CHAPTER 08

PREVENTING CONFLICT: THE ORIGINS OF THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA
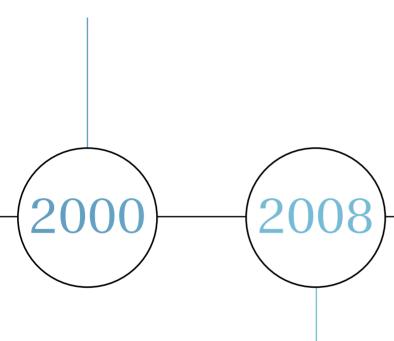
+ "Women, peace and security is about preventing war, not about making war safer for women."

Participant at the Asia-Pacific regional civil society consultation for the Global Study

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 1325

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

2000   2008

Resolution 1820

Urges the Secretary-General and his Special Envoys to invite women to participate in discussions pertinent to the prevention and resolution of conflict, the maintenance of peace and security, and post-conflict peacebuilding, and encourages all parties to such talks to facilitate the equal and full participation of women at decision-making levels

＋ Resolution 2106

Affirms that sexual violence, when used or commissioned as a method or tactic of war or as a part of a widespread or systematic attack against civilian populations, can significantly exacerbate and prolong situations of armed conflict and may impede the restoration of international peace and security; emphasizes in this regard that effective steps to prevent and respond to such acts significantly contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security; and stresses women's participation as essential to any prevention and protection response

2013

＋ Resolution 2122

Requests the Secretary-General and his Special Envoys and Special Representatives to United Nations missions, as part of their regular briefings, to update the Council on progress in inviting women to participate, including through consultations with civil society, including women's organizations, in discussions pertinent to the prevention and resolution of conflict, the maintenance of peace and security and post-conflict peacebuilding

Throughout history women peace activists from all over the world have united to try and put an end to war. Their call for a commitment to peace and for disarmament has been consistent and universal even when their own countries were at war. The same was true in 2000. When women took their demands for a women, peace and security (WPS) agenda to the Security Council in 2000, they were demanding that prevention of war be a key aspect of the Security Council's agenda along with a recognition of the capacities of half the world's population to resolve the complex challenges of global peace and security.

They were seeking a fundamental shift in how these goals are secured. Their objective was, at its core, the prevention of armed conflict and a roll back of the escalating levels of militarization making homes, communities and nations less rather than more secure. These concerns and fears continue to resonate today. During consultations for this Study, women the world over expressed their conviction that the United Nations had lost sight of its own vision to beat 'swords into plowshares.'[1] Over the years, international actors have increasingly shifted their attention and resources toward militarized approaches to security, resolution of disputes and the hurried and ad hoc protection of civilians in conflict. This is not the 'prevention' envisioned 15 years ago.

It is no coincidence that 2015 saw three major peace and security reviews underway simultaneously in the UN system. The institutions and mechanisms established to make and keep peace are stretched to capacity, functioning on a multilateral logic of a by-gone era and an over-reliance on mitigation of crises once they erupt, rather than sustainable, long-term approaches to peace and security. The recent High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations found that prevention efforts remain "the poor relative of better resourced peace operations deployed during and after armed conflict."[2] A militarized view of conflict prevention sells resolution 1325 short of its transformative vision for a more equal, just and peaceful world, and neglects a proven tool available to achieve this.

"The adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 was indeed a watershed, and there is much to be celebrated with this achievement. But we also have to use it to challenge the underpinnings of marketised and militarised international peace and security."

Felicity Ruby, Secretary-General of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom at the time of the adoption of resolution 1325[3]

The resort to armed conflict, whatever the underlying reasons, has disastrous impacts for affected societies. The economic costs, long-term implications for State institutions and normalization of violence with its associated effects, are only a few of the ways in which conflict is felt. Conflict-affected and fragile States have been among the poorest achievers of the Millennium Development Goals.[4] As the report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture notes, all of the ten worst performing countries on maternal mortality are either conflict or post-conflict countries.[5] Wars, and the ensuing organized political and criminal violence and corruption

that accompany them, impede overall economic development—direct (e.g., infrastructure damage) and indirect costs (e.g., reduced tourism) draw substantially from state budgets and GDP. In 2014, violence had a global cost of 13.4 per cent of world GDP—USD14.3 trillion.[6] Furthermore, as a result of the feminization of poverty globally, the nexus between conflict and development lends itself to stark gendered impacts.

This Study is not suggesting that military responses do not have their place in the global lexicon of protection. However, it cannot be denied that the international community has been too slow to put in place effective early warning and prevention measures or address root causes even where they are apparent, and too quick to react to crises with an armed response. An attitudinal shift is needed away from a primary focus on military responses, towards investment in peaceful conflict prevention strategies.

The two concurrent reviews of UN peace and security have both made similar findings. The High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations has stated that, "the prevention of armed conflict is perhaps the greatest responsibility of the international community and yet it has not been sufficiently invested in."[7] The report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture underscored that while militarized responses to conflict "can prove effective in the immediate context of violence, they tend to address symptoms rather than root causes."[8] It also noted that the limited attention by the UN to both the prevention and recovery ends of conflict has been described as an 'inverted U'—in which there is "little effective UN attention to prevention, great attention to crisis response (though still frequently less than is needed), and again relatively little in the recovery and reconstruction phase."[9]

Both reports go on to make a number of important recommendations which seek to strengthen the UN's ability to prevent conflict through short- and medium-term strategies, including: increased attention, resources and coordination for mediation within the UN system; earlier UN engagement to address emerging threats to peace and security; and convening key stakeholders to bring attention to early conflict prevention priorities.

While these recommendations form an important starting-point for discussions about prevention as a priority, the value added of the WPS agenda is its structural assessment and response to conflict prevention: its assertion that sustainable peace will only be possible when all actors address the root causes of conflict and violence, a global political economy which prioritizes preparedness for war over peace, continuities in violence and insecurity which are evidenced particularly through the experiences of women and girls and the growing role of factors such as climate change and natural resource control in creating insecurity.

