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New Routes

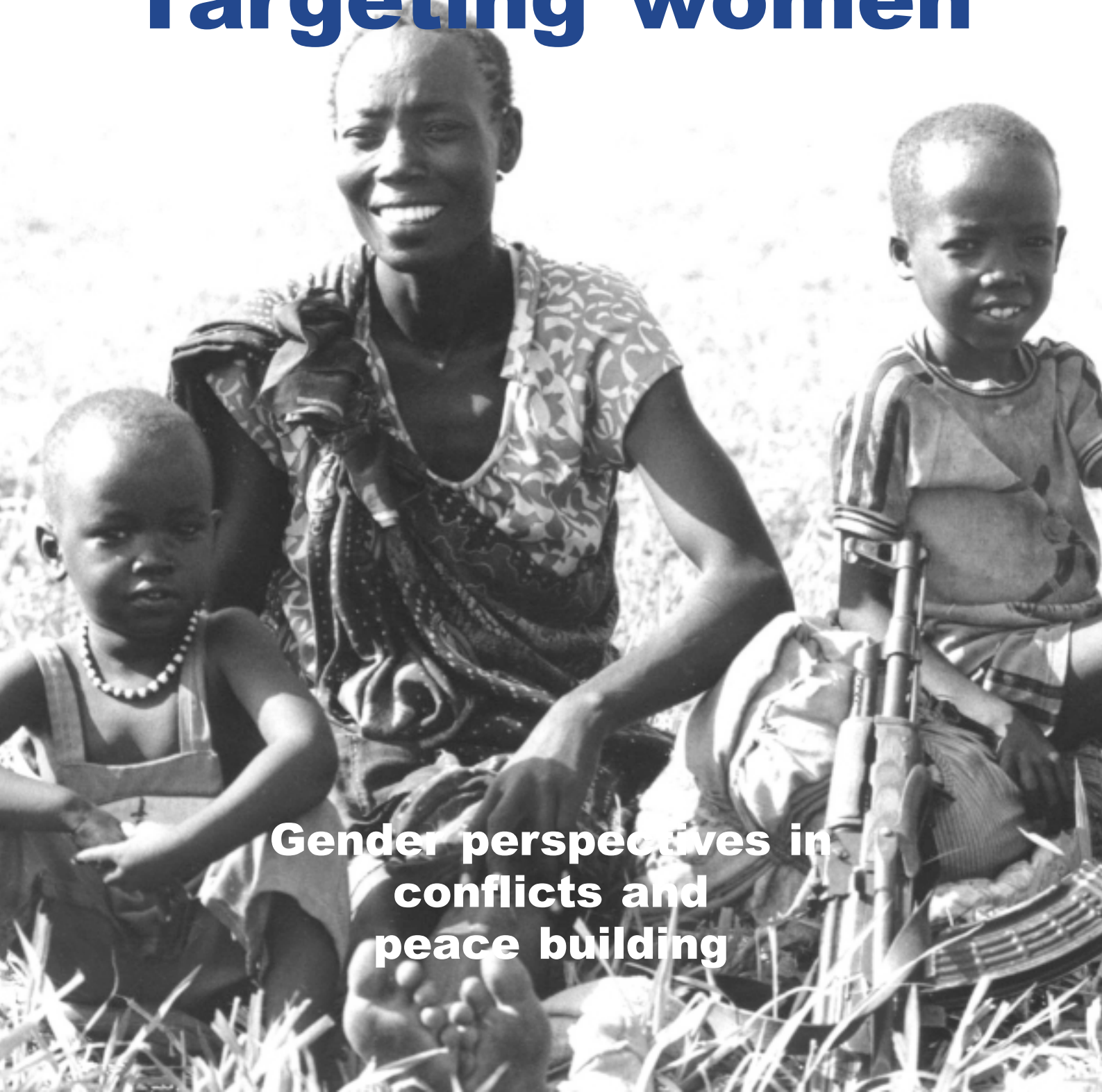
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Targeting women



**Gender perspectives in
conflicts and
peace building**

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Sudanese women with children.

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Victims and actors

When we endeavoured to make a special issue of our quarterly on *Women and Peace*, we conceptualised that *New Routes* would include at least three sections.

The first would deal with the *Historical Background* of Women and Peace Issues, i.e. how and when the theme became an international concern, why, who contributed to the process, etc...

The second would explore the *Situation of Women to Date*, in terms of Human Rights and Human Security. It was important for us to have a geographical component in that section to give a comprehensive idea of the state of the world's women.

The last segment would examine *Case Studies* preferably within three contexts: the Churches, LPI and a Broader-spectrum that could include a variety of related themes. Again, we aimed to include a geographical factor in order to reflect a worldwide view.

We sought a very comprehensive view of the topic, which for us entailed gender equity, global representation and cultural diversity. This meant having the analyses of both women and men, portrayal of the situation with a global perspective and especially in a fair and realistic manner: an impartial view of women's contribution to the peace process, not a romanticised one.

'Things never going exactly as planned' set aside, the making of this *New Routes* has taken us on a most interesting journey: one of important discoveries, one that has generated many exciting questions and one that has given us the opportunity to get in touch with extraordinary people.

The most striking knowledge gained from the material received is, undoubtedly, the prevalence of information on women in the context of violence and as victims, as opposed to women as actors for and contributors to peace. The latter is not very surprising when we bear in mind that unequal rights and the poor socio-economic status of women limit their ability to influence decisions, both in their communities and nationally, thus even less at international level. "Women remain vastly underrepresented in national and local assemblies, accounting for less than 10 percent of the seats in parliament, on average (except in East Asia where the figure is 18-19 percent). And in no developing region do women hold more than 8 percent of ministerial positions.ⁱ"

The focus on women more as victims and on how they suffer from violence is even less astonishing and more easily explained when we take into account that it is most likely proportional to the extent of suffering experienced by women on a daily basis and throughout their lives (Cf. Table 1).

One important aspect conceptualised and unfortunately not reached is gender equity in the authors' points of view on *Women and Peace* issues. For reasons ambiguous still, we did not manage to receive any male contributions on the topic. Although we could speculate on the reasons why we did not obtain these articles, it is certainly irrefutable that a greater number of women are involved with *Women and Peace* issues and write more on the matter.

However distinct what we conceived is when measured up to what we are offering in this publication, the articles and the overall end result are tremendous. The journey was demanding, yet exciting, rewarding and very fruitful. We hope that you enjoy reading and learning from the articles as much as we have.

Please note that some of the contributions are short versions of papers that you can read in full on the LPI web site www.life-peace.org or request as hard copy by mail from New Routes, LPI, Box 1520, SE-751 45 Uppsala.

Leyla-Claude Werleigh

Assistant editor for this special issue of New Routes

ⁱ www.worldbank.org/gender/prr/ Engendering Development Report Summary, p.5

ⁱⁱ www.unfpa.org/swp/2000/english/tables.html Source: Heise, L. 1994. Violence Against Women: The Hidden Health Burden. World Bank Discussion Paper. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.

Table 1. Gender Violence throughout a Woman's Lifeⁱⁱ

Phase	Type of Violence
Prenatal	Sex-selective abortions, battering during pregnancy, coerced pregnancy (rape during war)
Infancy	Female infanticide, emotional and physical abuse, differential access to food and medical care
Childhood	Genital mutilation; incest and sexual abuse; differential access to food, medical care, and education; child prostitution
Adolescence	Dating and courtship violence, economically coerced sex, sexual abuse in the workplace, rape, sexual harassment, forced prostitution
Reproductive	Abuse of women by intimate partners, marital rape, dowry abuse and murders, partner homicide, psychological abuse, sexual abuse in the workplace, sexual harassment, rape, abuse of women with disabilities
Old Age	Abuse of widows, elder abuse (which affects mostly women)

Gender and war

We need a renewed ethics on war and peace The starting point of this new ethics must be women's and men's narrations of violent conflicts. Theol. Dr. Anna T. Höglund looks at the gender and war connections in this article.

During the First World War, the British author, Virginia Woolf, made the following observation:

"I become steadily more feminist, owing to the Times, which I read at breakfast and wonder how this preposterous masculine fiction [the war] keeps going a day longer – without some vigorous woman pulling us together and marching through it."¹

Woolf saw clearly, as have many women before and after her, how gender and war are connected in many ways. In the Western tradition the stereotyped vision of war has been persistent: Women are supposed to be the outsiders of war. War is men's business. They go to the front, they do the fighting, they take the risks and make the decisions. Women stay at home, take care of the children and keep the home fires burning, waiting for the soldiers to come home. But gender does not determine whether or not a person is an outsider of war. In different respects, women have always been part of war.

as a support to war and militarism, above all the complementary roles of waiting wives and sweethearts.²

In the 20th century we can find examples of how women have formed the majority of the world's peace movements – some of which have been distinctively female, such as Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. But even so, "real" peace making, in the form of summits, negotiations and disarmament conferences have mostly been (and still are) carried out by men.³ This becomes intelligible through a gender and power analysis. Cultural views of femininity characterise women as naturally peaceful and non-violent. They also assign women to the private realm. Cultural views of masculinity assign men to the public sphere and to positions of power. Hence, men are responsible for all public affairs – in war and in peace, according to cultural gender constructions. Being mostly excluded from high-level politics, women have searched other forms of political action. One example is the women's peace camp outside the US Air Force base at

and even loss of country. Furthermore, the majority of refugees after violent conflicts are women and their children. We can also see that after a war the number of widows increases, widows who are often left without any means to provide for themselves and their children. This is related to the fact that women also bear the greatest burden of the world's poverty. Pointing out that these circumstances of violent conflicts fall especially hard on women and children does not imply that men do not suffer from the disasters of war, within or outside the army. By the same token, women, too, are part of the structures of domination often seen as a major obstacle to a just and peaceful world. Still, these unequal power structures are clearly, if not solely, connected to gender.⁴

Feminist research on war and peace concerns how gender is constructed in and through war, but also, conversely, how war is constructed by gender. In other words: How warlike values are reinforced through the behaviour normally expected of women and men. A feminist ethics on war and peace analyses whether there is an accordance between gender and the construction of an ethical theory defending military violence. Further, it concerns how patriarchy depends upon military violence, and therefore also on moral justification of its violent structures. Finally, feminist ethics could also concern moral agency: how military violence can be judged morally and how the moral judgement depends on and reflects gender construction in society.

In this article, I will present the two dominant traditions within Christian ethics of war and peace, the just war doctrine and radical pacifism. I will then proceed by analysing the moral judgement of violence within these theories in relation to gender construction in war. The tragic use of

What women mostly experience in armed conflicts is loss.

We can distinguish different roles, such as camp followers (i.e., as prostitutes, providing sexual services to the soldiers), nurses in combat, soldiers (in earlier times disguised as men) and, finally, as housewives and sweethearts, waiting for the men back home. Some of these roles, in particular, have served

Greenham Common in Great Britain, that existed from the 1980s until the beginning of the year 2000.

But most of all, women experience war as victims. What women mostly experience in armed conflicts is loss: loss of property, loss of their means of livelihood, loss of family, loss of home

rape as a weapon in war will in my presentation work as the lens through which gendered moral agency is studied.

Theological and Ethical Aspects: The Just War Tradition and Radical Pacifism

Within Christian social ethics the moral judgement of war follows traditionally two main lines: the just war tradition and radical pacifism. The argument concerning justified war includes two main questions: When would it be justified to resort to war? (the so-called *jus ad bellum* tradition) and: How should a war be conducted justly? (the so-called *jus in bello* tradition). Both these aspects of the just war tradition are today codified in international humanitarian law, for example in The Geneva Convention.

The *jus ad bellum* doctrine (which concerns the question of when it could be morally right for a state to resort to war) holds that war could be justified on condition that the following demands are fulfilled: the war is fought for a just cause, ordered by the right authority, fought with the right intention, resorted to as a last resort, and waged for the end of peace. Furthermore, the *jus ad bellum* doctrine holds that the military violence permitted should be in accordance with the principle of political proportionality, i.e., war cannot be justified unless proportionality can be established between the political objectives and their price.

According to the *jus in bello* tradition (which concerns the means and methods in a justified war), warfare is justified insofar as it respects the claims for necessity (no violence which is not necessary for the ends in sight is justified) and military proportionality (in the end, more good will be done than undone, or a greater measure of evil will be prevented, through the military efforts). Primarily, though, the *jus in bello* tradition emphasizes the principle of discrimination, i.e., the claim that civilians should be kept



Theologians have renounced military violence on Christian grounds.
Photo: Lennart Strandlund/IKON

outside of combat. A war, to be defined as “a war”, is a fight between military forces, with military attacks directed only towards military goals. The civilian population, as well as individual civilians, should not be the object of attack. Indiscriminate attacks, i.e., those which are not directed towards a specific military objective, are prohibited.⁵

The principle of discrimination is the rule in war that is most frequently violated. This could be due to the fact that its interpretation is built upon the so-called “principle of double effect”. This principle – developed in medieval catholic theology by, among others, Thomas Aquinas – holds that the death of civilians could be morally accepted in war, provided it was an unintended by-product of a legal military attack.

The just war tradition has had a tremendous impact upon Christian social ethics, but theologians have also renounced military violence on Christian grounds. One line of argument is that pacifism is seen as a consequence of Christian discipleship. According to this tradition, the Christian person should follow the moral example of Jesus, of which

resistance to military violence is one important part. It is assumed that the teachings of Jesus have direct political implications – they are not, as some non-pacifist theologians assume, merely relevant to private life. The *Imitatio Christi* ideal could be a means for establishing a new world order, based on service to, rather than power over, others.⁶

Christian pacifism could also be articulated on basis of eschatological reasoning. In this case the idea of the “peaceable kingdom” in Christian tradition is used both as a source for critique of society and politics, and as a goal for political and theological work. Finally, theological pacifism could be characterised by an emphasis on the contradictions between the Christian faith and the secular state. Violence is assumed to be contradictory to Christian ethics, and as violence seems to be a necessary part of every society, the Christian person must reject or withdraw from society as a whole.⁷

Gender Construction In and Through War

How do these examples of Christian

ethics reflect gender construction in war? In order to answer that question, we need first to examine the way gender identity is shaped in and through war. I will confirm the construction of gender in war by way of three themes, namely *labour division*, *complementary gender identity making*, and

combatant and non-combatant, everyone seems to be unprotected, independent of sex. Further, recent research shows that societies with a high level of military violence also have a high level of domestic violence. This definitely damages the image of men using violence to protect women and

species. A dualism is built up around dichotomy rather than continuity, exclusion rather than inclusion, and expressed in binary pairs as public/private, war/peace, front/home, combatant/non-combatant. In these pairs the second concept is not only subordinated to, but also in service of, the first one. The logic of domination has contributed to, as well as supported and maintained, patriarchy and its system of structural dominance, of which the war system is one important part.¹³

If these dichotomies are revealed, one of the pillars of warism is dismissed. It could give rise to a reinterpretation and redefinition of gender roles in war. Warfare in (what we might call) today's post-modern world is beginning to put these spheres into question. Women do take part in wars as combatants today, and technically advanced weapons have eliminated the division of home and front and civilian and combatant. As these divisions can no longer be upheld, I argue, *war becomes more difficult to justify*. Post-modern wars have changed much of our previous understanding of both war and peace and the role gender plays in it. The conflict in former Yugoslavia can serve as an example. Beverly Allen writes:

"[In this war] where there is no 'front' and death finds you in the breadlines, water lines, and markets, gender roles are being radically redefined. Chores that in a patriarchal gender division of labour are traditionally assigned to women - chores, that is, having to do with domestic work and reproduction - have taken on traditional masculine values associated with heroism, risk taking, boldness, and courage."¹⁴

Rape As a Weapon

The most obvious form of gender construction in war is the frequency of rape used as a weapon in military conflicts. The feminist political theorist, Catharine MacKinnon, argues that

The more militarist a society, the more sexist its institutions and values.

dichotomous thinking.

