

FACT SHEET

GENDER PERSPECTIVES ON DISARMAMENT AND ARMS CONTROL

Why is gender important to disarmament?

Men and women are differently affected by, and involved in, issues related to weapons, including weapons of mass destruction, small arms and light weapons (SALW), landmines and cluster munitions. Therefore, mainstreaming a gender perspective into disarmament policies is crucial.

GA Resolution 71/56 (2016) recognizes the “valuable contribution of women to practical disarmament measures ...and in promoting disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.”

SCR 1325 (2000) endorses the role of women in international peace and security, especially in decision-making and peace processes.

SCR 1820 (2008) recognizes that widespread and systematic sexual violence is a threat to international security.

SCR 2220 (2015) stresses the importance of women’s full and effective participation in all efforts to counter the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of SALW, in line with resolution 1325 (2000).

SCR 2242 (2015) encourages the empowerment of women to participate in the design and implementation of efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of SALW.

There is wide recognition that the equal, full and effective participation of both men and women is vital to the maintenance of international peace and security. Since the adoption of Security Council resolution (SCR) 1325 (2000) and the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda, the world has witnessed an outpouring of efforts to engage women as agents of change in disarmament and arms control processes. This positive trend has been advanced by involving women directly affected by armed violence as well as initiating women-led policy initiatives.

In 2015, an independent review of implementation of SCR 1325 found that, despite a number of successes, many obstacles and challenges still persist in the full implementation of the WPS agenda.

Where is this perspective being addressed?

United Nations General Assembly: General Assembly resolution 65/69 (2010) recognized the contributions of women to disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control and encouraged women’s participation in all decision-making processes. The 69th session of the

Assembly adopted the resolution (69/61) which had been updated in light of the conclusion of negotiations on the Arms Trade Treaty and to encourage the collection of sex disaggregated data. The resolution was adopted by consensus at the 71st session (71/56).

Arms Trade Treaty (ATT): The ATT includes a legally-binding provision related to gender-based violence (GBV) (article 7(4)). The risk of GBV thus forms an essential criterion in the export assessment that must precede the authorization of any export by States Parties of conventional weapons, ammunition and munitions, and parts and components within the scope of the ATT. Member States and civil society have undertaken various capacity-building efforts to support the operationalization of article 7(4).

Small arms and light weapons: In the UN Programme of Action (PoA) on SALW preamble, States express grave concern over the devastating consequences of the illicit trade in small arms for, *inter alia*, women. In the outcome document of the Sixth Biennial Meeting of States to

consider the implementation of the PoA (A/CONF.192/BMS/2016/2) held in May 2016, States undertook to: account for the differing impacts on women, men, girls and boys in policies and programmes designed to combat the illicit trade in SALW; promote the meaningful participation and representation of women in PoA processes; encourage the collection of disaggregated data on gender and illicit SALW; and seriously consider increasing funding for policies and programmes that take account of the differing impacts of illicit SALW on women, men, girls and boys.

Security Council: Similarly, SCR 2117 (2013) urges Member States, UN entities, and intergovernmental, regional and sub-regional organizations to take further measures to facilitate women's full and meaningful participation in all policymaking, planning and implementation processes to combat and eradicate the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of SALW. This call was repeated by the Council in its most recent resolution on women, peace and security, SCR 2242 (2015). The Security Council took a further step in developing a gendered understanding of small arms control with the adoption of its second thematic resolution dedicated to SALW. SCR 2220 (2015) encourages Member States to strengthen the collection of sex disaggregated data to better understand the impact of illicit SALW on women. The resolution calls upon Member States, United Nations entities, intergovernmental and regional organizations to take into consideration the specific impact of conflict and post-conflict environments on women's security as well as to mitigate the risk of women becoming active players in the illicit transfer of SALW.

Conference on Disarmament: The Conference on Disarmament has held two informal meetings on gender and disarmament, within the context of implementation of SCR 1325 (2000), in 2015 and 2016. The informal meetings addressed gender as an issue that cuts across all items on the Conference's agenda, including those related to weapons of mass destruction. The discussions were widely welcomed by delegations and interest has been expressed in integrating this cross-cutting issue into the work of the Conference on a more regular basis in future.



UNODA and the NGO Global Action to Prevent War launched a joint publication "**Applying a Disarmament Lens to Gender, Human Rights, Development, Security, Education and Communication: Six Essays**" in April 2013.

The role for the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

UNODA, through implementation of its gender mainstreaming action plan (updated in 2016), continues to further disarmament objectives through gender-sensitive programmes, activities and policies. UNODA's goals include:

- Exploring the linkages between the promotion of greater gender equity and disarmament
- Strengthening our capacity incorporate gender perspectives into our work
- Undertaking advocacy on including gender perspectives in disarmament discussions
- Supporting equitable participation in disarmament discussions

For more information: www.un.org/disarmament/gender/