APPROACHES TO CONFLICT PREVENTION

Approaches to conflict prevention are generally grouped into two categories oriented toward:[10]

(i) Operational, or short-term practical strategies; and

(ii) Structural, or long-term prevention.

Both categories would benefit from greater integration of the women, peace and security agenda.

Operational (short- and medium-term) approaches: prevention and preparedness for potential violence

Operational, or medium- and short-term approaches to conflict prevention encompass the adoption and execution of practical strategies that monitor and prepare for the potential for conflict, and ensure a swift response where violence erupts. Operational prevention includes strategies such as early warning and response, preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, and the use of information and communications technology (ICT). Although integration of gender as a category of analysis, and the use of women-led or informed strategies of early warning and conflict resolution are proven tools to strengthen the effectiveness of conflict prevention measures, they have to date only rarely been incorporated.

FOCUS ON

UN tools for conflict prevention

In its report, the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations called for decisive and far-reaching change across four areas of the work of peace operations, the first of which is a demand for the UN to bring conflict prevention and mediation back to the fore.[11] The UN already has a number of tools working alongside peacekeeping and special political missions which relate to prevention and mediation—among them, the Good Offices of the Secretary-General, Peace and Development Advisors, and the Human Rights up Front initiative.

The **Good Offices of the Secretary-General** is an important avenue for conflict resolution through preventative diplomacy. Its use has intensified and expanded over the past 15 years, and successive Secretaries-General, their envoys and senior Secretariat officials have attempted to mediate virtually every major armed conflict on the UN's agenda.[12] As discussed in this report in Chapter 10: *Key Actors*, the United Nations must do more to ensure that women occupy senior leadership positions, including relating to the Secretary-General's Good Offices, where women currently serve in only 4 out of 18 appointments.

The UN's **Peace and Development Advisors (PDAs)**[13] work in support of UN Resident Coordinators and Country Teams to develop and implement conflict prevention programmes. They pursue sustainable strategies which build upon the capacities of national actors to carry preventative and peacebuilding work forward.[14] PDAs are also tasked with integrating the women, peace and security agenda into their conflict prevention work. The extent to which this is taken on board seems to vary however, and an internal review for the Department of Political Affairs recommended that senior leadership do more to ensure that PDAs recognize gender mainstreaming as an essential part of their responsibilities.[15] Further, an independent assessment of the PDA programme found that women are under-represented, filling just 6 of 34 PDA posts.[16]

The Secretary-General launched the **Human Rights up Front (HRuF)** initiative in late 2013, with the goal of ensuring that the UN system takes early and effective action, as mandated by the Charter and UN resolutions, to prevent or respond to large-scale violations of human rights or international humanitarian law. As the UN works to implement it—including through its senior advisory group—it must ensure that gender analysis is integrated into all areas of action, and that recommendations pay particular attention to promoting and protecting women's human rights. Also important is a gendered understanding of the human rights violations which are monitored to trigger a response by the system.[17]

All three peace and security reviews undertaken by the UN this year highlight the critical need for greater investment in prevention strategies, including through monitoring and analysis. Implementation of these should consider however that whichever violations are monitored, and whomever is consulted to inform design, analysis and response, will directly affect the strength of efforts and their impacts. In this regard, women's differential experiences of conflict lend themselves to different sources of information and identification of early warning trends, providing a concrete tool to strengthen conflict prevention and mitigation.

We [...] call on the Security Council and all actors to focus on gender-sensitive disarmament and conflict prevention, including early warning.

Rhoda Misaka, a founding member of the South Sudanese Diaspora Association, and member of EVE Organization for Women Development, at the Security Council Open Debate on Sexual Violence in Conflict, 2014

Early warning

Gender-sensitive analysis of conflict can reveal otherwise unseen conflict drivers and triggers, and women's participation is a key avenue to strengthening effectiveness. Women can help identify changing dynamics in grassroots, familial and community level relations that may contribute to national level tensions, which might not otherwise be identified. For instance, women and girls can observe changing patterns in time-allocations spent by men and boys (e.g., training clandestinely), and in the hiding of arms caches in homes and community centers. Studies in Kosovo and Sierra Leone found that women in those contexts had valuable information about the accumulation of weapons and violent attacks being planned, but had no means of reporting or sharing this information.[18]

The continuum of gendered violence in women's lives also means that when there are rising levels of insecurity in society more broadly, women may be the first to be affected. Rising tensions can result for instance, in restrictive freedom of movement for women, increased risk of assault in public areas, and women's inability or lack of willingness to access fields and gardens due to threats. Similarly, increasing levels of domestic violence and the specific vulnerability of women to gender-based violence within and outside the home often reflect growing tensions and militarization in society as a whole. These specific issues can be valuable indicators and sources of information if captured as elements of early warning mechanisms for preventive action, including for the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence. A three-pronged approach that promotes the inclusion of women in early warning, the development of indicators that are gender sensitive, and the development of indicators that are specific to gender-based violations impacting women, increases the effectiveness of our conflict prevention efforts.

Overcoming the exclusion of women and girls from early warning is critical.

Conflict prevention methods are improved through directly engaging with women and providing avenues

to capitalize on their knowledge. This includes ensuring that women are consulted during the formulation of early warning systems and that there are specific channels for women to report information to the central data collection site. Where there are barriers in literacy or ICT skills, efforts should be made to ensure that women are trained, or have alternate avenues for reporting. Women's organizations in particular can be instrumental. They often have key insight into changing gender power relations, and specific changes to freedoms available to women, as well as knowledge of changes to rates of gender-based violence, and to patterns of men's behaviors inside and outside of the home. They should therefore be engaged in roles that allow them to maximize the impact of these valuable insights within existing mechanisms.

Early warning mechanisms and indicators must be gender-sensitive. Effective early warning systems are those that ensure equal participation of men and women in the conception, design and implementation of early warning measures. The development and use of indicators that are gender-specific, as well as indicators that are sex-gender specific is critical. Examples of gender-sensitive early warning indicators include:

- Sex-specific movement of populations.