With regard to the labour division, we can state that after biological reproduction, war is perhaps the arena where division of labour along gender lines has been the most obvious. This has also led to the assumption that this division is absolute and natural, as it seems to be connected to the biological sexes.⁸ The division of labour in war is rooted in two basic assumptions: first, that there is a clear line between "combatant" and "non-combatant", and second, that geographically there is a real place called "the front". The notion of "combatant" and "non-combatant" plays a central role in the construction of masculinity and femininity. Military education is often characterised by denial, suppression and devaluation of what is culturally regarded as "feminine" characteristics, such as empathy, sympathy, and gentleness.⁹ This carries into the second thesis of my argument, namely, that the military system seems to be dependent on certain ideas of masculinity and femininity. Gender identity in war is shaped out of whether you take on one of two complementary roles: as combatant or non-combatant, the protector or the protected, being at home or at the front.

The notion of protector and protected in war must, however, be considered a myth. In the wars of today, with weapons of mass destruction which leave no clear line between

children. The more militarist a society, the more sexist its institutions and values. This could be observed in e.g. Nazi Germany and Chile under dictatorship.¹⁰ According to women working in women's shelters in Serbia and Croatia, domestic violence in these countries rose by 100 per cent during the war in former Yugoslavia in the 1990s.¹¹

At the heart of the gender construction in war lies the old war laws, built upon the chivalric code, in which the knight is supposed to adore and protect women. The chivalric conventions of warfare still work to preserve and increase the gender construction in war. They give rise to modern notions of "romantic heterosexual warfare", where the gendered division of labour and identity construction is central. The soldier is by definition male, whose duty it is to fight honourably (according to war laws and codex) against enemies of similar civic and gender status.¹²

At the very core of the above reasoning lies an important part of the Western tradition and philosophy, namely a dichotomous and binary thinking, in which everything is supposed to be divided into 'A' or 'not A'. The feminist philosopher, Karen Warren, describes this tradition as a "logic of domination". This logic holds that *superiority justifies subordination*, concerning e.g. race, class, gender and



The military system seems to be dependent on certain ideas of masculinity and femininity. Photo: Pressens Bild.

women are indeed violated in many ways in which even men are. But women are also violated in ways men are not, or that are exceptional for men. These sex-specific violations are sexual and reproductive.¹⁵

Rape in war has long been seen as “part of the game”; a component of the unofficial rules of war. Violence against women in the conquered territory is conceded to the victor, according to the ritual rules of the game. Despite its commonality, rape in war has long been an invisible war crime. Gender violence has escaped sanction because it has been shielded in the private sphere. Military and political leaders have dismissed rape as a private crime, a sexual act, committed by an individual soldier. Therefore, rape has not until recently been characterised as a war crime of the gravest dimension and prosecutable

before the International Tribunal in the Hague.¹⁶

One function of systematic rape in war seems to be to display, produce and maintain *dominance*. Domination by men over women, but also, in some

constructivist view on gender, rape in war is a way of constituting *superior masculinity for the perpetrator, subordinated femininity for the victim, and deprived masculinity for the male enemy*.¹⁸

Another purpose of rape in war is

In post-modern wars, the front is everywhere.

cases, domination by men over other men. The rape of some women sends a message to others: to women that they need protection by men, against other men; to men, as a symbolic expression of humiliation of the male opponents, telling them they have failed to protect “their” women. They are thereby wounded in their masculinity and marked as incompetent males.¹⁷ In other words: According to a

to bind warrior rapists to one another. This could be compared to gang rapes in peacetime, which is a mutual demonstration of masculinity and a wish to exercise power. But rape in war has also become a political institution, and as such it has strategic purposes. It is used as a means to break down the infrastructure of a society (where women become “prime targets” due to their central role in civil society); to

serve as propaganda in war and, as was the case in former Yugoslavia, as a means of ethnic cleansing.¹⁹

It is of utmost importance to articulate the role gender identity plays in the dynamics of power that attend the commission of sexual abuses in war. What must be analysed is the relation between gender identity and power. In doing this it becomes clear that “attributes of masculinity always adhere to the perpetrator, whether that person is male or female, precisely because of that person’s dominance over another person or group of persons. By the same token, then, attributes of femininity always adhere to the victim, whether female or male, precisely because of that person’s subjugation to another person or group of persons.”²⁰ Stating this is not to close one’s eyes to the fact that most rapes, in fact, are committed by (biological) men towards (biological) women.

Gender Construction and Moral Agency

Ethical and theological theories on war and peace both reflect and oppose cultural gender norms. Theories of justified war construct masculinity in a traditional way, where maleness is associated with violence and the male soldier. Pacifist theories differ in this respect. They reveal how masculinity can be constructed both as accepting violence and as renouncing it. They are thereby an example of what I prefer to name the “optional masculinity” in relation to violence that exists in the Western culture. “Optional masculinity” implies that masculinity could be constructed out of a broader spectrum than femininity; in this case, as both violent and pacifist. Pacifist theories, however, are not as culturally accepted as are the theories of justified war, as they represent a breach against cultural gender norms. This confirms that different masculinities exist in the same context, hierarchically ordered in relation to each other. Femininity, on the other hand, cannot (according to cultural gender views) be as freely

constituted as masculinity. There exists a “determinate femininity” concerning the moral judgement of violence, implying that femininity is primarily constructed through renouncing violence. Feminist pacifism based on the concept of motherhood is one example of this.²¹

To avoid the confirmation of “optional masculinity” and “determinate femininity”, I choose not to analyse gender construction in moral agency in war out of the concept of motherhood, but instead to use the analysis of the function of rape in war presented above. From a feminist ethical perspective, rape in war could be used as a searchlight to reveal how ethical theory and moral agency is gendered. Rape in war is rarely discussed in ethical and theological theories. The rules of *jus in bello* could very well be interpreted in such a way, that the principle of discrimination, as well as the principles of necessity and proportionality, prohibits rape as a weapon of war. However, as rape is not explicitly named or discussed in Christian social ethics, even these theories have contributed to making rape “the invisible war crime”. Furthermore, the earlier mentioned “principle of double effect”, which holds that the death of civilians could be morally accepted in war, provided it was an unintended by-product of a legal military attack, has contributed to the view that rape is an unfortunate, unavoidable by-product of the war situation as such.

Moral judgements have an impact upon whether wars are started and how they are conducted. In moral agency concerning violent conflicts, gender is constructed and constituted. The goal for a feminist ethics of war and peace, as I see it, is to question the legitimacy of military violence, to condemn abuses in war, but even to challenge cultural gender norms. The identification of masculinity with violence must be opposed, without falling into the pitfall of complementary gender views, where non-violent men should be complemented with violent women.

War can no longer be apprehended as an event. Rape in war shows how violence in times of conflict is related to violence committed in peacetime. Neither gender categories, nor war and peace, are in today’s post-modern world as binary and simplistic as they have traditionally been – and as they are mostly reflected in the ethics of war and peace. Postmodernity affects the understanding of war as well as the theorising about it. What characterises a post-modern understanding of gender and war is *fluidity*. Masculinity, femininity, war and peace, front and combat – all these concepts, can no longer be neatly defined, but are highly fluid and constantly changing.²²

From this follows that the old rules that used to govern how wars were to begin and end, how peace was defined as distinct from war, who was to participate, who was the enemy, how the fighting was to be conducted, and what roles were ascribed to women and men during war time, all these old notions, are now put into question. In post-modern wars, there is no front, or, to put it another way, the front is everywhere. The combatants are everyone, and no one is any longer protected from violence through being a civilian, independent of gender.

The conclusion we can draw from this is that we need a renewed ethics on war and peace. The old doctrines concerning when and how to fight are not applicable to wars in the post-modern era. The starting point of this new ethics must be women’s and men’s narrations of violent conflicts. In order to develop the ethical judgement of military violence, and to get an extended view of morality, we need to listen to people’s experiences of immoral actions in times of war. Women do have experiences of war, but, as in many questions, women have been silenced also in the question of violent conflicts. It’s time we start to listen, both to women’s narrations of war and to their arguments for peace.

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- ²⁰Allen, Beverly, op. cit., p. 27-28.
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- ²²Concerning the concept "post-modern war" see e.g. Cuomo, Chris J.: "War is not an Event: Reflections on the Significance of Everyday Violence." In *Hypatia, Special Issue: Women and Violence*. Fall 1996; and Cooke, Miriam: "(Wo)-man, Retelling the War Myth." In Cooke, Miriam and Woollacott, Angela, op. cit., p. 177-204.

The lessons of humiliation

Evelyn Lindner addresses the dynamics of humiliation in their interplay with terrorism. It is built on four years of research on the phenomenon of humiliation, as well as more than twenty years of practical experience as a psychologist in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Please note that this article has been shortened. You can read the whole paper on the LPI web site www.life-peace.org or order a copy by mail.

The horrific events on the 11th September 2001 in the United States shook the world. News programmes around the world have incessantly covered the events and their aftermath ever since. The name Osama bin Laden has dominated the news, ways of retaliation or reactions are being discussed.

When I first came to Egypt in 1984, I heard quite a lot about the bin Laden family. They were a fact of Egyptian life, part and parcel of it, especially within the Egyptian business community that has many connections with the rest of the Arab world. A poor man from Yemen, so I learned, the father of Osama bin Laden, had migrated to Saudi Arabia and had, through his diligence and talent, acquired wealth and respect.

I do not recall any allusions to leanings towards terrorism on the part of the Laden family or Osama bin Laden; terrorism, or even Islam for that matter, were not themes associated with the name 'bin Laden,' business was the only context in which they were discussed. Apart from hearing about the bin Laden family, I had Palestinian clients who made me understand how distressed they were concerning the fate of Palestine.

The terror attacks of the 11th September 2001 in the United States, that shocked the world, show - at least to

my understanding - that the entire world community is caught in a cycle of humiliation. Men such as Osama bin Laden would never have any followers, if there were not a pool of feelings of humiliation in large parts of the world, feelings that are so intense that young intelligent men, who could found families and have satisfying careers, are willing to lose their lives in suicide attacks. The rich and powerful West has long been blind to the fact that its superiority may have humiliating effects on those who are less privileged, especially during times when the West simultaneously teaches the world the ideals of human rights, ideals that heighten feelings of humiliation.

Feelings of Women Who Wish To Bear Sons

In Egypt, where I worked as a psychological counsellor from 1984-1991, I had Palestinian clients who came to me with depression because they felt they should help their suffering families in Palestine, instead of studying in Cairo and preparing for a happy life. In the wake of the 11th September I try to recall some of the cases (I do not reveal names and will protect individuals by making their biographies indiscernible).

A young woman, not yet 20 years old, came to me, let me call her Farida. I try to capture the essence of her

message: 'My father wants me to study, get married, and have a life. But I cannot smile and laugh and think of a happy life, when at the same time my aunts and uncles, my nieces and other family members face suffering in Palestine. This suffering is like a heavy burden on me. I cannot smile and laugh. I feel their suffering in my body. Sometimes I cannot sleep.'

I know some Palestinians of my age who do not care. They go to the discotheque and dance and do all kinds of wrong things; they even drink alcohol. I think this is disgusting. Our people are suffering and we should stand by them. If we cannot help them directly, we should at least not make fun of them by living immoral lives, or be heartless and forget them altogether. I feel that I do not have any right to enjoy life as long as my people suffer.

All right, I obey my father and try to concentrate on my studies. But I do this only because I respect my father. If he were not there, I would go to my homeland, get married and have as many sons as I could have, and educate them in the right spirit. I would be overjoyed to have a martyr as a son, a son who sacrifices his life for his people. I feel that suicide bombers are heroes, because it is hard to give your life. I want to give my life. I want to do something. I cannot just sit here in Cairo and watch my people suffer. Their suffering eats me up. I feel so powerless, so heavy; sometimes I can hardly walk. The burden crushes me. What shall I do?

What would you, the reader, advise this young woman to do? I tried to give her strength and discussed with her how she could contribute to a more just world after her studies, in a peaceful way, and how this would be more beneficial to her people and the entire world than giving birth to suicide bombers.

Her deep involvement and sincerity



"I am appalled by the violence in the world." Photo: Michael Boesl/Pressens Bild

were intense, pure, deep and selfless. I was reminded of the sincere young students who had been my clients in Germany. I remember a young German woman. She was 19 years old and had bulimia, let me call her Rita. Her words were the following: 'I am appalled by the violence in the world, the destruction of the environment, and the lack of sincerity around me. I am a good student, a very good one. And I cannot live in a world where men play around with the world, with women, and nature, and bring suffering about all of us. Men want to show off their muscles and virility, that is all they want, and the rest of the world is their victim.'

This world makes me choke. I am so nauseated that I do not want to eat. And sometimes I do not eat for a long time. As long as I manage to refrain from eating, I feel pure, ascetic, as if I

can escape the pollution around me by saying 'no.' But then I get very hungry, and I start eating, and because I eat too much, I have to force myself to vomit. This in turn makes me feel extremely guilty, because I waste valuable resources. Here I am, I say to myself, eating too much and vomiting, while millions of people do not have enough to eat. I am caught in this cycle. What can I do? I want to do something, but I don't know what! I feel so powerless and heavy!

These two young women resembled each other. Both were highly intelligent, with an IQ considerably above average, with a bright future ahead, and they did not know how to digest the violence, neglect, and thoughtlessness they perceived around them. They were strong women, with an acute awareness of justice, whose strength was wasted because they saw no constructive way

out. They felt caught in a hopeless situation, where they were straight jacketed.

The Palestinian woman found solace in dreaming about sacrificing her life, as the mother of sons who would give their lives to defend their people. The German woman did not have any such vision, however, she thought that asceticism was a solution, an asceticism that went too far for her own abilities.

The Significance of Humiliation

I had some male Palestinian students as clients in Egypt as well, and they dreamt of giving their lives in Palestine and condemned, as Farida did, some of their friends who chose to 'forget' their people's suffering and instead went about their own business, even enjoying life by feasting and drinking. None of these young clients was driven



Women traditionally are given the task of carers.
Photo: Oikumene/WCC.

by any 'will to power' or inherent 'hatred.' They were driven by despair about the sufferings they perceived around them. They suffered from empathy, so to speak; perhaps to be called a 'noble' suffering. However, they suffered also from short-sighted, impatient and counterproductive strategies to provide their empathy with relief. In other words, the starting point, empathy for others' sufferings - a 'noble,' 'sincere,' and 'valuable' suffering - contrasted starkly with 'destructive' strategies for action.

years of work - the phenomenon of humiliation. Many identify deprivation as the main culprit of problems such as resentment and embitterment; however, I believe that this is too superficial an analysis. Deprivation is not in itself necessarily perceived as a form of suffering that calls for action. However, deprivation that is perceived as an illegitimate violation of ideals of equality and dignity is perceived as a humiliation that has to be responded to with profound sincerity.

