0*	*8,5*	*8,65*	*9,0*
Poland	*0,1*	*0,3*	*0,47*	*0,47*
Portugal	*6,6*	*8,4*	*8,4*	*8,4*
Slovakia	-	-	*6,1*	*7,06*
Slovenia	-	-	*19,2*	*15,38*
Spain	*5,8*	*10,0*	*10,5*	*10,7*
United Kingdom	*8,1*	*8,6*	*8,8*	*9,0*

Source: http://www.nato.int/issues/women_nato/index.html

Table 4: Female Soldiers in the Armed Forces of EUFOR Troop Contributing Countries (2005)

Country	***2005***
Albania	
Argentina	
Belgium	*8,3*
Bulgaria	*6*
Canada	*16,9*
Chile	
Czech Republic	*12,21*
Estonia	
Finland	*1,7*
France	*12,8*
Germany	*6*
Greece	*4,3*
Hungary	*16*
Ireland	*1,9*
Italy	*1*
Latvia	*20*
Lithuania	*9,07*
Luxembourg	*6,25*[1]
Morocco	
The Netherlands	*9*
New Zealand	*14,7*
Norway	*6,3*
Poland	*0,47*
Portugal	*8,4*
Romania	*5*
Slovakia	*7,06*
Slovenia	*15,38*
Spain	*10,7*
Sweden	
Switzerland	*0,5*[2]
Turkey	*3,95*
United Kingdom	*9*

Source: http://www.nato.int/issues/women_nato/index.html
1. Luxembourg – National Report 2005 available at http://www.nato.int/issues/women_nato/index.html
2. Swiss Armed Forces

Table 5: Composition of the Police in BiH (April 2006)

LEA	**Female**	**Male**	**Female %**	**Male %**
SIPA	8	183	4,2	95,8
SBS	96	1750	5,2	94,8
FmoI	66	787	7,7	92,3
Canton 1	63	1301	4,6	95,4
Canton 2	11	160	6,4	93,6
Canton 3	99	1419	6,5	93,5
Canton 4	78	1193	6,1	93,9
Canton 5	16	165	8,8	91,2
Canton 6	26	823	3,1	96,9
Canton 7	43	938	4,4	95,6
Canton 8	7	237	2,9	97,1
Canton 9	101	1286	7,3	92,7
Canton 10	9	250	3,5	96,5
BD	11	266	4,0	96,0
RS	286	5283	5,1	94,9
TOTAL	**920**	**16041**	**5,4**	**94,6**

Table 6: EU Military Staff (absolute numbers)

	male	*female*	*empty*
Secretaries (Civilian C grade)	1	11	3
Civilian B grade	0	2	0
Military	158	5	7
Total	**159**	**18**	**10**

Table 7: Those working for/in the EUMS(absolute numbers)

	male	*female*	*empty*
DGE in CCM	5	2	2
CION in CCM	2	0	0
LEGAD	1	0	0
Total	**8**	**2**	**2**

Table 8: PMG Representatives (absolute numbers, March 2006)

	male	*female*
PMG	47	17

Table 9: Secretariat-General of the Council (absolute numbers)

	male	*female*
DGE 8	9	7
DGE 9	3	5
S.J.	1	0
COM	4	0
Total	**17**	**12**

United Nations S/RES/1325 (2000)

Security Council

Distr.: General
31 October 2000

Resolution 1325 (2000)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 4213th meeting, on 31 October 2000

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999, 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000 and 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, as well as relevant statements of its President, and *recalling also* the statement of its President to the press on the occasion of the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace (International Women's Day) of 8 March 2000 (SC/6816),

Recalling also the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231) as well as those contained in the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century" (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), in particular those concerning women and armed conflict,

Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements, and *recognizing* the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and *stressing* the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

Reaffirming also the need to implement fully international humanitarian and human rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts,

Emphasizing the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls,

Recognizing the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard *noting* the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693),

Recognizing also the importance of the recommendation contained in the statement of its President to the press of 8 March 2000 for specialized training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations,

Recognizing that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security,

Noting the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls,

1. *Urges* Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict;

2. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes;

3. *Urges* the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this regard *calls on* Member States to provide candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster;

4. *Further urges* the Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations, and especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel;

5. *Expresses* its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and *urges* the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide to Member States training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peace-building measures, *invites* Member States to incorporate these elements as well as HIV/AIDS awareness training into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment, and *further requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training;

7. *Urges* Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children's Fund, and by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies;

8. *Calls on* all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia:

(a) The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction;

(b) Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements;

(c) Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary;

9. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, especially as civilians, in particular the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 1999 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;

10. *Calls on* all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict;

11. *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;

12. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, including in their design, and recalls its resolutions 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998 and 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000;

13. *Encourages* all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants;

14. *Reaffirms* its readiness, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, to give consideration to their potential impact on the civilian population, bearing in mind the special needs of women and girls, in order to consider appropriate humanitarian exemptions;

15. *Expresses* its willingness to ensure that Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including through consultation with local and international women's groups;

16. *Invites* the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peace-building and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution, and *further invites* him to

submit a report to the Security Council on the results of this study and to make this available to all Member States of the United Nations;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General, where appropriate, to include in his reporting to the Security Council progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions and all other aspects relating to women and girls;

18. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.