- Increase in female-headed or male-headed households.

- Increased harassment, arrest and interrogation of civilian men by security forces.

- Changes to patterns of gender roles; e.g., men occupied with political activities, women take over more of the productive role of the household.

- Hoarding of goods, lack of goods on the local markets.

- Training in weapons for men, women and children at community levels.

- Propaganda, news stories, programmes glorifying militarized masculinities.

- Resistance or curtailment of women's involvement in marketing and trade, in public community discussions.

- Increased numbers of meetings by men for men.

- Random and arbitrary detention of men.

These kinds of indicators may be included in multiple models of early warning systems and within the policy that informs state-level preparedness and planning. In the Solomon Islands in 2005, UNIFEM (predecessor to UN Women) supported the development of a project—"Monitoring Peace and Conflict Using Gendered Early Warning Indicators"—which identified indicators to reflect the experiences of both men and women with regards to long-term effects of unresolved land disputes; to examine women's role in 'gun-free village' programmes, and to monitor media content reflecting women's experiences and concerns.[19] The model used discussions with community members to elicit men and women's views separately, ensuring the inclusion of both men and women as monitors.

In South Sudan, UNMISS supports the Community Women Peace Dialogue Forum, which engages women to identify early warning signs to solve community conflicts and lead campaigns to prevent sexual and gender-based violence.[20] Additionally, the peacekeeping mission established a 24/7 hotline, the distribution of communication equipment to high-risk communities, and collection and analysis of information in the mission's operations centers. Early warning indicators of conflict in Jonglei state, for example, include unusual movement of all-male groups, rising bride-price and an increase in pregnancy terminations, among others.

A Conflict Early Warning and Response (CEWARN) Mechanism was developed by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a regional organization which brings together seven countries of the Horn of Africa: Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda.[21] CEWARN receives and shares information on the basis of indicators that monitor potential points of tension, many of which are gender-responsive and enable effective gender-sensitive early warning to take place.[22] CEWARN's early warning reports provide highlights on the impact of pastoral and related conflicts on women and girls; incorporate indicators that capture the role of women in peacebuilding or promoting violent behavior; train field monitors on gender issues; and include gender-related questions and indicators in their field surveys.[23]

FOCUS ON

Community-based approaches to early warning

The Dutch foundation Cordaid has developed a community-based participatory approach to early warning, called the "barometer of local women's security," which has been implemented in seven conflict-affected countries and territories. To create the Barometer, Cordaid works with local women to define what security means to them, and the indicators which should be used to measure it.[24] Women receive training on how to collect relevant data, which Cordaid then captures and analyses in a centralized database, and shares with local, national and international decision makers. Early results of the project indicate that the Barometer bridges the gap between policy makers and local women, and equips women with a voice in the daily peace and security of their community.[25]

Monitoring for gendered violence:
The UN Action "Matrix of Early Warning Indicators of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence"

Specific systems that monitor for gendered violence are critical not only to the prevention of conflict, but to the prevention of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence. The UN Action "Matrix of Early Warning Indicators of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence," developed in 2011 for use by actors involved in protection in humanitarian settings is an example of one tool for monitoring.[26] The matrix establishes a clear set of indicators that signal potential, impending or ongoing sexual violence. It enables ample preparedness planning by protection actors, as well as rapid response to risk factors for conflict-related sexual violence.

Indicators include:

- **Military and security factors:** armed groups rewarding or indoctrinating aggressive, hyper-masculine behavior; combatants operating under the influence of drugs or alcohol; and the placement of military bases or encampments in close proximity to civilian centers.

- **Humanitarian and social factors:** changes in the mobility patterns of women and girls (such as their sudden absence from schools or market-places otherwise unexplained by contextual or seasonal factors); an increase in female-headed households due to an absence of men from communities, or to an increase in the number of women rejected by husbands and communities; mass displacement due to insecurity or emergency; and disappearance of girls reported by family or law enforcement officials en route to/from schools in areas where arms bearers are present.

- Political and legal factors: such as violent, unconstitutional changes of power; permissive or encouraging rhetoric about rape and justifications for sexual violence voiced by political leaders; and women candidates and voters in an electoral process targeted for violence, including psychological, sexual and physical violence.

- **Economic factors:** drop in the price of arms or increase in supply; inflation and food insecurity; and increased reports of women's involvement in the shadow war economy, e.g., trafficking, prostitution.

- **Media factors:** increased signs of media repression and restrictions on freedom of expression; public incitement to sexual violence, including by reference to past violations against a community/group to justify future attacks;

- **Health factors:** increase in requests for HIV/STI testing; increase in women seeking clandestine abortions; and increase in female prison population and in reports of women/girls subjected to torture and other forms of ill-treatment.

Early warning mechanisms should specifically capture gender-based violations. Monitoring of violence should ensure that women and girls have safe outlets to report violence, and follow-up response services when they do. As noted above, rising levels of domestic violence in particular may be an indicator of rising levels of violence more broadly, and increased risk and vulnerability to assaults outside the home have also been found to be indicators of incipient conflict. Women and women's organizations will likely have the most accurate information on growing levels of these kinds of violations, and should be connected to formal early warning mechanisms. Indicators should also explicitly cover gender-based violations, including for example:

- Sex-specific violations: increased reports of rape and domestic violence; trafficking and abductions; gender-motivated killings and disappearance of men and women.

- Increased control of women's public movements, dress, agency, growth in fundamentalist views of women.

In Timor-Leste since 2009, the NGO BELUN has coordinated a national early warning and response system.[27] It tries to maintain a gender balance among its community-based monitors, collects sex-disaggregated information in their situation and incident forms, and report on indicators specifically related to gender-based violence in periodic monitoring reports.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

More than one third of the world's population was online by 2011, and developing countries accounted for 63 per cent of all users, with rates of growth faster than in developed countries.[28] This increased access globally points to the potential technology has to be a widely accessible avenue for conflict prevention efforts.