Deprivation may have many faces: poverty, low status, or marginalisation - there is a host of words describing it. However, poverty, low status and marginalisation do not automatically elicit feelings of suffering or even despair. A religious person may join a monastery and be proud of poverty, low status may be explained as God's will or a just punishment for sins perpetrated in an earlier life, and also marginalisation may be the fundament for pride; not all minorities feel oppressed. Furthermore, poverty may motivate a person to work hard in order to get out of it, parents may sacrifice to enable their children to have an education and a better life, and every small incremental steps towards a better quality of life may be celebrated. The question must be: what is it that transforms deprivation into unbearable suffering of a kind that triggers severe depression or the urge to retaliate with violence?

Feelings of humiliation is the answer. Feelings of humiliation may lead to acts of humiliation perpetrated on the perceived humiliator, setting off cycles of humiliation in which everybody who is involved feels humiliated, and is convinced that humiliating the humiliator is a just and holy duty.

while men are educated to fight. Because of this caring role, women tend to react with depression when they feel helpless, oppressed or humiliated. Women are not supposed to fight and tend to turn the expression of their feelings inwards. Farida did not want to take up weapons herself, however, she wanted to give birth to sons who could fight. Rita did not know against what to fight; she retreated to mere asceticism. My male Palestinian clients, however, thought of taking up weapons. Rita's male friends with similar sets of problems as hers were drawn to alcohol or other, more exteriorised, ways of expressing their problems as opposed to Rita's inwards orientation.

Concluding Remarks

The question that forces itself into the discourse is: What can be done? What are the lessons? What alternative way out could those who feel humiliated take?

The world does have role models for alternative ways of social change, apart from self-destructive depression or other-destroying violence. One example is Nelson Mandela. He succeeded in transforming his feelings of humiliation after 27 years of prison, into a constructive contribution to social and societal change. He distanced himself from his own urge for revenge. He did not become a Hitler.

An inner distancing from the urge for revenge is a sign of personal strength and great maturity. It is this very maturation that the world has to bring about in all people who are caught up in feelings of humiliation and drawn towards violent retaliating acts, if it wants to become a global village with an intact social fabric. Third parties are needed to bring about this distancing step. Third parties, or bystanders, in fact all mature and moderate forces in the global community of human beings, should emerge from any passivity and facilitate constructive social change towards a global village that deserves the name.

She wanted to give birth to sons who could fight.

The core of their problem is - this is my evaluation after more than 20

Women in many societies traditionally are given the task of carers,

Gender dimensions of internal displacement

Laurel Patterson writes on internal displacement and gender from her perspective as a UNIFEM official in Southern Africa. This article is a short version. It can be read in full at the LPI web site: www.life-peace.org and requested by mail.

The demise of the Cold War has ushered in an era of increasing internal conflicts and civil strife. These conflicts have seen a rise in the direct, violent targeting of civilians as strategic military targets. Some statistics argue that up to 90 per cent of the casualties in recent internal conflicts are civilian. The result has been the coerced internal displacement of millions of people worldwide.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) have emerged as a new protection paradigm, which places more focus on persons who have been forcibly displaced but remain within their own borders, as opposed to refugees who seek asylum in the territory of a foreign state. The numbers are telling of the extent of the situation. At first count in 1982, it was found that there were 1.1 million internally displaced persons in 11 countries. By 1997 more than 20 million were reported in 30 to 40 countries. Of this figure, it is estimated that 16 million of the internally displaced are in Africa, and the majority are women and children. Displaced women are at a heightened risk of sexual atrocities, forced prostitution, poverty, economic and social decay.

The inclusion of the gender dimension is therefore a necessary step, if the plight of internally displaced persons is to be effectively addressed. Men and women experience conflict differently, and where men might leave the family and community to fight, or to flee

conscription, women are often left as heads of households, caring not only for themselves but for children and the elderly. The implications are far reaching, and emanate from an imbalance of power that makes women especially vulnerable. Without a gender perspective, we cannot fully understand all dimensions of the conflict, and of the resulting displacement. Without this understanding, the ability to plan and implement humanitarian assistance and a return to peace is impossible.

There are many causes of displacement, ranging from armed conflict to natural disasters. This paper will focus on displacement in protracted armed conflict, and sexual atrocities committed against displaced women. The first section will explore the emergence of IDPs as an area of concern for the international

tremendous effect of displacement on women and children.

Of particular concern will be violence committed against displaced populations in resource rich areas, where looting and pillaging have resulted in massive displacements and abuses against women. Such is the case in the civil war in Angola, which comprises a case study of a protracted civil war, and its implications for internally displaced women. The paper concludes that there is a long way to go in effectively meeting the urgent needs of displaced women. We need more research, documentation, and a strengthened capacity to mainstream gender into the programmes that do exist. We need to strengthen not only the resolve of the international community, but motivate the national governments, who are fundamentally responsible for displaced persons.

The Emergence of IDPs as a Humanitarian Issue

The interest in IDPs came at a time when events taking place within a state were believed to be of legitimate concern to the international community. The right to state sovereignty,

The atrocities against women constitute crimes against humanity.

community and the challenges that affect the ability of the international community to address the issue. Beyond the issues associated with defining and giving status to IDPs are the very real concerns and the

enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, makes internally displaced people the responsibility of the government in the state in question, as IDPs do not cross internationally recognized state borders. However, the



Women should be included in all phases of humanitarian assistance.

Photo: Jonas Ekströmer

growth of the international human rights movement has challenged this notion that state sovereignty is an absolute power wielded by a state. In line with these developments, the international community has taken the

The displaced often suffer extreme trauma.

position that, in certain circumstances, if a state cannot or will not look after the security and well being of its people, then the international community has a right and responsibility to intervene on humanitarian grounds.

To respond to this issue, the United

Nations designated a Representative of the Secretary General on Internally Displaced People, Dr. Francis Deng, to investigate and address the issue of the internally displaced. This mandate is also concerned with the specific protection and assistance needs of internally displaced women, and serves to highlight the challenges, violations and abuses that are gender specific in situations of internal displacement. In concert with legal practitioners, Dr. Francis Deng developed the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. Among the many principles, these guidelines call for internally displaced women to be included in all phases of planning and distribution of humanitarian assistance. It also states right for IDPs to be protected from all forms of violence, including rape and other gender specific forms of violence, including forced prostitution. Even though this document is not legally binding, it is an important step in addressing the needs of IDPs.

The Beijing World Conference on Women in 1995 also called for increased protection for refugee and displaced women. The Platform for Action, emanating from the Conference, is specific in the actions it advocates to protect these populations. It calls for the full participation of women in the planning and implementation of programmes for refugees and IDPs, for emergency aid to take into account the needs of women, and the importance of promoting self-reliant capacities amongst displaced women.

The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), in particular through its African Women in Crisis Programme (AFWIC), has been active in addressing the needs of refugee and IDP women. From working with women on creating peace following the genocide in Rwanda, to advocating for the involvement of women in the peace process in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), UNIFEM consistently provides support and empowerment to

displaced women. In terms of pressing issues, UNIFEM is advocating for psychosocial support in all humanitarian assistance, recognizing the profound social and psychological effects of conflict and displacement on women.

These developments have also increased awareness and action on the issue of violence and sexual abuse against women in conflict, regardless of their displacement status. Conflicts such as Rwanda and the Former Yugoslavia have served to bring the issue of rape and other sexual atrocities as deliberate tools of war to the forefront of international attention. Of particular note have been the documented sexual atrocities committed against women during the Rwanda genocide. One report from the Ad Hoc War Crimes Tribunal in Rwanda notes that "under-age children and elderly women were not spared ... pregnant women were not spared. Women about to give birth or who had just given birth were also the victims of rape in hospitals ..."

The atrocities committed against women during armed conflict constitute crimes against humanity, punishable in international criminal courts. However, developments in these areas must be linked to development in the protection and assistance of internally displaced women, whether sexual atrocities occur during armed conflict, during forced relocation, within or outside of camps, or during the reconstruction phase.

The Challenges of Defining and Assisting IDPs

There are several challenges in addressing the needs of internally displaced people, especially women. With regards to the international response to these issues, a major obstacle is the lack of a UN agency with the mandate to protect and assist IDPs. As noted by Roberta Cohen, UN agencies are therefore able to 'pick and choose' the situations in which they will provide support, based on their mandate and

resources. The result is that the needs of IDPs are partially met in some countries, and not at all in others. When this happens, women and children are the most heavily affected.

A second major impediment is the lack of international legal measures for their protection. There is no legal instrument that defines what protection means for internally displaced populations. In comparison, the plight of refugees is one that has been codified in international law since the issue came to the international fore after World War II.

In terms of protection of women, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees adopted a policy to ensure protection and assistance for refugee women in 1990. However, those who are forced from their homes under the same circumstances as refugees, but remain under the domain of their government, have no access to international protection. This is a gender specific concern, given that the majority of displaced persons are women and children, and the violence and abuse they endure is also gender specific.

In addition to these challenges, the IDP population comprises a vast and varying group that is difficult to define. Coupled with the lack of a UN mandate, and the absence of international legal status similar to that afforded to refugees, there is no official or binding definition of what constitutes internal displacement.

The definition that informs this paper was developed by the Representative to the UN Secretary General on Internally Displaced Persons, who defines IDPs as persons or groups of persons, "who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence in particular as a result of, or in order to avoid the effects of, armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border."

This definition attempts to cover the

different experiences of IDPs. Of particular note for this paper, the definition is written to include those who are forced from their homes as well as those who flee. This is an important distinction in understanding the scope of the issue, and moves beyond the conception of internally displaced as only those who flee crossfire situations. In many cases, groups or individuals are forcibly displaced, or 'relocated' by both the government and rebel forces.

While this definition is far-reaching, it still does not capture the plight of IDPs in protracted civil wars, where individuals or groups may have been displaced several times, over vast distances or lengths of time.

The Challenges of Internally Displaced Women

Once displaced, individuals and groups are particularly vulnerable to attacks by both sides of the conflict, and this includes forced conscription and forced labour for militant groups. Sexual atrocities against displaced women are common, as is recourse to prostitution. The cases of girls and women abducted as sex slaves have been documented in several recent conflicts.

The displaced often suffer extreme physical and psychological trauma. Severe health concerns are often associated with displaced populations, including heightened mortality rates. In addition, statistics are slowly demonstrating the heightened risk to sexually transmitted diseases and the risk of contracting HIV and AIDS among these populations.

There is no doubt that internally displaced persons constitute a global crisis. The particular plight of women is undeniable; those who are displaced as a result of conflict or civil strife have become the targets of violence and abuse by all parties to the conflict. With over 70 per cent of the displaced population comprised of women and children, they are the ones who bear the brunt of the violence. This violence has been demonstrated to be



Women and children bear the brunt of violence against IDPs. Photo: LPI

gendered in nature, taking the form of rape, sexual mutilation and forced prostitution. Protection of IDPs and the eventual resettlement of displaced populations is therefore impossible without a focused view of the needs, challenges, and ultimately advice of those who have been most intimately affected by the crisis.

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of UNIFEM, the United Nations or any of its affiliated organizations.

The case of refugees

Elizabeth Ferris is programme executive in the WCC International Relations Team. In this article she reports from a meeting convened by the UNHCR, where 45 refugee women were invited to tell their own stories on the first World Refugee Day. They speak of great difficulties but also of strong will and hope for the future.

Mary is a widow with seven children, but she doesn't know where two of her children are. She is a refugee from Sierra Leone - a victim of that country's brutal violence. "In 1998, we ran away from our town in Bo," Mary recalls. "A group of rebels caught us and murdered my husband. They made me take off all my clothes and lie on the ground. I was sure they were going to kill me. But one of the rebels was a boy from my village, and he told the others to leave me alone. Later, my son found me. Like many refugees who were running away, he had been wearing all of his clothes, so he was able to give me something to cover myself. We made it to Guinea, where we lived in a refugee camp."

Mary from Sierra Leone, along with 45 other refugee women, has come to Geneva at the invitation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on the occasion of the first World Refugee Day - 20 June. It is the first time that refugee women - from camps, urban areas and internally displaced persons - have come together on a global level to share their experiences and to chart recommended actions for UNHCR. The World Council of Churches (WCC) is one of only three international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (along with the Women's Commission on Refugee Women and Children, and the World Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)) invited to participate in this meeting.

"I lost everything when I had to leave my home - my husband, our business, our home, everything," Mary laments. "Then on September 9, the president of Guinea told his people to drive the refugees out of the country

and the attacks began. Refugees in cities were rounded up, beaten and killed. People attacked the refugee camps. We were so scared."

"Usually it's the man who builds the hut, but my children and I worked very hard to make bricks and build our tiny hut. The dirt floor isn't sanitary and people get sick. I don't know where two of my children are: a 21-year-old boy and a 16-year-old girl. Maybe they are in another camp, maybe back in Sierra Leone. It's so sad. I can't sleep at night worrying about them..."

"Our biggest problem right now is food. We get 13.5 kilos of bulgur wheat. That's supposed to last 45 days, but sometimes it doesn't come for 55 or 60 days. We used to grow some vegetables in the other camp, but it will take time to grow things in this new camp. The women turn to prostitution when they can't feed their children and when their husbands find out, they beat them," Mary explains.

Pioneer work

The WCC is participating in this UNHCR meeting in recognition of its leadership role in putting refugee women's issues on the international agenda. In 1988, together with the World YWCA and other NGOs, the WCC organized a first consultation on refugee women. A pioneering initiative, the meeting brought together 150 participants from 40 countries, 35 per cent of whom were refugee women themselves. Many of the recommendations from that conference have been implemented. Policies and guidelines have been developed by UNHCR, training materials developed and staff hired to focus on gender questions.

Fifteen years ago no one wanted to hear about refugee women. UNHCR officials and governments looked at us as if we were crazy for suggesting that refugee women had particular needs and resources which must be recognized.

So much has happened since then, I tell them. For example, many governments recognize that women asylum-seekers need to talk to women officials about experiences of sexual assault. Programmes are targeting women for income-generating projects, and gender concerns have become mainstream in many organizations. But as long as women are still raped while searching for firewood and families go hungry because the man with the ration card needs cigarettes, there is much work to be done.

The testimonies at the June 2001 meeting in Geneva confirm that much remains to be done. Women continue to suffer physical violence in flight, in camps and in their families. "Sometimes our men have nothing to do in the camps," one Burundian woman says. "They used to support their families, to protect their families, but now they feel useless. Domestic violence often comes from this change in gender roles."

Meeting with UN High Commissioner for Refugees Ruud Lubbers, a 17-year old Ethiopian refugee woman reflects the concerns of many when she tells him of the burning need for education for refugees. "Our children need schools," she pleads. "We want a simple straightforward answer from you. We want you to say yes, you will make education available to refugees." In response, the high commissioner picks up the microphone and says simply: "Yes. I will do that. Yes."

The World Council of Churches (WCC) is a fellowship of churches, now 342, in more than 100 countries in all continents from virtually all Christian traditions.

Visit www.wcc-coe.org for more information.

Human security through a gendered lens

In this article Bernedette Muthien interrogates the meaning of security. She argues that state-centred security narrowly concerns itself with war and arms, excluding the basic conditions of women's day-to-day human security needs, and suggests that human security and gender justice are imperatives for peace. The article is a short version of a paper available on the web site www.life-peace.org or to be requested by mail.

This paper focuses on and critiques dominant paradigms of 'national security'. It points out that the dominant perspective tends to be state-centred, and neglects issues of human security and gender justice. Due to the male-centredness of security and peace studies, women's interests and needs have been neglected, with serious and far-reaching consequences for women.

