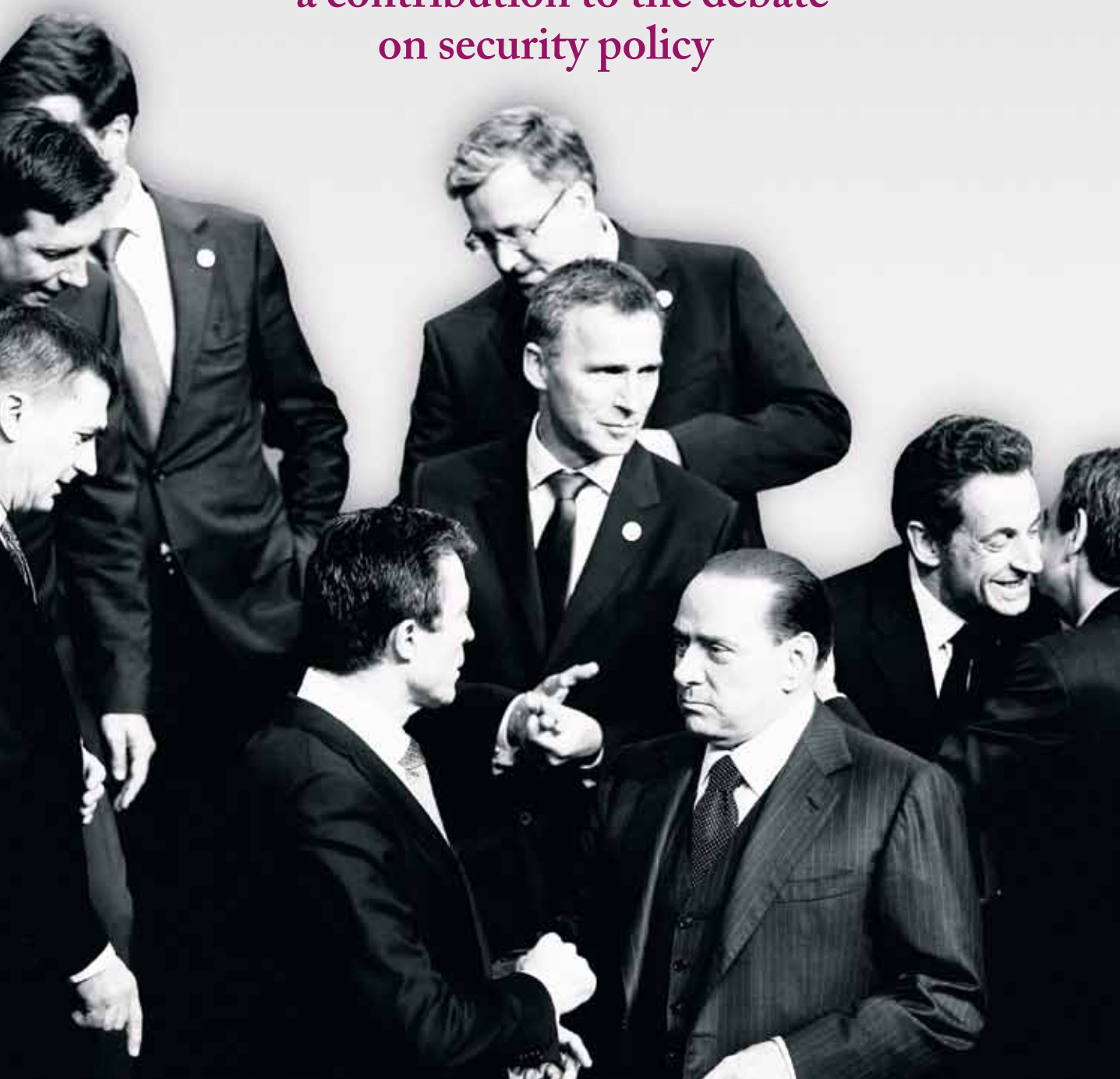
Building security

– a contribution to the debate on security policy



Contents

Foreword 3
Introduction 4
New threats – new solutions 6
We don't talk about territory 10
The war on terror
– a setback for human security 14
Increased militarisation 20
Violence and exclusion
– threats to half of humanity 26
Women's participation indispensable
for peace and democracy 32
Men's competence is never questioned 40
Final comments 44
Appendix 45
Endnotes 47

The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation supports women's organising in conflict regions.
We collaborate with women's organisations that play an active part in peace and rebuilding processes.