What is already apparent is that just as new technologies are being leveraged to wage war, they are also increasingly being used to improve physical security and work toward conflict prevention and peace. Drones for example, are being used in post-disaster humanitarian response (and have potential for post-conflict response), as a means to safely reach victims in need of assistance before humanitarian first responders can reach them. In the DRC, MONUSCO has used unpiloted aircraft to track migration and the movements of civilians being pushed from their homes in attacks.[29] They have also instituted a programme to provide women with mobile phones and SIM cards as part of a gender-sensitive early warning system, thus giving affected populations direct access to the UN's available protection resources.[30] In remote stretches of the Amazon, the Wapichana indigenous community of Guyana has partnered with the NGO Digital Democracy to create an early warning system that monitors illegal forestry and gold mining taking place on their land and threatening their environmental security.[31]

Internet social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter provide channels to raise awareness about reports of violence, engage in dialogue with women globally, and spread knowledge of women's diverse roles in different societies. Online platforms are being used to crowd-source information on documented instances of violence against women, in some cases mapping reports of sexual violence or harassment against women to demand accountability for tackling the problem, like the Women Under Siege project in Syria.[32] Satellite technology is enabling peacekeepers to respond in more targeted and effective ways to sites of violence or anticipated violence; this same

Rising levels of domestic violence in particular may be an indicator of rising levels of violence more broadly.

technology also facilitates evidence collection for intervention and prosecution with respect to attacks on communities, described in Chapter 5: *Transformative Justice.*

New mobile technologies are being developed specifically for the purpose of strengthening women's security in conflict. Some smartphone applications are being created to help civilians identify potential dangers in their surroundings, and connect people with nearby allies.

Barriers to women's access to technology

It is important to acknowledge however, that in furthering the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in conflict prevention, there are key access and control concerns to be considered for women and girls. What technology women access and how, on an individual and collective basis, varies greatly, often corresponding with pre-existing barriers to their access to power and resources such as language, education and affluence.[33] In low and middle-income countries, women are 21 per cent less likely to own a cell phone than a man.[34] This number is 23 per cent in Africa, 24 per cent in the Middle East and 37 per cent in South Asia,[35] and further stratified over the rural/urban divide.

Equally, while a global study found that 93 per cent of women felt safer and 85 per cent felt more independent because of the security offered by owning a mobile phone,[36] in already insecure contexts technology can in fact place women at greater risk. This is particularly the case for women human rights defenders and journalists whose work and personal lives can be subject to online attacks and monitoring—a factor which is analyzed in greater detail in the section on the media in Chapter 10: *Key Actors.*

Beyond economic barriers, other reasons why women and girls remain distanced from new technologies include: lack of awareness of how ICTs can affect their lives; lack of time; concerns over physical security; lack of the technical knowledge to operate a particular technology; fear of ridicule or social censure; lack of access to some types of connectivity; and content that does not respond to their interests and needs. Each of these barriers must be addressed to maximize technology's potential to improve women's and girls' physical security and prevent conflict. **Sustainable Development Goal 5, indicator 5(b), will be a critical tool in this effort, as it calls for States to enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women**.[37]

COMMUNITY-LEVEL MEDIATION, DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND CONFLICT MITIGATION MECHANISMS

Women's situation rooms

Women's civil society organizations in several countries have joined forces to prevent and mitigate incidents of violence against women in elections through awareness raising and mediation. Women's Situation Rooms (WSR) have been established in a number of African countries to monitor and, where possible, prevent or mitigate the eruption and escalation of election-related violence by engaging stakeholders in constructive dialogue and peace advocacy in the lead up to, during and after elections.[38] WSRs facilitate this engagement among a broad range of actors from grassroots to national levels, including young people, the media, political and government leaders, private sector officials and religious and traditional leaders. While WSRs are organic and adapt to the specificities of each national context, these forums generally encompass preventive diplomacy activities; civic education; facilitation of dialogue and advocacy; and training and deployment of female observers to monitor elections country-wide. They also seek to raise awareness about incidents of violence and intimidation against women in the electoral process.

For the period preceding the election, a temporary physical "Situation Room" (a central coordination center) allows key women leaders and organizers, analysts and other stakeholders to gather and coordinate strategies and inputs. Real-time analysis of information reported by the observers and the media also takes place. Where relevant, information is relayed to police and other stakeholders so that appropriate action can be taken. Situation Rooms also bring together prominent women leaders from within each country and neighboring countries, demonstrating solidarity, and providing opportunities for coordination and strategizing across regional borders. As this strategy involves the creation of a central monitoring system based on reports from a wide network of trained observers, more analysis is needed to determine the reliability and effectiveness of the reporting system. Amidst such ongoing efforts to examine the effects of WSR on violence prevention, what has already become evident however, is that they serve as an important forum for awareness-raising and solidarity-building among women and with different stakeholders, with a clear message to uphold peace and mitigate political violence.

FOCUS ON

Women's Situation Rooms: Experiences from three countries

WSRs have now been employed in elections in Kenya (2013), Liberia (2011), Nigeria (2011, 2015), Senegal (2012) and Sierra Leone (2012). WSRs operate in context specific ways, illustrated through some of the examples here:

Kenya
Ahead of the 2013 general election, women's civil society organizations established a WSR in Nairobi led by a team of Eminent Women from Tanzania, Uganda, Nigeria and Liberia.[39] 500 observers were trained and provided reports from across the country. Over 554 incidents were recorded including reports of threats to candidates and voters, and general voter complaints. As cases were addressed, the mechanism contributed to a de-escalation and mitigation of violence.

Nigeria
During the 2015 Presidential and Senatorial elections a toll-free hotline was created and run by 40 trained operators who responded to calls by the general populace (particularly reporting on constraints of women's voting rights). Over 300 female monitors were trained and deployed to ten states. Political, legal and media analysts, police and representatives of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) were able to exchange information and cooperate through this initiative.[40]

Senegal
A WSR was established during the 2012 presidential elections by The Women's Platform for Peaceful Elections.[41] More than 60 women were trained and deployed country-wide as monitors.[42] During the elections, monitors reported incidents to the Situation Room and information was relayed to the police, the electoral commission and other stakeholders.