National Security

Security has tended to be defined in terms of the nation state. Thus the notion of national security, emanating predominantly from the field of strategic studies, is dominated by the neo-realist mode of thought, with its focus on power and institutions of power, especially the military.

This traditional notion of national security, in terms of armies, guns and war, emphasises the state as both the primary actor and level of analysis. Narrow state-centrism excludes other important actors and levels of analyses, including individuals and groups (ethnicities and religious groupings, political and ideological groups, and non-state actors like corporate mercenaries), as well as other institutions (for example transnational corporations (TNCs) and multi-natio-

nal corporations (MNCs), international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank, as well as the global arms trade - from manufacturers to marketers to purchasers).

The modern move away from inter-state war to intra-state conflict, in particular, stresses the importance of group and institutional analyses. The war in Angola, for example, involves regional, linguistic, economic group, state and international dimensions. It involves both the largely southern National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) supporters and Luandese Popular Movement for the Independence of Angola (MPLA) supporters, as well as especially diamond and oil TNCs, as well as other states, notably South Africa and Namibia, France and the United States. It includes non-state actors such as mercenaries, arms and other suppliers, locally and internationally.

The traditional definition of security also emphasises protection from harm for citizens of a country within national boundaries. National boundaries in Africa are colonial legacies, often arbitrary, and variously disputed. Sovereignty of borders is often bestowed, with little or no consultation, and with little regard by the interna-

tional community to the impacts on the inhabitants within the borders. Eritrea, for example, is deemed a sovereign state after its secession from Ethiopia, while Somaliland, where women contributed significantly to brokering peace, is not officially recognised.

The idea of protection from harm for citizens is narrowly defined, and effectively means protection from foreign attack, but does not preclude offensive measures deemed in the interests of citizens and state. Two examples are South Africa and Botswana's military intervention in Lesotho since 1998, as well as Namibia's incursions into Angola against UNITA. Neither does this traditional definition of harm include other aspects of safety, security or wellbeing, including the environment, basic needs (for example food and housing), identity and dignity. A more holistic definition of protection from harm would mean more than the traditional protection from war and invasion by foreign armies. It would mean, to name a few examples, protection from hunger, protection from poverty, protection from sexual assault for women, children and men.

The traditional national security definition of protection from harm refers to a state-level notion of harm, and does not protect citizens from homelessness, illiteracy and unemployment. Nor does it protect citizens' fundamental human rights, as enshrined in the South African Constitution, to be free of discrimination on the grounds of race, class, gender, spirituality or sexuality. Negative peace, or the absence of war, conforms to traditional definitions of security in general, and traditional protection from harm in particular.



Negative peace conforms to traditional definitions of security. Photo: AP/Themba Hadebe/Pressens Bild

Positive peace, on the other hand, means both negative peace, as well as the realisation of even the most basic of social justice needs.

Human Security

A second approach that contests the national security model is proposed by Johan Galtung, who matured from radical analyses of (under)development since the 1960s to groundbreaking peace studies during the 1990s. Based on the work of other researchers over two decades, Galtung (1996) took the debate into new realms of understanding the requirements for peace when he proposed what has come to be called the human security model. This model, Reardon asserts, focuses on environmental security, basic needs, issues of dignity and identity, and finally, protection from harm.

The human security paradigm is designed to provide a more holistic comprehensive definition of security and protection from all forms of harm. These include indirect or structural, cultural, and direct or personal, and their respective antitheses, as postulated

in Galtung's (1996) model. Structural violence (with its antithesis structural peace) refers to, for example, discrimination based on class, race or gender, violence embedded in the very structure of society. Personal or direct violence implies a direct verbal or physical attack of one person on another. Cultural violence 'serves to legitimise direct and structural violence' (Galtung, 1996:31).

While violence against women is direct and personal (for example, a man assaults a woman) it also embodies structural sexism and gynocide, as well as cultural legitimisation which seeks its continuous replication. A subtle example of structural violence in this instance would be victim blaming which is institutionalised in law and legal practice. More pronounced forms include common practices which are sometimes codified in law, such as female genital mutilation, forced child brides, and femicide/infanticide. In relation to cultural violence, this is evident for example when survivors internalise their personal and systemic brutalisation. This relates to the sexist

attitudes that keep women's opportunities limited.

The human security paradigm attempts to address critical questions about who is secure, and who not, and whose interests are served. Reactively, human security would include the absence of physical violence, or negative peace. But proactively, human security involves establishing mechanisms (policies and structures) that will ensure that individuals and communities enjoy personal, structural and cultural security, in other words positive peace.

Reardon (Interview, January 1999) speaks of four sources of human security: the environment, basic needs (for example food and housing), identity and dignity, and finally, protection from harm. She asserts that human security of groups and individuals is essentially the expectation of well being.

Engendering Security

Betty Reardon's framework of human security has been used to analyse women and poverty in South Africa

and India, with representatives from these countries, at a meeting of the Women's International Network on Gender and Human Security (WINGHS), during the Hague Appeal for Peace Conference in May 1999. Women working in communities in South Africa also have definite notions of the insecurity they experience in their day-to-day lives, and what they would envision as contributing to a secure society.

During the October 28, 1999 workshop conducted with a wide range of women in Cape Town, two views were echoed clearly. First, that security is more than merely individualistic and that it centrally involves the family and the community. And secondly that security is more than physical, and should at least incorporate economics and health. Reardon (Email communication: January 1999) suggests that the remedies, "which could move the international system closer to a sustainable system of human security lie in the demilitarisation of security in favour of nonviolent conflict resolution and the building of mutually beneficial relationships among all nations, committing talent and global resources to fulfilling all security expectations within national, cultural and gender equity. These remedies can only be achieved when human needs are the primary concern of the security establishments. This concern cannot be the focus of security policy-making without the equal participation of women. Human security depends on gender equality (my emphasis)."

Public/private dichotomy

The traditional dichotomy between the public and private spheres, has relegated women to the domestic or private (as unpaid nurturers and caretakers), and enabled men's control of the public (including the political and economic realms). Yet once women themselves are forced to cross the dividing lines, through force of circumstances or their own growing confidence and will to transform their own

lives, they find new independence and strength.

In a workshop conducted with community women in Philippi, a township outside Cape Town, during November 1999, participants were adamant that they controlled their household finances. Reflecting the traditional public-private dichotomy, one participant spoke of her struggles to become a minibus taxi driver, against the wishes of her husband, family and the taxi association. She noted the importance for women to claim the public sphere and that her forced independence was accompanied by a forced consciousness about her basic rights.

Traditionally national security is concerned with the public domain, of which a key part is the economy, and centrally concerned with the prevention of foreign invasion. If the World Bank and International Monetary Fund Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) are seen as a foreign 'invasion', then national security fails to protect the public realm of the economy and betrays the interests of those it purports to protect. The distinction between public and private is false, with the 'public' economic domain impacting (adversely) on the 'private' domain of the household.

In Africa, SAPs are known to increase women's workload due to cash crop production and lack of access to the money that their crops raise. While women spend 25 percent of their time on agriculture, 72 percent of agricultural work is done by women, and 60 percent of this time is taken up by fetching water, collecting woodfuel, and going to the market (Carr 1991:115).

Men not only receive preferential treatment from African governments, but from international development agencies as well. These agencies choose largely to lend money and support to projects which benefit primarily men rather than women, and who involve predominantly men in decision-making.

With SAPs, external debt is reduced by cutting domestic spending and switching to export-led strategies of growth in order to compete in the global market. As the traditional providers of basic family needs, women are directly affected by social welfare cuts in for example housing, food subsidies, education and health.

Conclusion

This paper set out to discuss constructions of security, notably national and human security, and seeks to begin conceptualising a basic notion of women's security, from a grassroots perspective. Ultimately, human security, through a gendered lens, clearly and realistically taking account of all people, men, women, children and the transgendered, may be the most useful way of addressing the conditions of all human beings all over the world. In conclusion, Betty Reardon offers a set of questions that are useful for analysing public and national security policies, and which help to assess the extent to which human security is being addressed. Readers are invited to take the time to consider them for future dialogue on this critical alternative for peace in the new millennium.

When analysing public and national security policies, the following questions may be asked to assess the extent to which human security is being addressed:

- * Is this good for the environment? Is this good for the land?
- * Will this enable people to meet their basic needs? How?
- * Will this enhance (and not diminish) people's identity and dignity?
- * Would this infringe upon the protection of other peoples?

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Women and conflict - a Serbian perspective

In this personal experience of the wars in the former Yugoslavia, writer Jasmina Tesanovic shows how women constantly developed solidarity everywhere, much more than the fighting has.

Author's note:

Since March 17, 1999, when the first NATO bombs dropped over Belgrade, capital of Serbia, I have been keeping a diary A Moral Opera of a Political Idiot on the everyday private/political events occurring in my homeland including the relationship between women and war.

Women and War, the following text which I wrote two years ago, was based on somebody else's stories - those of refugees I interviewed - and my theoretical knowledge and artistic observation. This latest war trauma occurred in my own backyard, literally, when a bomb exploded there killing a 23-year-old gypsy girl.

However, upon reading my article now, I realize that words, once based on somebody else's life, have now become my reality. I can identify completely with some of my heroines from the book of refugee stories, from other women in war.

A sense of guilt, combined with responsibility and everyday survival duties was exactly what came to me in downtown Belgrade as in small Croatian or Bosnian villages some time ago to the women I interviewed. And so it goes on ...

In 1991 when the war started in the former Yugoslavia, I was sitting in a restaurant called Srpska Kafana in downtown Belgrade with two men and another woman when two policemen came to our table. At that time we had many checkpoints because the military police were trying to find men who were dodging the draft - 80 per cent of men from Belgrade refused to participate in the war. The men showed the police their identity cards, they

This is a matter of life and death. This is war!"

I am ashamed to say that my first reaction to the war, which I knew was a dirty war, was a gender reaction and not a pacifist one. Why, I wondered indignantly, in matters of life and death, are women excluded like second-class citizens? Why is it that nobody asks me if I want to fight in the war? If you take up a gun and you kill or risk being killed, you are in a completely diffe-

ference in experiences of men and women in war, differences that are completely defined by gender and sex, and particularly with the experiences of women. It is the personal stories of women that really show the complexities of the war and tell what really happened.

I will refer to a book, *The Suitcase: Refugee Voices from Bosnia and Croatia* (University of California Press, Berkeley 1997), which I published with many, many people whose work is as important as mine. It is actually a collective work of peaceful people, mostly women, and we did this work during the worst years of war in the former Yugoslavia.

Writing this book was, for me, a healing process. I tried to understand what was going on and to give an answer through writing about the war, through the innocent witnesses of this war. 95 per cent of those killed in this war were civilians and only 5 per cent were soldiers, which is completely the opposite of what happened in World War I.

Since there were many wars going on in the former Yugoslavia - a nationalist war, an ethnic war, a religious war, a civil war - all people from the former Yugoslavia became refugees at a certain point by being forced in one way or another to make a decision about which side they belonged to. They had to decide what their nationality was, even if they were from mixed marriages, as most were, and without any political or national conscience, as most people born after World War II were, being Yugoslavs. And looking back now at this book that was finished in 1995, I can say it is a nostalgic and romantic book. Nearly all the refugees we spoke to at that time, before the

95 per cent of those killed in this war were civilians.

were checked and thanked politely. I handed them my document. They looked at me in a very strange way and said: "These men are answering for you.

rent position than if you do not take up a gun and you do not kill. This is a man's war in a man's world.

This paper attempts to deal with the

Dayton treaty, were claiming that they would go back home and start their lives anew as soon as the war was finished. Now, there is no way to go back, because the same states and policies that expelled them are not letting them go back.

National, state and public identity in women are a secondhand identity. Women take their name from their father, they change it to their husband's, and very often they are supported or protected by their sons after their spouse's death, or adopt a new identity with the next husband. They construct their identity in support of their men rather than in support of their nation or state

I will tell you a very typical story of a woman refugee, from the book *The Lawbreakers*. A Serbian woman married to a Croat lived in the Muslim-dominated city of Bugojno in Bosnia. At the outbreak of the war her husband decided to stay, because there was an alliance between Croats and Muslims, but when this alliance started to break he decided that they should leave for Croatia. They were a middle-aged couple with three grown-up children.

This woman, however, was only ethnically a Serb. She was married to a Croat, she took his surname, she even converted to Catholicism when she married. Her citizenship was Bosnian, like her husband's and her children's, and her family was from Bugojno for many generations. When they came to the border of Croatia, heading toward Germany, the Croats would not let her in, because she was not ethnically Croatian. Her husband and their children were admitted, and she was sent away. She could not go back to her city in war without a husband - being a Serb she would be killed - so for the first time in her life she headed toward Serbia where she ethnically belonged, with serious doubt that she would be admitted with her Bosnian passport and Croatian surname.

Arriving at the Hungarian border without proper documents, she was arrested and put in prison with com-

mon criminals. She had a hard time proving that she was a refugee, but after a week they released her, gave her refugee papers, put her in a refugee camp at the border, and asked her to pay for her prison stay. As a refugee, she is not provided for by the state, as a criminal would be. Only by paying can she get her refugee status because she cannot claim direct national, ethnic, or state protection. That is provided only for men and their children, because only men are bearers of legality or ethnic purity in old fashioned states.

The problem is that she has no single, one-way identity. She has a multiple identity which is exposed only by a critical situation. Hannah Arendt writes that in modern society, women are the biggest minority; they are a majority in number but they are treated as any minority, legally speaking. Arendt adds that very often minorities are only recognized by the law when they break it.

Heroes and traitors

During war, misogyny becomes very apparent in political life, particularly in the dividing line between heroes and traitors. This is a typical social exorcism of evil through women, so well-known in the past in the branding of women as witches. The (re)construction of women during wars, especially nationalistic wars, can be defined with three words: instrumentalization, naturalization, and traditionalization.

Instrumentalization is when women in emergency situations like war are used in the place of men for men's goals. Like working in factories and then being kicked out when the men come



All people from the former Yugoslavia became refugees at a certain point.

Photo: Torbjörn S Gustafsson/IKON

by the construct of "Nature": those who give birth, who breastfeed, bury the dead. The concept of natural born women denies women the right to emancipation and the status of persons.

Traditionalization is a conservative political tool of gender in society. Again in an emergency situation as the war is, women are asked to perform their traditional duties in traditional ways: to be mothers, wives, to dress and act as the traditional society prescribes.

Women have to become the angels of their homes.

back, even if they perform their jobs better.

Naturalization is when women, as well as men, become degraded from their politically and socially constructed social selves, to their functions dictated

Because it is a moment when society becomes totemistic, every nationalism, positive or negative, is based on a differently constructed man-woman relationship in which there is one point in common: the emergence



The emergence of women into the public sphere lasts only as long as the war lasts.
 Photo: Torbjörn S Gustafsson/IKON

of manliness in men and the subordination of women. Gender roles take extremes of masculinity and femininity. Women have to become the angels of their homes and take on all family duties. But that includes traditionally male work such as engineers, workers, miners and doctors, while men are presumably saving the world or their lives. Many women eagerly accept this contradictory demand because they get the public space that is often denied them in peace time.

In this role, women are again used as instruments for men's goals. I heard of two villages on the frontline of Bosnia that were very close. One was Muslim-dominated and the other populated by Serbs. Every day men from the villages would take up their arms and go to the frontline to shoot, while the women would presumably stay at home. Food was only available

through the black market shared by the warring parties. So women went to the frontline as well and exchanged goods while their men were shooting over their heads. They then returned home and never spoke of where they had been. Although the men knew about the black market, and knew where their cigarettes and food had come from, they kept their honor by not mentioning the collaboration with the enemy. The deal was to keep silent and stick to their roles: heroes fight and angels stay at home.