Building Security

By: Åsa Carlman, Annika Flensburg, Katarina Hellström, Lovisa Strand, Christina Wassholm and Eva Zillén.
Cover Photo: ScanPix, Daniel Ocha de Olza/AP/Scanpix
Art Direction: Louise Bååth, King Island Design
Translation: Katherine Stuart, the Right Word
ISBN: 978-91-979583-0-1
Printed by: Dixa, Stockholm 2011

The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, 2011
Slakthusplan 3
121 62 Stockholm, Sweden
Telephone: +46 8 588 89 100
E-mail: info@kvinnatillkvinna.se
www.kvinnatillkvinna.se

Foreword

Through our work in regions afflicted by conflict, over the years we have met and collaborated with hundreds of women activists. We have supported them in a variety of ways in their stubborn and courageous battles for peace and democracy, and seen with our own eyes what a positive force for development they are.

In Building Security our point of departure is women activists' experiences and knowledge and we question the security policy being pursued, which even today, in 2011, continues to ignore the biggest threats faced by women. We hope that *Building Security* will be a contribution to a critical debate about today's priorities, and about how security for all can be achieved: human security.

We wish to extend our thanks to all those with whom *The kvinna till kvinna Foundation* has collaborated over the years. They have shared their often hard-won experiences of having been excluded from having a voice in their communities. Even so, under their own steam and in collaboration with other women, they have helped to reduce violence in their own communities and to promote sustainable development and human security. We would also like to thank Gerd Johnsson-Latham and Christina Wassholm in particular, who shared with us their valuable knowledge.

Photo: Esther Sorri

Building Security was made possible by the Dutch *Millennium Development Goal 3 Fund*, financed by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This is also part of *The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation*'s project *Women's Organisation, Security and Participation (WOSP)*. Within this project, we have conducted a number of workshops for women's rights activists in order to assist them in being better able to safeguard their own security. ■

Lena Ag, Secretary-General
The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation

Introduction

Building Security describes that today's security policy priorities in actual fact may be undermining opportunities for achieving a sustainable peace and security for all. This is particularly clear in the wake of the events of 9/11 and the so-called 'war on terror'.

Military actions are often prioritised while basic threats to the female part of the population are put further down the security policy agenda. We find ourselves in a vicious circle of women being made invisible, of violence and exclusion – factors that are undermining the opportunities for a sustainable peace and security for all.

The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation wants to be part of breaking this circle. *Building Security* is an in-depth contribution to public debate in which we let our collective experience from work for women's rights in the Balkans, the Southern Caucasus, the Middle East, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo be reflected in current research. What we have learned from our collaboration with over 120 local women's organisations in areas of armed conflict correlates well with the conclusions of researchers in the field with respect to how the contribution of women helps to reduce violence in the society subsequent to the cessation of hostilities, to strengthen democratic decision-making, and to build a more fair, equitable and sustainable peace. We want to challenge the notion that conflict resolution and peace-building should be consigned to the warring parties. *The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation* has previously documented how women's organisations from the different sides of armed conflicts can contribute constructively to all phases of the promotion of peace, conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction. Research shows that if civil society actors such as women's organisations participate in peace negotiations, the peace negotiated is more sustainable. Even so, women are more often objectified as in need of protection than as actors who can contribute on their own terms to strengthening the security of all people – even when experience shows that women are protected by other women and not by soldiers and weaponry.