Building peace at the grassroots level

Women's civil society and community-based organizations are developing deliberate peacebuilding strategies and advancing critical conflict prevention methods at the grassroots level—efforts which have been recognized by the Security Council in resolutions including 2171 (2014),[43] and in the review of United Nations peacebuilding architecture.[44] In Liberia, Palava or 'Peace Huts' have been established as safe spaces where women can come together to mediate and resolve community disputes, including incidents of gender-based violence.[45] Peace Huts are traditionally a means of addressing individual grievances in the community, and their new more inclusive role has been supported by the Liberia National Police who have provided cell phones so that calls can be made to a free help-line. Further, Peace Huts are becoming more inclusive of men and boys' efforts to combat gender-based violence, as evident in the creation of 'anti-rape' football clubs and focus groups for male leaders. Peace Huts have also been integral in the mediation of disputes over extractives; in 2012 Peace Hut women set up a roadblock to protest logging taking place in Gparpolu County.[46] The women's activism resulted in the sacking of the Minister of Forestry and much higher scrutiny on the concession agreements with extractive industries.

In some areas in Colombia, 'peace communities,' have been formed which declare their area and population 'neutral' and free from armed conflict, and which set demands on combatants to not draw these communities into violence. Women are critical leaders in this movement.[47] The Association of Organized Women of Eastern Antioquia (AMOR) directly negotiated with armed factions to secure a temporary humanitarian accord that enabled freedom of movement for communities.[48] In Sudan, the Sudanese Women Empowerment for Peace (SuWEP) movement developed a "Minimum Agenda for Peace" to promote peace across Sudan and South Sudan.[49] Operating across both jurisdictions, the movement included initiatives such as public hearings on women's views on the context, training in conflict resolution and mediation, and broader and multiple peace advocacy strategies.

The presence of strong women's networks, committees and groups working at the grassroots level means that women have important experience as community-level mediators and social mobilizers, and can play a key role in more formal mediation processes when presented with opportunities for inclusion.[50] Teresita Deles, the Presidential Advisor to the Peace Process in the Philippines, the late Dekha Ibrahim from Kenya, and Shadia Marhaban, the former negotiator for the GAM rebel group in Aceh, are examples of women who are internationally renowned as mediators, yet started their work as community organizers and local-level peacemakers. External actors can support the work of such women by providing safe spaces for women to participate in all mediation processes, from the local, to the national, regional and international. States, the United Nations, and civil society must create partnerships to build infrastructures for peace, including opportunities for women of all ages and from different groups to constructively interact to address the causes of tension and conflict within their communities.[51]

STRUCTURAL PREVENTION: ADDRESSING THE FOUNDATIONAL ROOTS OF WAR AND MILITARISM

Structural or longer-term approaches to preventing armed conflict address the underlying causes of war and violence. They aim to bring about a reduction in the potential for armed or political violence over time and promote nonviolent means to address acute need and rights entitlements. They include efforts to address structural inequality and violence, promote human rights and human security, and engage in de-militarization, disarmament and reduction in spending on armaments.

Global military spending in 2014 (USD 1.7 trillion)[52] is almost thirteen times higher than development aid allocations from OECD-DAC member countries (approximately USD 135 billion).[53]

The report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture offers important insight into the drivers
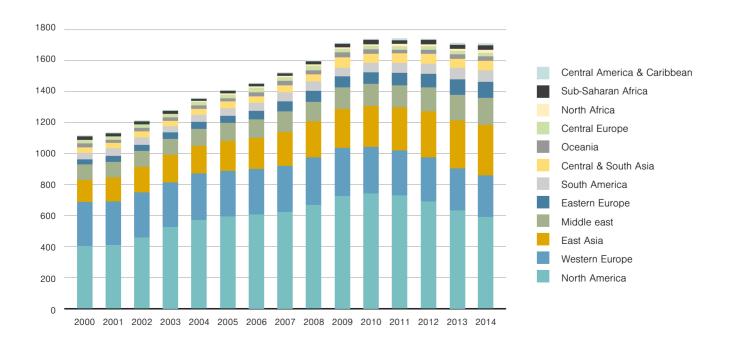
> "It has been very hard to move the focus from prevention of violence against women to prevention of conflicts."

Respondent to the civil society survey for the Global Study, based in Australia

grievances,[55] and how climate change, environmental degradation and population growth are adding new complexities to the understanding of global security.[56] Most usefully, the review of UN peacebuilding architecture offers insight into possible solutions to these seemingly intractable root causes of conflict—an approach to conflict prevention which views peace as inextricably linked with development and human rights. Mirroring this approach, the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal on peaceful and inclusive societies is premised on the common understanding—developed over the past fifteen years of lagging achievements on the millennium development goals for conflict-affected countries—that human rights, peace and development, the three pillars of the UN's work, are indivisible and interrelated; one cannot be achieved without the others.[57]

and structural causes of conflict, analyzing a range of factors, from extremism and organized crime to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, weak governance institutions and corruption.[54] The report highlights how social and economic deprivation, coupled with historical exclusion, can animate

In consultations for the Global Study, participants echoed this understanding that peace will be neither achievable nor sustainable without equitable and inclusive development, and the recognition of the full range of human rights. Though the terms 'discrimination' and 'oppression' may no longer be

Total military expenditure by region (Total USD billion, 2011 constant prices and exchange rates)[58]

popular in international reports, in many societies exclusion and the violation of rights is systematic, violent and reprehensible and the result of a deliberate and vicious political will. They require moral condemnation. With this understanding in mind as a cause of immediate concern, three further themes also emerged as core to the WPS agenda's approach to conflict prevention: addressing local and global inequalities; the connections between small arms, crime, violence and gender; and climate change and natural resource scarcity.