Another true story is one of an ethnically divided city in Croatia in which, during the war, the Serbian part had water and the Croatian part electricity. After some time the women became angry about trying to do the washing, so they brought their washing machines and their laundry to the dividing line between the two parts of the city. They attached the machines to the electricity on one side and the water on the other and chatted together and exchanged information while washing the clothes, each staying on their proper side.

But this emergence of women into the public sphere lasts only as long as the war lasts. Women are thrown back into the private sphere the moment the warriors come back home. We saw this after World War II in the USA and in Europe, when women were once again denied the freedom of a complete life, after having proven that they could do everything men could do and sometimes better. Traditionalization of society comes as a consequence of this phenomenon of extreme reversal: women sent back home become wives who tend to occupy themselves with petty things all day long.

State or private interests?

Another conflict women face in war is whether to support state or private interests, that is, the lives of their men. Women who refuse to take part in the war and support the main dominant ideology are so-called traitors. In past centuries they were called witches and

were burned and hanged. At the beginning of the war in the former Yugoslavia, the mothers of mobilized soldiers made demonstrations, just as in ancient Greece when the first demonstration of soldiers' mothers occurred, for the same reasons. Immediately they were called traitors and this word continued to be attached to women throughout the war.

Women in wartime also suffer a gender-violence that in war comes with all its contradictory moments. I am referring to rape. This is a true story: She was a 19-year-old girl who lived in Bosnia with her family. When the war began, her brothers fought on the Serbian side, while she huddled in cellars in the part of the city occupied by the army. She was raped by soldiers and became pregnant.

When her father discovered that she was pregnant and by whom, he decided that she could not go on living with them. So she ran away to another city. Before the baby was born she received this message from her father: "If you have a boy you can come back home, but if you have a girl, we do not want you." She delivered a girl and gave up the baby for adoption. She returned home because she needed her family emotionally. However, over the next few months she suffered a terrible sense of guilt, and she decided to go back and get her baby. Helped by women's groups, she got her baby, got a flat, and tried to live a normal life. She managed for a few months. Then one night, purely by chance, she was found standing on the ledge of her window by a friend as if she were in a trance, ready to jump.

After coming in off the window ledge she explained what had happened to her. It was night, the moonlight was very strong, lighting the beautiful face of her sleeping baby. As she gazed at her little angel, she caught a glimpse of the face of her rapist. Finally she realized who the father was. The face of the person she loved most in the world - her baby - was also the face of the person she hated most in

the world, her rapist. She had an impulse to kill her baby but decided to kill herself instead. When reality splits in this way, one's mind splits as well.

Judith Lewis Herman, in her book *"Trauma and Recovery"*, draws a parallel between the survivors of domestic violence (such as rape or battering) and soldiers surviving heroic wars, as the same kind of trauma and violence, whether private or public. It is a life-long scar that heals but never fades. This is one way that men's and women's experiences of war are actually quite similar, though they are seldom seen as such. Women bear shame, public and personal, while men are regarded as heroes. But then on the contrary, women's trauma is recognized and treated as such while men's is frequently kept secret: the price of being a hero.

The bodies of these women were used and abused as if they were territory to be conquered or abandoned. If women were used for the purpose of ethnic cleansing, if raping women was a way of sealing a territory and planting a flag on it, it proves that these women were tortured as women, and that the crime of rape is clearly a gender crime. That is valid from women's point of view, but not from men's. To a raped woman, the primary trauma is her rape; it is less important, if at all, whether her rapist was a man from her community or not. For men, the main point is the patriarchal right over the property of the woman's body, so that the ethnically "other" perpetrators become more important than the victim, just as to the rapist, the otherness of the victim excused the crime. Once again women are invisible. In order to prosecute a crime, there has to be a law that makes this crime visible and transparent as a crime against gender.

With hard work, international feminists have made sure that rape is no longer a normal practice in war, nor less important than killing and torture. Victims of rape are not covered by official witness protection programs. They cannot stay anonymous until the

trial or be given a shelter. Women have to testify that they were raped, sign the indictment, and then go back to their homes where publicity becomes an additional trial to bear among family and friends. If they admit the rape, women cannot protect their children born from rape from suffering social stigma. So these women are driven to silence and the crime to invisibility.

civilization, of morals, and to do something against the war, against violence.

Women refugees from the former Yugoslavia, from this guilt-inspired sense of duty, developed a women's solidarity during the war as a constant everywhere, much more than the fighting did. Women helped each other throughout the war, recognizing in each other a more similar position than

Women are the bearers of the collective conscience of a community.

Guilt of survivors

Trauma takes other forms than the specific abuse of rape and has many effects. Very often in speaking to women who had suffered the violence of war, I saw that they had a terrible sense of guilt and depression. Yet, these women had not committed any act of violence, indeed many had been raped. But they felt they should have done more to protect their men, their village or their country. They took the responsibility directly into their bodies, suffering painful symptoms of depression and guilt because of this big thing they had nothing to do with, from which, on the contrary, they were excluded.

Victims of trauma often have a sense of guilt for something else that is really guilt for staying alive. From this sense of guilt I would directly identify the source of the notion of a collective guilt. I definitely do not believe collective guilt exists, but I am sure that a collective sense of guilt exists, and it is mainly a feminine body of guilt. Women are the designated psychological bearers of the collective conscience of a community. Luckily enough, from this collective sense of guilt comes a personal sense of guilt. Then out of that comes a vital moment that survivors recovering from trauma need: a strong sense of duty, a need to survive, to save the values of life and

in that of their men, unrelated to their ethnic or national state. They protected each other with false names and nationalities, risked lives, wrote letters, gave promises and kept them. The majority of the peace initiatives were from women. In the new Yugoslavia, 70 per cent of new groups - feminist, conflict resolution, Women in Black, opposition parties - were made of women. Even if they had a man as a formal leader, they were created and energized by women.

As a war survivor, and as a political idiot, I say that this is the only politics I still believe in, politics without heroes, big ideas, big words or big promises. I believe only in anonymous heroines. I do not think anybody can save me anymore or fulfill my needs, unless I do it myself with my own means and language. My enemy is no longer a bad hero, nor a politician, nor a person in power, but the culture that makes such primitive people possible and empowers them.

Our children are children of nationalism, if not nationalists themselves. They have no other identity except for the Serbian one: claustrophobic, xenophobic, and biased against the rest of the world. These children belong more to nationalist policy than to us, mothers who bear a sense of guilt for only staying alive without protecting altogether our values and culture, for not making the world a better home.

Peacemakers in the Middle East

Virginia Baron recalls the co-operation between Palestinian and Israeli women initiated at the end of the 1980s, and takes a look at what women peacemakers can offer in the escalated conflict today.

Asked to name the major difference between the first and second Palestinian Intifada, one might immediately respond that it is the higher level of violence that has characterized the second Intifada. Another less noticed difference is the change in the role of women, their increased visibility in the movement to end Israeli occupation. Since the outbreak of the first uprising in December 1987, through the periods of heavy conflict, to times of optimism and ultimately despair after the failure of the Oslo peace process, through the first year of the second Intifada, women have taken new steps onward to claim their place in Palestinian Arab society.

This is not to say that women were not always key to resistance movements in Palestine. They organized social service societies, schools, clubs for youth, and provided needed community services in times of crisis,

over the West Bank in the 1990s. Whatever its roots, it is certain that the personal reaching out to so-called “enemies” and the warm responses on both sides, Palestinian and Israeli, which have marked women’s interactions in the last few years, have proved to be empowering. I was witness to some of the early stages.

In 1989, a year after the start of the first Intifada, a group of women from Beit Sahour, a mostly Christian town in the occupied West Bank, boarded a bus for Jerusalem. It was with great trepidation that these women and girls set out to participate in their first joint Israeli-Palestinian women’s demonstration. The women were protesting the imprisonment of men and boys who were being held in administrative detention, that is, without being formally charged, but the reason was known to be their refusal to pay taxes to the Israeli military administration.

provided the impetus for the army’s hyperactivity, especially the upgraded activity against women and girls. A bus, furnished free by the local bus company, was to leave Beit Sahour for Jerusalem at 3.30 in the afternoon. My friend Noha and I walked downtown through the light drizzle. When we arrived at the bus stop, there was no bus and only a few women huddled together, holding scarves over their faces to protect them from the cold and rain. It seemed that everyone had brought extra scarves or large wads of kleenex to cover their faces in case of teargas.

More women and teenage girls drifted down to the bus stop, and by the time the bus finally arrived, there were more than seventy-five young, old and middle-aged women waiting to climb onto the bus for whatever adventure awaited them. It was the first time anything of its kind had been organized, and nobody knew what to expect. There were mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, cousins of prisoners. Probably everyone on the bus had at least one relative, and many friends in prison. The women were going to demonstrate on behalf of the prisoners in Anata Prison. Israeli women were making the arrangements at the other end and we were to join them at our destination. There was much raucous discussion on the way into Jerusalem, especially between the young women and the older ones. The young ones were full of doubts, questioning whether they should be involved with Jewish women. Why should we trust them? one girl shouted. We have to try to work together, a woman said. Followed by much shouting and disagreements. Why did you come? someone asked. There was certainly no harmony among the demonstrators.

Nobody knew what to expect...

but they were rarely out-front activists for political change and peace. This new development may have begun with the first hesitant steps taken toward co-operation between Palestinian and Israeli women at the end of the 1980s. It may have begun with the Palestinian-Israeli dialogue groups that sprouted all

By that time, Beit Sahour had gained an international reputation for its town-wide nonviolent tax resistance.

Here I excerpt from notes written during a stay in Beit Sahour in December 1989:

Probably the women’s demonstration planned for the afternoon

The young women had not been at the church “pray-in” the week before. It was quite likely that some had never had even a single constructive contact with an Israeli in their lives. All they knew were the soldiers whom they hated, and bureaucrats and perhaps some salespeople. Probably some had not even had those contacts. They were heading for the total unknown. I was a little apprehensive about the complete disunity among the group, but it seemed only to amuse the middle-aged and older women, who were in the majority by far.

The older women were ignoring the young ones, letting them blow off steam. We drove past the walls of the Old City and up toward the Mount of Olives. So far so good. We were on familiar ground for the Palestinians. But then we headed toward the Mount Scopus campus of Hebrew University. The women were quiet now, wondering what was in store for them. It was a totally new thing, demonstrating on enemy territory with Israelis. It would have been out of the question for men to have done it. They would have landed in prison, joining the ones on whose behalf they were demonstrating. The bus stopped. Much discussion in the front of the bus. No Israelis in sight. The bus turned in a complete circle. I thought maybe the whole idea was being scratched. Then they saw them. A bunch of women emerged from cars and taxis carrying banners and posters. The Palestinian women scrambled off the bus. The Israeli women rushed toward them.

Links of Human Bonds

Women were running around greeting each other. Some were hugging each other. I heard one say: “Hello, remember me? We met two weeks ago when you came to Beit Sahour.” The Israeli women were trying to organize a line of women to stretch as far as they could. They were handing out posters written in Arabic. Jewish women were holding posters in Hebrew and English. A long banner read: “Form Links



“Form Links of Human Bonds.” Photo: Elisabeth Dalziel/Pressens Bild

of Human Bonds.” Israelis held signs saying: “Free the Tax Resisters of Beit Sahour.” One of my Israeli friends asked me to encourage women to spread out so the press could take pictures. In all the excitement I hadn’t realized that there was actually a TV crew on the scene and a few photographers.

Sidra Ezrahi, a professor at Hebrew University, made a speech in English about the obligation to free prisoners from unconscionable conditions in the prisons. She pointed to Anata Prison, across the valley on a hill, a few miles from where we were standing. We could see the lights starting to flicker

Palestinian women sang “Biladi,” their forbidden anthem. Many held up their fingers in the victory sign, also illegal. Then they handed out flyers, an “S.O.S. from Beit Sahour,” an appeal from mothers, wives, sisters, and children of prisoners, asking the Israelis to support them in obtaining release of the prisoners. Along with this, they spread a list of the men, including some late additions written by hand in ink. Police, who had appeared across the street, tentatively kept their distance. Israeli women encouraged everyone to hold hands and spread out as far as the line would reach.

We join hands on behalf of a demilitarized world.

on in the waning light of the afternoon. “Yes, it’s cold here, but imagine how much worse it is to be living in tents in the cold and rain,” she said. There was a low hum of women translating for each other as she spoke. Someone made a speech in Hebrew and another in Arabic.

When the speeches were over, the

The Palestinian women piled back onto the bus, watched closely by the police who, by this time, had moved in closer but still were not interfering. The Israeli women waved and called to the women on the bus. Everyone was jubilant. The Palestinians didn’t care that police were standing under their nose outside the bus. They turned



*Women were full participants in the resistance and were paying the price for it.
Photo: Eva Glemme*

down the windows and shouted their goodbyes. It had been an exciting afternoon. The women had proved that it was possible to have a joint demonstration.

All the way home the women recounted everything that had happened, fixing the details in their heads for future retelling. That evening, Noha said: "Women are complaining all over town because they didn't hear about the plans for today's demonstration. Especially the relatives of prisoners. They want to know when we're going to do it again so they can go, too."

The Second Intifada

We move now to October 2001, the first anniversary of the second Intifada. An urgent action call went out, through emails as well as phones, for another demonstration to be held in front of another prison, the Neve Tirza/Ramle Women's Prison. The plea made by the Women's Organization for Political Prisoners was to "Stop the Violent Abuse of Women Political Prisoners" who were being beaten and tortured. There was growing concern for the safety of young women prisoners, aged 18 to 25. The call was to write letters

and faxes to pressure wardens to cease their abusive behavior. Supporters demonstrated in front of the prison on 5 October at noon. Times had changed. Not only had the violence escalated but women were full participants in the resistance and were paying the price for it. This time it was Israeli and Palestinian women demonstrating on behalf of Palestinian women.

During the same weekend, Jewish and Palestinian women in the north of Israel gathered for discussion, dialogue and political education on the topic "One Year of Intifada, One Moment Before War: Women Offer Alternatives". Women from Israeli and Palestinian groups held a panel called "Women Changing Society: New Strategies in our Feminist Struggle". Women in Black held a mass demonstration as the finale for the meeting.

Across the world in New York, shortly after the September 11 attacks, the newly formed Brooklyn Dialogue Project was convened. Marcia Kannry (mkfemworks@aol.com) spoke about the experience: "It was quite a moving event, as the smoke plumed out over the site of the World Trade Center, here we were, hundreds of New Yorkers - Muslim, Jewish, Christian, Israeli and

Palestinian - gathered in support of each other's right to live freely in peace."

In San Francisco, on 29 September, at a meeting of the Coalition of Jews for Justice & Bay Area Women in Black, Penny Rosenwasser brought a message from the Coalition of Women for a Just Peace:

"We Palestinians and Jewish women from Israel, stand in solidarity with you today in your struggle to prevent a new war from painting a mural of bloodshed and destruction across the globe. We join hands on behalf of a demilitarized world, in our common struggle against violence, racism, and the oppression of one people by another."

This happened as there were reports that the San Francisco Women in Black peace activists had become the subject of an investigation by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation. Ronnie Gilbert, a well-known American folk singer, wrote in a letter to the editor: "The F.B.I. is threatening my group with a Grand Jury investigation. Of what? That we publicly call the Israeli military occupation of the mandated Palestinian lands illegal? So does the World Court and the United Nations. That destroying hundreds of thousands of Palestinian olive and fruit trees, blocking roads and demolishing homes promotes hatred and terrorism in the Middle East? Even President Bush and Colin Powell have gotten around to saying so. What is there to investigate? That some of us are in contact with activist Palestinian peace groups? Is that bad?"

She went on to honor the Jerusalem Women in Black who have stood vigil every Friday for 13 years in protest against the occupation.

In the fall of 2001, young women took part in seminars where Palestinian Muslims and Christians met with young Israeli Jews in the U.S.A. These young Palestinian women would not have been able to participate in such a program ten years ago. Today, under the sponsorship of Catholic Relief Services, hosted by the American

Fellowship of Reconciliation, this seminar was one of many opportunities made available through church and NGO sponsorships.

The first hesitant steps of women peacemakers taken long ago have grown into true partnerships.

Achieving peace continues to be the greatest challenge on earth. The road to overcoming hate is long and arduous, but the friendships achieved along the way make the struggle more than worthwhile.

Virginia Baron is president of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation. She was on the staff of Life and Peace in 1991-92. Her interest in the Middle East dates back to her first trip in 1975 sponsored by the National Council of Churches in the USA.

Ecumenical peace teams in the Middle East

Ecumenical accompaniment

The World Council of Churches (WCC) has established an ecumenical monitoring programme in Palestine and Israel (EMPPI) to coordinate the work of church and ecumenical monitoring and observer teams there. The principle of "an accompaniment programme that would include an international ecumenical presence, based on the experience of the Christian Peacemaker Team" was approved by the WCC Executive Committee at its meeting in Geneva 11-14 September. EMPPI is seen as part of a much wider ecumenical response to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and is a result of discussion with a broad range of local and international church and ecumenical partners.

Several church-related pilot projects already underway will be connected to the EMPPI framework. These include a "United Civilians for Peace" campaign coordinated by Dutch development, ecumenical and peace organizations, a Church of Sweden ecumenical monitoring effort, an observer programme developed by DanChurchAid, with the Council on Interchurch Relations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark and the Ecumenical Council

of Denmark, and an ecumenical accompaniment programme being developed by the Middle East Forum of Church World Service (USA).

A newly opened "WCC fund for the ecumenical response to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict" will enable the WCC to widen its coordination efforts following the Executive Committee's resolution.

Commenting on EMPPI, WCC International Relations programme executive Salpy Eskidjian notes that the WCC "has now decided that it is most important to focus our immediate attention on the establishment of an international ecumenical presence, as the situation in Israel and Palestine is more alarming than ever".

The full scope and coordinating mechanism for EMPPI will be developed over the next two months. Here, the WCC's prior experience with the Ecumenical Monitoring Programme in South Africa (EMPSA) will stand it in good stead, Eskidjian judges.

EMPPI is expected to focus on monitoring and observing human rights violations in sensitive situations such as at checkpoints, accompanying people in their daily activities like going to school, work or hospitals, observing

public action, and participating in non-violent direct action. It will work with local churches as well as human rights and peace groups. "Where church and local partners are in need - that's where we'll be," Eskidjian promises.

To her mind, the programme "is a powerful way that churches worldwide can be in active solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Palestine and Israel as they struggle to resist a harsh military occupation using non-violent means".

EMPPI also will be a foundation for further education and advocacy to support a peaceful and just resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. "From our previous work in other parts of the world, we know that first-hand experience is the most effective way to raise awareness and support an alternative voice in advocacy work," Eskidjian concludes.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) is a fellowship of churches, now 342, in more than 100 countries in all continents from virtually all Christian traditions. Visit: www.coe.org for more information.

Women and peace in the United Nations

In this article, Sara Poehlman-Doumbouya and Felicity Hill, representing Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, presents a long story of struggle that led to a "historic" UN resolution. Women's perspectives on war and peace had at last become visible.

Women filled the public gallery of the Security Council on October 24, 2000, clapping and justifiably using the word "historic" over and over again. After 55 years of the United Nations working to end the scourge of war, women's perspectives of war and peace became visible at last in the Security Council. Women from Sierra Leone, Guatemala, Somalia, Tanzania and international non-governmental organizations spoke to members of the Security Council in an "Arria Formula" meeting the previous day. Arria Formula meetings offer an opportunity for Council members to be briefed by NGO experts, with these experts informing them on the suffering of women in war,

mainstreaming in United Nations reporting systems and programmatic implementation mechanisms. This resolution provides an important tool in shifting the UN system from words to action.

On the surface, Resolution 1325 may seem like more words that may or may not be implemented, but for women's groups involved in peace building in conflict zones worldwide, it is a historic statement with significant implications that can be quoted and used in all related contexts. Moreover, as a Security Council resolution, it is binding international law that, for the first time, officially endorses the inclusion of civil society groups,

in United Nations documents provides a broader understanding of the progression of the visibility of women and gender. In order for women's groups and human rights organizations to lobby their governments to respect commitments made by signing UN documents and treaties, they must have an acute awareness of the issues put forth and agreed upon by member states.

Second, the role and efforts of non-governmental organizations in the build-up to Resolution 1325 were critical. On 8 March, 2000, Ambassador Chowdhury of Bangladesh, as the President of the Security Council, made a ground breaking statement linking equality, development, peace, and the need for women's urgent involvement in these matters. The Coalition on Women and International Peace and Security (consisting of Amnesty International, the Hague Appeal for Peace, International Alert, International Peace Research Association, the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom) hereafter seized a window of opportunity and pushed for a thematic debate in the Security Council.

Under the Namibian Presidency, the Coalition, working closely with the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) and UNIFEM towards the open session, or Arria Formula helped to identify and bring the experiences and expertise of civil society into the sacred realm of the Security Council.

Peace and women's rights are interdependent.

the under-valued, under-utilized conflict prevention and peace building work of women, and the leadership they show in rebuilding war-torn societies

As a result, on October 31, 2000, Security Council members unanimously passed Resolution 1325, which calls for: the participation of women in decision-making and peace processes; gender perspectives and training in peacekeeping; the protection of women; and gender

notably women, in peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements.

The success of introducing issues on women, peace, and security into the Security Council and passing Resolution 1325 lie in two evolutions in the United Nations system. First, the ideas and languages in this resolution were built on documents and treaties passed through the United Nations since its inception in 1945. An examination of references to women and peace issues

The evolution of women and peace in UN documents

Beginning with the United Nations

Charter signed 26 June, 1945, the Peoples of the United Nations sought to reaffirm faith in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small. The fact that the mention of gender was pronounced before any mention of nation-states previews the significant role that the United Nations would come to play in the promotion of human rights. However, women did not participate in any significant way in the formation of this Charter besides the often-cited contribution of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who championed the formation of human rights platforms at the United Nations.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (General Assembly Resolution 217A), signed 10 December, 1948, reiterates the faith in the equal rights of men and women. Article 3 specifically states that “everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.” Therefore, the equal security of women should have already been ingrained in the UN mindset. Despite, this one mention of gender, human rights dialogues assumed that roles, needs, and concerns of both genders were the same.

Almost 20 years later, the General Assembly recognized that women may have special concerns. On 16 December, 1966, member states signed Resolution 2200A on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict. Instead of addressing peace and security as non-gendered, this document recognizes that women often suffer as civilians. Thus, states should make all efforts to spare women from the ravages of war and ensure they are not deprived from shelter, food, medical aid, and other inalienable rights (Articles 4 & 6). Women are seen as victims that need to be protected and helped, instead of participants in their own protection or in the struggles for peace, self-determination, national liberation and independence.

From 1975, women became much more visible in the UN system after the first UN World Conference on



*The United Nations sought to reaffirm faith in the equal rights of men and women.
Photo: Pressens Bild*

Women. The document that came out of this conference, the Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and Their Contribution to Development and Peace, addresses in greater detail women's roles in issues of peace and security. It shows the urgency to improve the status of women to in order to give them the same opportunities as men to participate actively in the attainment of world peace. Moreover, it recognizes that women play multiple roles as peace-makers in the family, community, nations and the world and must be given the opportunity to participate equally in decision-making processes. Among the actions called for is greater representation and participation of women in international forums that discuss peace and security issues, especially in the UN system, including the Security Council. Even though this Declaration made women more visible, the document is not binding on member states, but serves only as a recommendation.

Following the Declaration of Mexico, on 15 December, 1975 the General Assembly passed Resolution 3519 on Women's Participation in the

strengthening of International Peace and Security. In the rhetoric of UN member states, women's roles were expanded from that of victims to that of active participants in the peace process. The resolution calls upon women's organizations and groups to intensify efforts to strengthen peace and eliminate colonialism, racism, discrimination, aggression, occupation and foreign domination.

By 18 December, 1979, UN member states recognized that women may not be able to participate in issues of peace and security and other important issues due to discrimination. Thus, the General Assembly passed Resolution 34/180 on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). This document stated that peace and the welfare of the world require maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields. It calls state parties to eliminate all discrimination against women and ensure that women could represent governments at the international level and within international organizations. However, the UN system failed to introduce a method to ensure women's participation.

Women's Participation in Peace Issues

As the Cold War escalated, the call for peace became louder in the international community. From 14 to 30 July, 1980 a second conference on women was held in Copenhagen. The report from this World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace also makes a strong link between the achievement of peace and women's participation in peace and security issues. Women are called to participate in the broadest way to achieve détente and disarmament, to promote freedom and strengthen international security. More specifically the UN calls for solidarity campaigns for struggling women and calls on the UN system, non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations to support these groups and include women's participation in their activities.

The recommendations of this conference were taken into account by the General Assembly on 3 December, 1982 when member states passed Resolution 37/63 on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Cooperation. States who voted for this resolution agree to promote equal representation of women in state functions, in the diplomatic service, in national, regional and international meetings, and to increase the employment of women in the UN secretariat and specialized agencies. Yet the number of women representing their countries as General Assembly ambassadors or in the Security Council remained low.

Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women. Conference participants developed the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, a collective plan of action for women and their advocates. For ten years, women's issues were given a high profile in the UN system. Eleven paragraphs of this document specifically address women and peace. It made the connection that peace and women's rights are interdependent, that it is impossible to have one without the other. This thinking process proved to be in advance of governments who failed to recognize this connection or implement suggestions.

The Secretary-General reported to the Commission on the Status of Women to review and appraise the implementation of the Nairobi Strategies on 22 November, 1989. His assessment in the realm of peace was that women remained the victims of violence disproportionately and that little change was made in their involvement in decision-making since 1985. The equality of genders persisted as rhetoric within the UN system and its member states.

The General Assembly passed another resolution (48/104) on 20 December, 1993 on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, showing further realization within the UN mind that women's needs did not always parallel those of men. This declaration called specifically for training to sensitize law enforcement officers and public officials on the needs of women.

The World Conference on Human

including the systematic rape of women in situations of armed conflict. Finally, the international community called for the integration of the equal status and human rights of women in the mainstream of the UN and subsidiary organs. From this point on, women's issues became a part of the regular language on peace and security issues.

Women's Leading Role in Peace Movement

The Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing 4 to 15 September, 1995, devoted much attention to peace and women, again linking the advancement of women to the promotion of lasting peace. Instead of asking women to strengthen their efforts, this report recognizes the leading role that women already play in the peace movement.

One subchapter is also devoted to the issue of women and armed conflict, listing six strategy objectives to increase women's participation, reduce excessive military expenditures, promote non-violent conflict resolution, promote women's contribution in fostering a culture of peace, provide assistance and training to refugee and displaced women, and provide assistance to women of non-self-governing territories. The report then provides an extensive list of actions to be taken by governments and international and regional intergovernmental institutions. Many women who participated in the drafting of this document were able to take it home to lobby their government to take action.

The issue of women and armed conflict remained on the agenda of the United Nations. In the 42nd session (2-13 March, 1998), the Commission on the Status of Women reported on Agreed Outcomes on Women and Armed Conflict. Once again, it proposed that governments take action to ensure gender-sensitive justice, address the specific needs of women affected by armed conflict, increase the participation of women in

Women are still viewed as a population in need of protection.

Therefore, women's voices remained marginalized in the UN system.

From 15 to 26 July, 1985 men and women from all over the world gathered in Nairobi at the Conference to Review and Appraise the

Rights and its Programme of Action from 12 July, 1993 went further to insist that women's needs be integrated into all human rights activities. This document addresses specific forms of discrimination against women,

peacekeeping, peace-building, decision-making, conflict prevention, resolution and reconstruction, and in general work to prevent conflict and promote a culture of peace. Coordination proved lacking in the UN system to integrate these suggestions in all areas; although women's concerns continued to gain progress.

The Security Council passed Resolution 1265 on 17 September, 1999 on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict. The General Assembly had passed a Resolution on this issue in 1966, but it took more than 30 years for the issue of gender training to become binding international law through a Security Council Resolution. Although this resolution calls for the implementation of a gender perspective on humanitarian assistance and on violence against women, women are still viewed as a population in need of protection instead of active agents in peace and security.

Women's groups and their advocates continued to lobby for greater visibility and participation in the UN system. Women's stories of suffering in situations of armed conflict began to appear in the public eye to a much greater extent. Asian women, for example, spoke out about systematic sexual slavery by the Japanese military in World War II (culminating in the Tokyo Tribunal of December 2000) and women in the Balkans and Rwanda spoke out about systematic rape as a form of genocide.

The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, under pressure and guidance from the Women's Caucus for Gender Justice, included these issues in their definitions of crimes against humanity and war crimes. In previous war trials, these crimes had not been directly addressed. Moreover, the statute insists on equal participation of female judges and experts on women's issues in trials and on appropriate gender-sensitize measures to protect the well being of victims and witnesses.

At the same time the UN was performing a comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects. This review, called the Windhoek Declaration, went before the General Assembly on 31 May, 2000. It declared that despite all the rhetoric on women in the UN system, women had been denied their full role in peacekeeping efforts, and the gender dimension in peace processes had not been adequately respected. This review made very specific suggestions on the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in peace support operations in negotiations, mandates, leadership, planning and structure, recruitment, training, procedures, monitoring and evaluation, and public awareness. The mission role of women could no longer be ignored.

On 21 August, 2000, the subsequent comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects was presented to a panel on United Nations Peace Operations. In this review, called the Brahimi Report, gender was mentioned in only a marginal way. It suggested that the Secretary-General compile input from member states to assure equitable gender distribution in leadership positions in peacekeeping operations. It also stated that UN personnel in the field must be particularly sensitive to gender differences.

The lack of an integrated gender perspective in this review fueled NGOs to unite and strategize for greater inclusion and participation of women. The coalition of women's organizations contributed recommendations for engendering the Brahimi Report to concerned actors. These include: establishing early warning opportunities where civil society, including women's groups, could direct information on potential conflict; posting gender advisors at all levels and gender units in peacekeeping operations; requiring gender sensitivity training for all participants in peacekeeping operations; creating a code of conduct for



UN personnel in the field must be particularly sensitive to gender differences.

Photo: Torbjörn S Gustafsson/IKON

peacekeepers that includes gender issues; and integrating women's rights in a more human based approach to peacekeeping.