Addressing local and global inequality

From Kosovo, where unequal access to social services has fueled inter-group hostility, to Yemen, where political exclusion has underpinned destabilizing protests and violence,[59] it is clear that inequality—economic, political, social and cultural—heightens group grievances and can lead to conflict. States with high levels of inequality are more likely to be overthrown by unconstitutional or forceful means, including politically motivated violence and terrorism.[60]

While inequality has always been among the key drivers of conflict—recognized by sources as diverse as Aristotle and the UN Charter—today there is cause for growing alarm. The World Economic Forum listed deepening income inequality as the number one trend of concern in 2015,[61] and in almost all countries, the mean wealth of the wealthiest 10 per cent of adults is more than ten times median wealth. For the top percentile, mean wealth exceeds 100 times the median wealth in many countries, and can approach 1000 times the median in the most unequal nations.[62]

For women, income inequality is exacerbated through structural inequalities that lead in all contexts to a feminization of poverty. As of 2007, roughly 20 per cent of women were below the $1.25/day international poverty line, and 40 per cent below the $2/day mark.[63] Girls and young women also suffer disproportionately from poverty, as more than one-quarter of females under the age of 25 were below the $1.25/day international poverty line, and about half on less than

Recent large-scale research projects are pointing to the fact that the security of women is one of the most reliable indicators of the peacefulness of a state.

$2/day.[64] This leaves women both more vulnerable to violence and insecurity in their lives as well as less able to mitigate the impacts of this violence.

GENDER AND CONFLICT PREVENTION

Under the WPS agenda, the conflict prevention pillar makes critical linkages between the *prevention of armed conflict itself, and the prevention of gender-based harms that precede and result from political violence.*[65]

Growing evidence-based research is showing that states that have higher levels of gender equality (political, social and economic) are less likely to resort to the use of force in relation to engagement with other states. Domestic inequality for women—where a hierarchy of inequalities are evident within the state—is also associated with a foreign policy that is less tolerant of other states and more likely to be belligerent in its international relations.[66] Similarly, recent large-scale research projects are pointing to the fact that the security of women is one of the most reliable indicators of the peacefulness of a state.[67] Where peace is understood as being more than simply the absence of armed conflict, gender inequality—whether in relation to equal legal status for women, sex-selective abortion and infanticide, or the deliberate targeting of women for gender-based harms and murder—globally becomes a key indicator

of a pre-conflict concept of security skewed in favor of men and toward the state. Effective conflict prevention must therefore start from an understanding of the broad and deep insecurities that permeate women's lives *prior* to conflict, and the ways that pre-conflict structural inequality can facilitate violence and insecurity.

Militarism and cultures of militarized masculinities create and sustain political decision-making where resorting to the use of force becomes a normalized mode for dispute resolution. Militarism also metastasizes, taking on forms outside of traditional armed conflict. In consultations for the Global Study, participants identified the various ways in which their lives had been militarized: through military support to extractive industries in Asia; the 'war on drugs' in Latin America; militarized anti-migration initiatives in Europe; and of course, the global 'war on terror.'

Massive funding gaps remain on broad human security needs and measures, particularly women's and girls' empowerment, reproductive health and rights, health and education.[68] Accounts from Cambodia, Costa Rica and Sri Lanka provide positive examples of reductions in spending on security and the military which have effectively redirected financing into social programmes,[69] but overall, there is an imbalance in investment towards the military apparatus rather than peace and prevention efforts.[70] Critically, militarism serves to uphold and perpetuate structural inequalities that in turn operate to disenfranchise women and girls from public goods, entrench exclusion and marginalization, and create the ingredients for a platform of broader inequalities that increase the potential for violent conflict to occur.

Women's experiences of gendered violence manifest within and outside of armed conflict, but with continuities and relations between them. The WHO estimates that 35 per cent of women globally have experienced some form of sexual or physical assault.[71] This violence is often aggravated by conflict, leading to patterns of sexual and gender-based crimes during conflict, and escalated rates of violence against women across societies after conflict.[72] The use of sexual violence during conflict can represent a dramatic departure in form and patterns from peacetime, as these atrocities may in fact be employed as a tactic of war and terror against members of target populations. However, the roots of this violence remain common. As noted by Zainab Hawa Bangura, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, "[I]f you don't protect your women in times of peace, you will not be in a position to protect them in conflict. Obviously, the issue of sexual violence does not happen by accident, it is related to the structure of the society and community." The prevention of violence against women in conflict rests squarely with the need to prevent violence against women before conflict— and above all, to prevent conflict, itself.

Importantly, the continuum of gender-based violence across contexts underlines the false distinction between the private and political spheres, and between conflict and peace. It points to the need for specific attention to and treatment of gender-based violence as a crucial element in conflict prevention. In the occupied Palestinian territories, women reported increased levels of violence within the home as a result of increased violence outside of the home.[73] In Ethiopia, rising levels of domestic violence were observed prior to the conflict with Eritrea.[74] In the Yugoslav wars, cross-ethnic rape of women escalated prior to the conflict, and women fled on this basis six to eight weeks before the conflict erupted.[75] In Rwanda, as early as 1990, extremist Hutu media began to target Tutsi women, depicting them as spies and a threat to Hutu society, including via pornographic material.[76] Each of these is equally an example of early warning indicators that were simply neglected, owing to the false distinctions created between what is deemed the personal versus the political.

Instead of viewing women's and girl's experience of a continuum of violence during 'armed conflict' and 'peace' as distinct moments, it is the commonalities between both contexts that must be recognized. What is certain is that pre-conflict social, political and economic systems are not gender-neutral, and the potential for the eruption of political violence is infused with a common gendered dynamic. Prevention strategies necessarily require stronger recognition and understanding of the depth of the influence of gender norms, gender relations and gender inequalities on the potential for the eruption of conflict.

"In this country, a young woman cannot walk on the street without fear."