Building 1325

After the omission of gender in the Brahimi Report, the time was ripe to push a Security Council resolution on mainstreaming women in peace and security issues that would become binding international law. Namibian diplomats were especially sensitive to this concern as the Windhoek Declaration came out of their country, where years of armed conflict necessitated peace building and the participation of all members of society, but especially of women. The Coalition on Women and International Peace and Security succeeded in lobbying Namibia to hold an open session on women, peace and security during their month of Security Council presidency in October 2000.

Members of the coalition lobbied and debated with every Security Council member. They created a list of experts and NGOs that would speak to the issues in the Security Council. They compiled packets of relevant documents with summaries and hand-delivered them to all Security Council members, and undertook media strategy to maximize attention on this issue. Synergy between non-govern-

mental organizations, UN departments, and governments brought together the strengths of each segment, and ensured success.

Representatives of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, an 85-year-old organization that formed in response to World War I, expressed an incredible sense of hope and relief that issues so long ignored were registering at the highest levels. Resolution 1325 provided a tool for women that called for gender sensitivity in all UN missions including peacekeeping. It urged the necessity of women to participate equally at all negotiating tables and for the protection of women and girls during armed conflict. The last paragraph of this resolution notes that the Security Council "decides to remain actively seized on the matter."

Next steps and follow-up

Since this momentous resolution, reports on UN peacekeeping operations, such as that on East Timor, Afghanistan (S/2000/1106), the Democratic Republic of Congo (S/2001/128), Western Sahara (S/2001/148) and other countries, have systematically included gender. Thanks to the tireless efforts of women's and human rights organizations, the UN is beginning to reaffirm faith in the equal

governments to address gender concerns.

Non-governmental organizations can support and sustain women's efforts using the tools provided in Resolution 1325 by: pressing governments to increase the numbers of senior women in the UN, contributing women's names to rosters for these positions, pressing for greater involvement and monitoring the actions of national and international negotiators in conflict zones, assuring that local civil society groups are integrated into all levels and aspects of conflict prevention, resolution and management, lobby governments to contribute funds for gender training of peacekeepers, monitor the inclusion of gender training in troop-contributing countries, monitor and document the actions of peacekeepers vis-à-vis women and girls, monitor and lobby for increased civil society involvement in the design and implementation of humanitarian assistance programmes in camps, collect gender-disaggregated data and testimonies to provide greater accuracy and understanding of the needs of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, monitor the implementation of Resolution 1325 at national and international levels and lobby for greater consultation with UN agencies in the follow-up processes and reports.

zones. This will make it impossible for the world, and especially the United Nations, not to notice the revolutionary, militarism-defying work of women. It will encourage women to continue their efforts to attain peace and justice, abolish oppression, eliminate colonialism, racism, discrimination, aggression, occupation and foreign domination.

In one part, the site gathers a comprehensive database of women's organisations in every country to facilitate networking and resourcing. Another section provides a collection of resources, including annotated bibliographies of books, articles, NGO reports, and tools for organizational building that feed critical thinking on sexism and militarism and enable women's groups to proceed in their work better informed and more effectively. The third part translates the UN into understandable language, focusing on war, peace, and security, and highlighting UN efforts that pertain particularly to women affected by war. The final section features campaigns and news of women who are working for peace and justice around the world.

The words of Security Council Resolution 1325 have and must continue to become action. The peoples of the United Nations must ensure that women are included at every level of peace and security from local communities to international criminal tribunals for countries coming out of conflict. They must ensure that women are included but also listened to in order to prevent wars.

The doors were open just wide enough for women to squeeze into a Security Council debate. But concerned women and men must act upon the words of Resolution 1325 and use those words and those stacks of papers to jam the doors permanently open, to enter the rooms where peace agreements are negotiated and into the rooms where peacekeeping operations are planned. Women come through the doors bearing gifts and insights, with a willingness to work, and with methodologies that are not naive or simple, but serious and political.

The UN is beginning to reaffirm faith in the equal rights of men and women.

rights of men and women as it laid out to do in the Charter. Women are still suffering disproportionately in situations of armed conflict, but as more women are included in decision-making and negotiating of peace and security issues, the hope is that armed conflict will no longer be a tolerable solution. To pressure their governments to take action, women's groups must be made aware of treaties and laws that have been agreed upon by their

Without delay, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has concentrated efforts to ensure that issues of women, peace, and security will continue to remain visible and high on the agenda of the United Nations. In October 2001, the UN office of the League launched www.peacewomen.org one year after the passing of resolution 1325. This new website aims to pull together the efforts of women working for peace in conflict

Women, violence and non-violent actions

In this flash-back, Leyla-Claude Werleigh points to an important project carried out by Life & Peace Institute some years back. There are still copies of these booklets available. Send a letter or an e-mail to order them.

One of the Life and Peace Institute's greatest contributions to the field of women and peace issues is undeniably its series on *Women, Violence and Non-violent Actions*.

The project was led under the auspices of LPI, the women desks of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the World Council of Churches (WCC). Women from Christian and secular groups as well as those from major faith communities were targeted with the aim of launching:

- A pilot Study on Women, War and Peace;
- A seminar in the Philippines, bringing together peace researchers and grass root activists to discuss the project theme from both theoretical and practical perspectives; and
- A publication of the results of the seminar to be distributed worldwide.

The focal goal was to stimulate networking between scholars and women practitioners and to enhance the efficiency of a non-violent struggle for peace and human rights.

The study on *Women, War and Peace* was elaborated by Elizabeth Ferris, then LPI Research Director, and published during the fall of 1993. The project culminated with *Women, Violence and Non-violence*, an international meeting held in Manila in November 1993, co-organised by LPI, LWF, WCC and

Gabriela, a women's organisation in the Philippines, and in 1996, the WCC published the results of the seminar in the book entitled *Women, Violence and Nonviolent Change*.

Women, Violence and Nonviolent Change (1996), edited by Aruna Gnanadason (WCC), Musimbi Kanyoro (LWF) and Lucia Ann McSpadden (LPI)

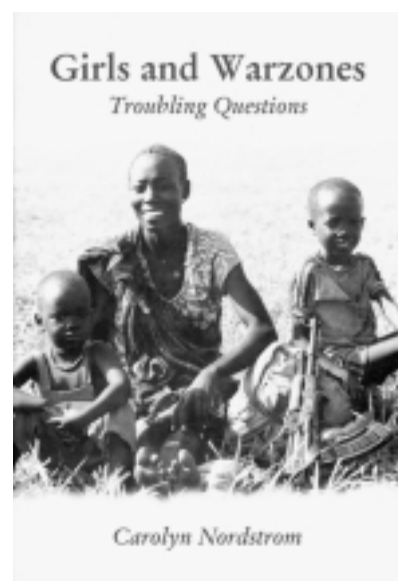


Amidst conflict situations in an increasingly violent world – ranging from wars between nations to abuse of women and children within the home – women are making effective, courageous and often creative non-violent responses. Because too little attention has been given to the specific contributions of women to conflict resolution, *Women, Violence and*

Nonviolent Change successfully brings these contributions to the foreground. After three analytical essays on women as peacemakers, the universality of human rights, and women's struggles, women from thirteen countries around the world present case studies of how women's groups are confronting violence in their context.

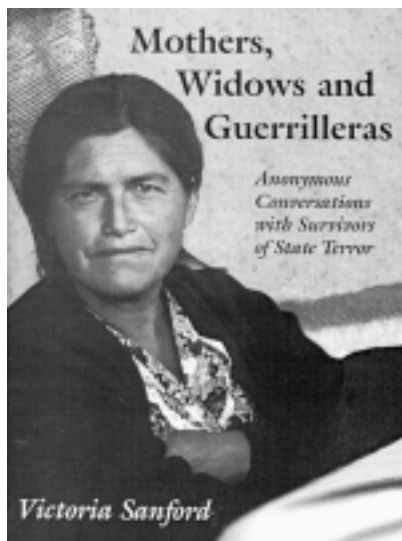
In addition to the above, an upshot of the themes developed at the Manila seminar caused a number of follow-up studies to be commissioned; they resulted in the following reports:

- *Girls and Warzones: Troubling Questions* (1997) by Carolyn Nordstrom;



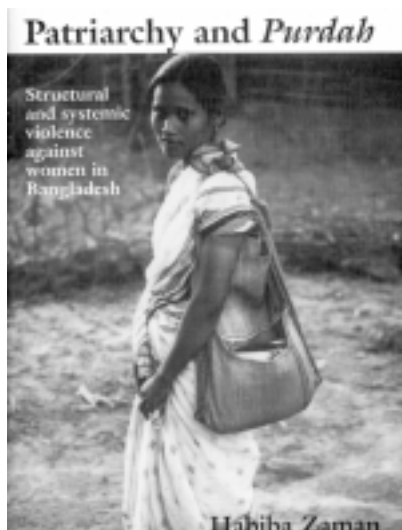
In the context of war and peace, *Girls and Warzones: Troubling Questions* puts the spotlight on the exploitation of inequalities and the acting out of differences in power and explores the variety of ways in which social and personal inequalities construct the experiences of violence for girls, children, women, groups, and for communities.

- *Mothers, Widows and Guerrillas: Anonymous Conversations with Survivors of State Terror* (1998) by Victoria Sanford;



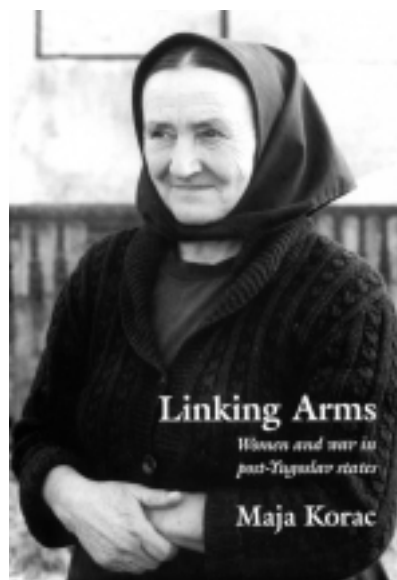
Behind Guatemala's brutal civil war lie the realities of extraordinary human suffering and bravery. During the military rule of 1954-1985, and particularly during the period of 1978-1984 known as *La Violencia*, over 100 000 civilians were killed or forcibly 'disappeared', often after undergoing gruesome torture. This is the story of the women in Guatemala that have lived through terror, both as direct victims and as mothers and widows of the victims who have in turn played a unique role in the truth-telling and reconciliation process.

- *Patriarchy and Purdah: Structural and Systematic violence against women in Bangladesh* (1998) by Habiba Zaman;



Through modern media, the brutal violence of today's armed conflicts is often brought to us directly from the battlefields. Violence, however, can also be embedded within the very fabric of a society. In *Patriarchy and Purdah: Structural and Systematic violence against women in Bangladesh*, Habiba Zaman explores the legal, religious and familial vulnerability of women to violence in Bangladeshi society, revealing how women are subordinated, controlled and made vulnerable through shame and social disgrace.

- *Linking Arms: Women and War in Post-Yugoslav States* (1998) by Maja Korac.



Violence was central in the formation of the states that emerged from the former Yugoslavia, ripping apart the very fabric of community life as neighbour fought against neighbour, as families were divided and uprooted, and as hatred spiralled through torture, rape and killing. Here, women were both the victims of rape and gendered violence, but also the mothers of soldiers. In *Linking Arms: Women and War in Post-Yugoslav States*, Maja Korac examines how women in the former Yugoslavia protested war and violence and how they have organised, as women, against violence, ethnic cleansing and war.

And in articles, based on their

studies, written for *New Routes: A Journal of Peace Research and Action*:

- C Nordstrom: *Behind the lines* (97:1)
- V Sanford: *Guatemalan stories* (97:3)
- M Korac: *Resisting loyalty* (98:2)
- H Zaman: *Patriarchy and Purdah* (99:2)

Projects

Another aspect of LPI's contribution to the field is its dedication to strengthen women's involvement in peace building initiatives and its endeavour to assure a comprehensive gender's perspective within its Conflict Transformation Programmes. We strive to accomplish this for we believe that gender parity and gender equity in the participation of the peace process is vital to achieve sustainable peace. One such example can be found in one of our future projects in Congo Brazzaville: it is on the promotion of women and children's rights and its main objective is to reinforce women's capacities in peace building through seminars, workshops and conferences.

Various women associations have centred themselves around common social values such as peace and reconciliation, forgiveness and non-violence. They work as supervisory staff for other women in order to stimulate citizenship consciousness among them and they also struggle for the promotion and the defence of women and children's rights in the Republic of Congo. LPI intends to, among others, support the creation of a monitoring body for women and children's rights¹ particularly aiming at increasing public awareness of these issues. The Institute will also participate in training of trainers' sessions in order to ensure that the Congolese women themselves master the tools necessary to continue the work they aspire to attain.

¹ Observatoire des Droits de la Femme et de l'Enfant

Conflict resolution in Somaliland

Women in the forefront

Women's direct involvement in all forms of public decision-making including conflict resolution and peace building was minimal in the past. In the specific area of conflict resolution, women had an indirect role to forge peace between conflicting parties. Sealing final agreements between the warring parties with the exchange of brides was one way of doing this. The logic behind this strategy was the sowing of trust between the two warring clans because the exchange of brides was a gesture of good will and a genuine wish to let bygones be bygones and start a peaceful relationship. The Somali saying "*meel xinijir lagu bururiyay xab baa lagu bururiya*" translated as "a baby should be born in the spot where blood has been spilt", indicates the rationale of exchanging brides.

Since exogamy in marriage was widely practiced among the Somali people, the very fact of a woman marrying into another clan was in itself a step forward against future disputes developing into violent confrontations. It is much easier for the elders of the two clans who have already forged an alliance through the marriage relationship (*xidid*) to reach an agreement when conflicts arose. Moreover, in some cases, women themselves acted as peace envoys to their respective clans and were sometimes the first messengers sent between the disputing clans to break the ice. Sending a woman was safer during the initial stages when peace agreements have not been reached, for women belong to both clans either by marriage or by birth.

Women's role in conflict resolution and peace-building came to the forefront during the internal conflicts within Somaliland that occurred after the end of the civil war. After experiencing the carnage of the war and living in refugee camps in Ethiopia for several years, the people were finally happy to return home and begin a new

life. However, it soon became clear that the legacy of a decade of wars and destruction would not vanish so smoothly. Conflict after conflict plagued the already war weary population and fresh waves of refugees streamed back to the camps they left only a short time ago.

These unfortunate incidents of power struggle between former friends,

more than anything else acted as a catalyst to find meaningful solutions to end these internal conflicts. Although women did not participate directly in the negotiations and peace conferences taking place throughout the country, nevertheless they contributed a great deal in exploiting the prevailing anti-war sentiments. The main contributions of women towards the peace building processes as identified by the respondents were:

- They mobilised people for demonstrations against war.
- They composed emotion charged songs and poems for peace.
- Women chose envoys from among themselves and sent them to participate in peace conferences without receiving any formal invitations from organisers and made touching speeches there.
- They made a lot of awareness raising on peace through their organisations.
- They persuaded their husbands and sons to stop the fighting.



Somali women sharing knowledge and experience at a LPI workshop.
Photo: Susanne Thurfjell/LPI

- They gave logistical support to peace conferences.
- They submitted peace declarations to warring parties

Women carried out these activities individually and through their respective organisations. One major reason behind women's overwhelming opposition to the conflicts and their enthusiasm for peace is believed to have resulted from the suffering they have experienced. Although everybody suffered tremendously, women and children received the major brunt of the conflict.

The following poem was composed when conflicts started between the SNM fighters who were united against the military regime. It is addressing the armed militias and drawing their attention to the reality of the dispute between them. It is a dispute that does not serve any purpose, but only adds to suffering of the already war-weary returnees who were keen only on one thing- rebuild their lives.