Participant at the El Salvador civil society consultation for the Global Study

The connections between arms, crime, violence and gender

Small arms, and their proliferation, are a direct outcome of the militarization of so-called peaceful societies. Whether in societies that have never experienced armed conflict, or in those that have endured periods or cycles of conflict, the availability of small arms inhibits efforts to prevent armed violence and contributes to the escalation of lethal violence. Access to such weapons intersects directly with and impacts the forms and intensity of women's experiences of gendered violence within and outside of conflict. The overall availability of small arms has significantly broadened the impact of these weapons today. The value of the global trade in small arms and light weapons almost doubled between 2001 and 2011, from USD 2.38 billion to USD 4.63 billion.[77]

In the aftermath of conflict, as state institutions and regulations are being established and conflict-related weapons remain in wide circulation, the easy access to small arms places women at increased risk of violence and insecurity. In many post-conflict societies, there is a noticeable continuity in patterns, actors and forms of violence from the political to the social and criminal spheres, with women at higher risk of being attacked in the public sphere, including by gangs and organized criminal groups. These criminal attacks are a part of the continuum of violence women and girls experience during and after conflict. Rampant impunity, normalization of violence, weakened state institutions, and formalized relationships between state actors and criminal groups all provide a breeding ground for increased criminal activity, made all the more lethal by the easy access to small arms.[78] In Latin America, respondents to a survey of civil society organizations for the Global Study designated organized crime as the most pressing emerging issue for women, peace and security in the region.[79]

Indeed, at Global Study consultations around the world, women and girls living in situations of heightened insecurity because of criminal violence explained how important the WPS agenda was to counter these threats and the growing normalization of violence in their everyday lives. They demanded that global policy frameworks and approaches on peace and security move beyond the limitations of state actors, and the narrow political definitions of these issues, towards broader notions of citizen security. There have been increased efforts to address the proliferation of small arms in recent years. The Arms Trade Treaty (2012) for example, goes some way towards regulating the sale and use of arms and mitigating impacts on rates of gendered violence. In Article 7(4) of the treaty, States Parties are obligated to assess the risk of arms "being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence or acts of violence against women and girls." This provision

> "Conflict prevention lies at the core of the [WPS] agenda, and the maintenance of international peace and security [...] Without strengthened investment in women's human rights, equality, education, and women-led civil society, we will not see sustainable peace."

Brigitte Balipou, magistrate in the Central African Republic, board Member of Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS), and Founding Member of the Women Lawyer Association of the Central African Republic, at the Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security, 2014

FOCUS ON

Girls and gangs in Central America

"There has never been peace in this region. The Latin American people have suffered extermination, criminalization and permanent violence[...]. Latin America remains one of the most unequal and violent regions of the world."

Report of the Latin America regional civil society consultation for the Global Study

The neighboring countries of El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala have some of the highest rates of femicide in the world.[80] They exemplify the relevance of resolution 1325 in non-conflict/post-conflict , insecure settings. In these three countries, women and girls experience astonishing rates of lethal and non-lethal violence, primarily as a result of competition between organized crime groups and gangs for control of illicit drug markets. Their daily lives are marked by the same levels of insecurity and violence experienced by their counterparts elsewhere, who are living in situations of armed conflict (as traditionally understood).

Youth gangs have emerged as a recent phenomenon, largely driven by deep socio-economic inequalities, a root cause of the armed conflicts in Central America. At a consultation for the Global Study held in El Salvador,

participants stressed how gangs specifically targeted young women, severely curtailing their rights to freedom and integrity.

Research on youth gangs in Central America has begun to reveal the complex roles women and girls play in relation to gangs, including their agency as members and collaborators, and not just victims of violence, while also noting the horrific abuse they endure as initiates and members of these groups.[81] Female participation in gangs highlights the links between conflict, criminal activity, gender-related economic and social exclusion, and sexual and gender-based violence. Understanding these links is essential to making resolution 1325 operational across a range of contexts such as organized crime and gang violence.[82]

Despite the unfamiliar challenges of applying resolution 1325 in these contexts, there are a number of clear opportunities. For example, governments can work with national and international women's organizations to develop and revise National Action Plans to implement resolution 1325 that are context-specific and in line with the UN Convention against Organized Transnational Crime, including its additional protocols on human trafficking and smuggling.[83]

recognizes the link between gender-based violence and the arms trade, and makes it illegal to transfer weapons if there is an overriding risk that gender-based violence will occur as a consequence of such a transfer. In addition, Sustainable Development Goal 16, which focuses on the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, includes an indicator on the significant reduction of illicit financial and arms flows, and combating all forms of organized crime.[84] Taken together, these two global policy commitments can provide a framework for addressing the proliferation of arms as a root cause of conflict and a constant source of insecurity for women and girls.

Specific national-level responses have also evolved to address the flow of small arms and light weapons. In response to the high levels of national gun violence in the Philippines, women's civil society organizations lobbied for the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty and the inclusion of small arms control in the Philippine National Action Plan on resolution 1325. The plan contains an action point on the creation and enforcement of laws regulating possession of small arms, including an indicator on the adoption of regulations on small arms transfer and usage.[85]

Understanding climate change and natural resource scarcity as causes of conflict

One significant shift over the past 15 years has been the increasingly evident impact of climate change, as societies experience shifting temperatures, recurring

+ *In Latin America, Global Study CSO survey respondents designated organized crime as the most pressing emerging issue for women, peace and security in the region.*

+ "Climate change is not gender neutral and [...] the disproportionate burden of climate change already borne by women can only be augmented as climate change induced conflict further threatens their lives, livelihoods, peace, and security."

Asia-Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, submission to the Global Study[86]

droughts, erratic rainfall, extreme weather events and increased insecurity. Climate related stressors—including natural disasters, which have increased in frequency and severity, and natural resource scarcity—are already playing a central role in exacerbating existing social tensions, driving conflict and magnifying existing inequalities, including gender inequality. In order to effectively prevent conflict in the future, we need to acknowledge and better understand the role of climate change as a threat multiplier, aggravating existing fragile situations and contributing to social upheaval and violent conflict.[87] From drought in Darfur, where climate-change stressors are deeply interconnected with the political economy of conflict,[88] to Syria, where drought exacerbated a long legacy of resource mismanagement,[89] to the Pacific, where entire islands are disappearing, forcing communities to relocate and straining local and regional relations[90]—the

impact of climate change on peace and security cannot be ignored.