*Shatter not, my newly mended heart,
Force me not to the refugee life,
Where cold, hunger, and misery reside
For I have just tasted the comfort of home
Kill not the surviving heroes,
Who miraculously escaped death!
Crush not the handicapped ones,
For they have barely recovered.
Young man with the gun,
Whom are you shooting? Me?
For, there is no enemy in sight.
Have you ever seriously wondered?
What becomes of our brave comrades?
Whatever happened to all our buildings?*

This is an excerpt from a research done by LPI's Somaliland's consultant Amina Mohamoud Warsame. It will be published in 2002.

LPI Seminar:

Inclusive peace

During LPI's last Board meeting, a seminar was held in Helsinki on June 8, 2001. The theme of the seminar was: Women and Peace. The seminar was meant to be an occasion for all Board and staff members of LPI, together with Finnish representatives of women's organizations, to be briefed on the situation of women in one particular part of the world (Somaliland); also to better get to know and understand how the Life and Peace Institute intervenes in the field. The seminar aimed specifically at:

- Gathering information
- Sharing experiences: similarities and differences
- Learning from each other
- Differencing what is specific and what is universal
- Strengthening our work

The seminar started with some words of welcome by Ms. Saara Ojanen from Finn Church Aid. This was followed by a quick presentation of the participants and a reminder of the goals of the seminar by Ms. Claudette Werleigh from the Life and Peace Institute.

A message for Peace was prepared specially for the occasion by Safia, a Somali woman artist refugee in Norway. The message was presented as a poem interlaced with song and dance. A researcher, Amina Warsame, was called to communicate to the public the most essential part of her recent findings: "Somaliland Women's changing roles and its Relevance to Peacemaking". LPI's Women's Coordinator for Somaliland, Zeynab M. Hassan, shared with the public her methodological teaching approach; the main information that she usually conveys; the reaction that she has gathered so far from women participating in her course; the progress or the

change that she has noted in their life; the difficulties that the Somali women still encounter; the challenges ahead...

Other people were invited to share their experiences so that we would get to know their work, what they have been able to achieve and how. These two presentations were followed by testimonies from Suad Younan (Middle East), Alice Mogwe (Southern Africa) and Violetta Vea (Asia/Pacific). The seminar was further extended to include a testimony from the North: Kari Hay from Norway shared her own experiences working with women refugees in her country. We used these examples from the North and the South to draw lessons valid for women all over.

A broader discussion followed with a panel composed of some male members from the Board and staff of LPI: Uffe Gjerding from Denmark, Simote Vea from Asia/Pacific and Rienzie Perera from Sri Lanka. They were invited to share their respective experience from different parts of the world and to reflect on the role and responsibility of men in peace building.

The seminar was designed to be inclusive: taking the experience in Somaliland as a point of departure, it gradually moved to women in the South, then to the North and finally included men both from the North and the South. This inclusive approach is in line with LPI's beliefs that **Women's Agenda for Peace is an Agenda for a peaceful world** to which all of us should contribute.

Vice-President of the Life and Peace Institute, Alice Mogwe, made a summary of the day's work and shared some thoughts based on her involvement in Botswana.

**Claudette Werleigh
Conflict Transformation
Programme at LPI**

News and reviews

New intern

Michelle Piromalli is the new intern at LPI. She is sponsored by Project Ploughshares in Waterloo, Canada. She has completed her Master's degree in international relations with a focus on peace and conflict studies.



LPI planning

for 2002-2003

LPI Executive Committee is currently reviewing proposed program plan and budgets for the Institute in 2002 and 2003. Two major new global research projects are planned. The Conflict Transformation Unit is considering continued work in Democratic Republic on Congo, the Kivu Province and Republic of Congo (Brazzaville) where studies and pilot projects have been carried out during 2000-2001. The Horn of Africa programme is planning a hand-over process with Forum for Peace and Governance (FOPAG), a local non-governmental organization in Somalia. Several educational and research projects are planned with church partners in Eritrea, Sudan and Ethiopia.

IDEA

On October 22 and 23, LPI CTP Director Claudette Werleigh spoke at a seminar on the theme: "The United Nations and Democracy". The case studies were: Bosnia/Kosovo, Haiti and East Timor. The seminar was convened by International IDEA (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance), based in Stockholm and the seminar held at Jesus College, Cambridge University.

Peace Brigades International

On 26 October, LPI was invited to a "celebration of active non-violence" on the occasion of the 20 years anniversary of the Peace Brigades International. The themes of the

presentations by Claudette Werleigh were: "Achievements and challenges in peace building and the (re-) construction of civil societies in conflict area" and "Promoting non violence and protecting human rights: the role of civilian third party initiatives in conflict areas".

Pax Christi International

Eskil Jonsson and Claudette Werleigh represented LPI at the meeting of the International Council of Pax Christi International in Mainz, Germany. Pax Christi International is the international catholic peace movement. The International Council of Pax Christi is the highest decision making body of this organisation. The Secretary General of Pax Christi International, Etienne De Jonghe, is a board member of the Life and Peace Institute

Counter violence

Francine Pickup with Suzanne Williams and Caroline Sweetman, 'Ending Violence Against Women'. Oxfam, 2001.

Violence, and fear of violence, dramatically limits women's choices in virtually all spheres of their lives. It has long-term, as well as short-term, consequences for women's physical and emotional well-being. It decreases women's ability to gain an education, earn a livelihood, develop human relationships, and participate in public activities, including development programmes. Yet development organisations have been slow to realise the centrality of the issue to their work. In this book, violence against women is taken up by development organisations, as a development issue in its own right. The first section of the book examines definitions of violence against women, and attempts to explain why it is a problem in all societies around the world. It discusses responses to violence that are based on human rights approaches. The second section focuses on strategies that development organisations can adopt in order to counter violence against women and to support the survivors. Case studies drawn from over 30 countries worldwide, from times of peace and of armed conflict, illustrate the possibilities and pitfalls of different strategies and interventions.

Religion and Politics

Robert P Kraynak, 'Christian Faith and Modern Democracy - God and Politics in the Fallen World'. University of Notre Dame Press, Indiana in 2001.

From the Christian perspective, Professor Kraynak investigates the problem of relationship between religion and politics in the contemporary context. With reference to the theme, Kraynak interrogatively raises some of the important problematic issues:

"What is needed is a return to fundamentals that enables us to reexamine the entire relationship. We need to ask honestly: Do Christianity and modern liberal democracy share a common moral vision, or are they opposed and even hostile to each other? Are they inherently compatible or incompatible?"

Kraynak, as a believing and practicing Christian, attempts to answer the questions methodologically, well balanced and structured. He states: "we must face the disturbing dilemma that modern liberal democracy needs God, but God is not as liberal or as democratic as we would like Him to be." In this book, he analyses the dilemma and suggests a reasonably acceptable solution to the problem. As a result, Professor Kraynak has written a profound and controversial book.

Selin Amirthalingam

SIPRI Yearbook

SIPRI Yearbook 2001: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security, Oxford University Press, 712 pages.

In this year's edition of the SIPRI yearbook, as in the four previous ones, three main sections cover the headings indicated by the title. The first section deals with Security and Conflicts in 2000, followed by a section on Military Spending and Armaments, the last part of the book tackling the issue of Non-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament. In the tradition of SIPRI yearbooks this edition provides both in-depth analysis on the different research themes of the Institute as well as wide-ranging surveys on the fields related to conflicts, security and armaments.

Jerome Gouzou

Resources on the Internet

United Nations

www.un.org/womenwatch WOMENWATCH is the United Nations Internet gateway on the advancement and empowerment of women.

www.un.org/womenwatch/daw Division for the Advancement of Women. Grounded in the vision of equality of the United Nations Charter, the Division advocates the improvement of the status of women of the world and the achievement of their equality with men. It aims to ensure the participation of women as equal partners with men in all aspects of human endeavour. It promotes women as equal participants and beneficiaries of sustainable development, peace and security, governance and human rights. It strives to stimulate the mainstreaming of a gender perspective both within and outside the United Nations system.

www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/index.html The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly is often described as an international bill of rights for women.

www.unifem.undp.org UNIFEM promotes women's empowerment and gender equality. It works to ensure the participation of women in all levels of development planning and practice, and acts as a catalyst within the UN system, supporting efforts that link the needs and concerns of women to all critical issues on the national, regional and global agendas.

www.un-instraw-gains.org UN/INSTRAW/GAINS - UN International Research and Training Institute for

the Advancement of Women/Gender Awareness Information and Networking System is a "one stop" web-based electronic system for: producing, managing and disseminating gender related knowledge and information; conducting collaborative research on emerging gender issues; facilitating consultations and dialogue between different stakeholders on global critical issues using a gender perspective; training and capacity building on women and gender issues.

www.un.org/Depts/eca/divis/acw/index.htm UN/ECA/ACW - UN African Centre for Women is a division within the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). Established in 1975 as the regional Women in Development (WID) structure in the United Nations system, the ACW web site focuses on gender issues and priority areas such as: economic and social policy analysis; development management; food security and sustainable development; information for development; and regional cooperation and integration.

www.eclac.org/English/research/women/indicators/genderind.htm UN/ECLAC/WID - UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Women and Development. This site provides gender indicators for follow-up and evaluation of the Regional Programme of Action for the Women of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995-2001, and the Beijing Platform for Action.

www.unescap.org/wid/index.htm UN/ESCAP/WID - UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Women in Development. This site deals with a broad range of women's issues in the Asia/Pacific region.

www.unesco.org/women UNESCO - UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation is the primary UN agency on educational and cultural issues. Learn about the latest UN educational programmes and activities promoting the status of women from this UNESCO gender equality site.

www.unesco.org/cpp/uk/projects/gender.htm Since the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), the UN agencies have renewed their commitment to the inclusion of gender in all their activities. To this end UNESCO established the Women and a Culture of Peace Programme (WCP) in 1996. In addition to mainstreaming a gender perspective in the trans-disciplinary project "Towards a Culture of Peace" the programme priorities are Supporting women's initiatives for peace; Empowering women for democratic participation in political processes to increase their capacity and impact especially in economic and security issues; and, Gender sensitive socialization and training for non-violence and egalitarian partnerships, with a special focus on boys and young men.

www.undp.org/gender UN/GIDP - UN Development Programme Gender in Development Programme advises and facilitates UNDP's gender mainstreaming in their work and policies.

www.unhchr.ch UNHCHR - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has declared that the human rights of women and of the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. There is information on how to contact the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, its Causes and Consequences.

www.undp.org/rblac/gender UN/IAC/WHRLAC -UN Inter-Agency Campaign On Women's Human Rights In Latin America And The Caribbean developed by the UNDP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean as part of the wider UN campaign on women's human rights.

www.un.org/womenwatch/resources/goodpractices UN/IACWGA – UN Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality. This good practices database in gender mainstreaming and implementing the Beijing Platform for Action is a project of the IACWGE. The collection of good practices in this web site has been created as a resource for organizations that are committed to implementing programmes to support gender equality.

International Organisations

www.worldbank.org/gender WORLD BANK, with a mission to fight poverty for lasting results, was established in 1944. This web site focuses on gender statistics, Bank publications on gender, policy research reports, activities, calendars, projects, programs, development partners, and related links that include a wide range of NGOs committed to gender development.

www.genderstats.worldbank.org/menu.asp WORLD BANK/PREM Gender - World Bank Gender and Development Group provides a database of gender statistics and a country-by-country summary of gender profiles, basic demographic data, population dynamics, labour force structure, education, and health, including maternal mortality rates. Tables from World Development Indicators provide comparisons for gender differences, gender and education, and reproductive health.

www.wilpf.org The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom was founded in 1915 and works to achieve through peaceful means world disarmament, full rights for women, racial and economic justice, an end to all forms of violence, and to establish those political, social, and psychological conditions which can assure peace, freedom, and justice for all.

www.peacewomen.org Peace Women is a project of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. It was inspired by the process that led to the Security Council debating and passing Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

www.amnesty.org/ailib/intcam/women/2000/index.html Amnesty International pays tribute to the struggle for women's rights in the twentieth year of the UN Women's Convention and five years after 189 governments adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, setting out commitments and steps for achieving those commitments under the goals of equality, development and peace.

www.hrw.org/women Human Rights Watch is dedicated to protecting the human rights of people around the world. We stand with victims and activists to prevent discrimination, to uphold political freedom, to protect people from inhumane conduct in wartime, and to bring offenders to justice.

www.international-alert.org/women/home.html International Alert's Women Building Peace Programme aims to Raise global awareness of women's experiences and perspectives of peace and conflict; Help women better realise their potential as peacebuilders from the village to the national level; Get more women included in all levels of peace processes.

www.iktk.se/english/index.html The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation works to help war-affected women to recover both physically and psychologically; to empower women and support them in participating in the re-building of a democratic society.

www.womenink.org Project of the International Women's Tribune Centre to market and distribute books on women and development with a focus on the perspectives of women from the Global South.

www.iwtc.org The International Women's Tribune Centre (IWTC) is dedicated to achieving women's full participation in shaping a development process that is just, peaceful and sustainable.

www.focusintl.com/statang1.htm WIDNET-Women in Development Network, has developed a databank on women's statistical information arranged by country and subject matter (population, health, education, labour and power).

www.law-lib.utoronto.ca/diana Bora Laskin Law Library, Women's Human Rights Resources

www.madre.org MADRE has worked in partnership with community-based women's organizations in conflict areas worldwide to address issues of health, education, economic development and other human rights.

www.equalitynow.org EQUALITY NOW is an international human rights organization dedicated to action for the civil, political, economic and social rights of girls and women.

Peace at the Polar Circle

One of LPI board members, Kari S Hay, reports about a peace oriented school in the very north of Norway.

Will a culture of peace grow well above the Polar Circle? Yes, it seems. At Soletun in northern Norway, there is a meeting-place, a fire of peace, where students from Tromsø, Texas and Timbuktu can meet.

For one year they live, study and work in a society which recreates itself every year, dependant on who the students are.

The school is called **Soltun Folkehøgskole**, a municipality college owned by The Methodist church in Norway.

The staff is working on a new profile as an **International school for Peace** which offers studies on conflict-transformation programs, based on models from Paul Lederach.

The main courses deal with drama, picture& art, out-door life and horse-riding, and the teachers work on integrating the peace and conflict-training in their subjects. The aim is to be part of the world-wide movement fighting for a **culture of peace**.

Through the Life and Peace Institute in Sweden, we have access to information about

how this work is carried out in conflict-areas and post-conflict-areas other places in the world. A special contact is established with The centre for Peace, Justice and Human Rights in Croatia.

We are planning a program which includes a visit exactly to this centre. We hope to meet people from the Peace-teams, and listen to their experiences. We would like our teachers to meet with those from the centre who do training in conflict-transformation. We hope to share knowledge in pedagogic, music, drama and art, and outdoor life activities by visiting schools and kindergardens, youth groups in the churches and sport-clubs.

We are also offering a scholarship to a young girl or boy from the area so he/she can spend a year at our college. This year we have students from eight countries including Norway.

Though we don't overcome terrorism with our work, we believe that this is one of the small steps to be taken in order to teach



Photo: Soltun FHS

young people, through experience, how exiting and strengthening it is to live and learn among people of different nationalities. This is our way of interpreting "The Bottom-up Approach" in this context....

Kari S Hay
Principal of Soletun

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