Women and girls experience the nexus between climate change, and peace and security in direct and profound ways.[91] For example, since women are often the providers of food, water and energy for their families—socially prescribed on the basis of their gender in many societies—they are likely to face increased challenges in accessing resources due to climate change. This becomes a devastating burden in conflict-affected areas, where women face an increased risk of insecurity and violence in carrying out these daily tasks.[92] Climate change is also a growing factor affecting migration and displacement, combining with other influences including unequal land distribution, insecure land tenure and inadequate infrastructure, to push populations to seek alternative livelihoods in urban areas and across borders, raising local, regional and international tensions.[93] As with all displaced populations, women and girls displaced by climate change and resource scarcity are vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence and other violations of their human rights. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4: *Protecting Rights.*

Despite their direct experience coping with climate change and resource scarcity, women are severely under-represented in decision-making on natural resource management in fragile and conflict-affected settings. For example, lack of access to water is a significant security and political issue in the West Bank.[94] Palestinian women, as the managers of domestic water use, have developed coping strategies to recycle gray water, monitor quality and prevent waste. Despite this knowledge, however, they are under-represented in decision-making at the Palestinian Water Authority, which negotiates directly with the Israeli Ministry of Defence and the soldiers that guard water resources. Similarly, women must also be part of national, regional and international negotiations on climate change, and part of the design and implementation of climate change policies and programmes.

+ "The most marginalized need to be at the discussion table. If not, we'll never find a solution on the ground.
Climate change is a survival issue, not a question of negotiations. We need to make sure that youth—future generations—are part of the solution."

Sylvia Atugonza Kapella, Head of the Riamiriam Civil Society Network in Karamoja, Uganda[95]

As recognition grows that the natural environment is a factor in many armed conflicts, and that environmental degradation has specific gender-related impacts, conflict prevention efforts must necessarily account for these factors. Women's knowledge of the natural environment and resource scarcity can play an integral role in early warning systems for climate-related resource scarcity and conflict, and in developing a sustainable response to conflict.

"The transformative potential of the WPS agenda has not been fulfilled, and this has to do as well with far too little focus on prevention and long-term structural change in societies, with too much focus on very short-term concrete results."

Respondent to the civil society survey for the Global Study, based in Sweden, working in conflict zones in West and Central Africa, Colombia and Myanmar

RECOMMENDATIONS

Moving progress beyond 2015: Proposals for action

ADDRESSING INEQUALITY, ARMS PROLIFERATION, ORGANIZED CRIME AND MILITARIZATION

Member States should:

✓   As a part of States Parties' obligations to implement the Arms Trade Treaty's provision on gender-based violence (Art. 7(4)), require arms producing corporations to monitor and report on the use of their arms in violence against women.

✓   Meet all Sustainable Development Goals—including goal 5 on gender equality, goal 10 on reducing inequalities within and among countries, and goal 16 on peaceful inclusive societies—ensuring that women and girls benefit equitably from achievement, and prioritizing their consultation and participation in the implementation, monitoring and accountability of programmes relating to the sustainable development agenda.

✓   Adopt gender-responsive budgeting practices, including through consultation with civil society, as a strategy to address, highlight and mitigate militarized state budgets and their destabilizing impact on international peace and security and women's rights.

Member States, the UN and civil society should:

✓   Provide financial, technical and political support to encourage educational and leadership training for men, women, boys and girls, which reinforces and supports nonviolent, non-militarized expressions of masculinity.

✓   Devise educational strategies that lead to a culture of nonviolent resolution of conflict in the home and in public spaces.

Civil Society should:

✓   Produce benchmark tools, with a gender perspective, for monitoring the initiatives taken by arms producing corporations on responsibility for the use of arms.

EARLY WARNING

Member States, the UN, regional and international organizations should:

✓   Include women's participation, gender-responsive indicators and sexual and gender-based violence related indicators (including conflict-related sexual violence) in all early-warning processes, conflict prevention and early-response efforts, with links to official channels for response at the local, national, regional and international level.

✓   Support further collection of data and awareness-raising on causalities between gender inequalities, levels of violence against women and the potential for violent conflict.

TECHNOLOGY

The UN, Member States and civil society should:

✓   Work with the private sector to develop and use new technologies which increase women's physical security and strengthen conflict prevention.

✓   Support the collection of data on the gender digital divide, and the factors inhibiting and promoting women's and girls' access to ICTs, particularly in conflict-affected and fragile settings.

ELECTORAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION, DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND MEDIATION
The UN should:

✓ Fully implement the recommendations of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations pertaining to mediation, ensuring consultation with civil society and women and girls in conflict-affected areas.

✓ Develop new strategies to include the women, peace and security agenda more systematically in its wider preventive diplomacy work, including in early warning mechanisms, insider mediation and building infrastructure for peace.

Member States, the UN and Civil Society should:

✓ Collaborate, including through financial, technical and political support, to strengthen the capacity of women's civil society to organize and play a greater role in national and community-led election monitoring and electoral violence prevention, dispute resolution and mediation initiatives.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURAL RESOURCE SCARCITY
The UN, Member States and civil society should:

✓ Work in partnership with affected women and girls when designing, implementing and monitoring climate-change and natural resource-related strategies, in order to harness their local knowledge and community-level networks for information-sharing.

Member States should:

✓ Work with civil society to develop or revise national action plans for the implementation of resolution 1325 to, as relevant, address the role of climate-related resource scarcity and natural disaster response in exacerbating conflict, and provide inclusive solutions to climate and resource-related insecurity.

✓ Develop gender-sensitive natural resource management policies.

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81. "[W]hile joining a gang brings some form of protection, it also exposes females to further victimization. Female involvement with gangs exposes them to [intimate partner violence] and sexual violence which is shaped by, and often used to legitimize, the hyper-masculine norms of the gang." See, Racovita and Carapic, "Girls, Gangs and Firearms Trafficking in Central America," fig. 3.

82. Carapic, "Organized Crime, Gangs, and Female Involvement."

83. Ibid.

84. "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," para. 16.4.

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