Building Security shows how inefficient and ineffective it is to exclude women's experience in peace-building, in peace processes and in post-conflict reconstruction. Military actions are expensive in terms of both life and money. Despite this fact, violent solutions are given priority. Since 2002, weapon sales around the world have increased by 59 per cent,[1] despite the fact that the number of armed conflicts has in fact decreased. As Hans Blix, former Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), has pointed out among others, there are large, influential and very powerful manufacturers of weapons and other forces that profit from military solutions, while the great mass of the people are the ones who pay in terms of being the victims of the violence, and because already limited resources are stretched even further – resources that otherwise could go towards people's health and education, for example. Not even the global financial crisis has halted budget allocations for armaments, although governments all over the world have made budget cuts in education, health care and social welfare, etc. As funding for the

purpose of countering terrorism, this is counter-productive, since social injustice and inadequate belief in the future comprise a breeding ground for both religious fundamentalism and terrorism. So while military conflict is prioritised and arms continue to proliferate, insecurity remains the reality for the majority of the population.

This report also demonstrates the gap between what security policies, experts and government authorities today say about how peace and security need to be built, and how they then act in practice. In theory, there is international consensus that issues such as economic development, democracy and human rights are the foundations of peace. At the same time, governments continue to use the same old methods, often with military overtones, to deal with threats and attempts to create stability. *The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation* aims to identify the security policies being pursued as a problem, and to shed light on the lack of knowledge and understanding of how respect for women's human rights have an impact on society as a whole. We aim to show that it is necessary to operate on the basis of a broadened concept of security in order to achieve sustainable peace, democracy and development. ■

Definitions:

Participation – Participation in this report refers not only to how many representatives should be present during negotiations, but also the quality, terms and influence that this presence at the negotiating table implies. A peace process where both men's and women's security is taken into account is only possible if there is a qualitative transfer of power, with a redistribution of power in the peace negotiations and in the peace process as a whole. Suitable resources and active measures systematically applied must be put into practice in order to make it possible for women to influence the content of and the decisions made in these processes.

Peace negotiations - The term peace negotiations is here used to describe the meetings and deliberations, often with international monitoring and international support that eventually lead to a peace agreement.

Peace process - A peace process is the complex process from a ceasefire agreement via peace negotiations to a peace agreement, security measures, post-conflict reconstruction, conferences for aid donors, democratic governance and conflict prevention efforts.

Women's organisations - women's organisations refers to organised groups of women in civil society who are working for peace and security, women's rights and social justice in regions of conflict.

Civil Society - We use UN definition of civil society which states that civil society includes associations of citizens (outside their families, friends and businesses) entered into voluntarily to advance their interests, ideas and ideologies such as social movements, indigenous people's organizations, religious and spiritual organizations, academe and public benefit non-governmental organizations. The term does not include profit-making activity (the private sector) or governing (the public sector).[2]

War and armed conflict - War and armed conflict refers to the definition used by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) database, which defines a threshold of 25 battle-related deaths in one calendar year for armed conflict, where at least one of the warring parties is the government of a State. War is defined as 1,000 or more battle-related deaths in one calendar year.[3]

New threats – new solutions

In the time between the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 and the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in the USA on September 11, 2001, a broader concept of security began to emerge.

This change resulted in a questioning of the prevailing and traditional view of security, which was entirely focused on defending territorial borders by military means. Through this broadening of the concept of security, the view of what constitutes a threat to freedom and security was also broadened, as well as what it is that needs protecting. In the view that emerged, "new" threats to human security were defined. These threats were identified across a broad spectrum and included everything from climate change, epidemics, poverty, natural disasters and starvation to terrorist attacks, human trafficking, drugs and armed conflicts. In addition, it was pointed out that social and economic gulfs between people, and a lack of democracy and development, could give rise to armed conflicts. The individual was identified as the primary object in need of protection.

World Bank and SIPRI:

If, from 2002, the world had invested just 3.7 per cent of its military expenditure in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, they could all be met by 2015.[4]

The result of this change in thinking was that the *UN Development Programme (UNDP)* published a report in 1994 in which it coined the term Human Security.[5] Human security is about security for individuals and communities rather than for States and borders, and it links together human rights with human development. This meant that the trend moved away from security achieved by military means to security achieved by means of sustainable human development.[6]

The UNDP describes the concept of human security as universal – that is, human security applies to all, irrespective of borders, gender, class or religious affiliation. Human security has two components: freedom from fear and freedom from want. The idea of including aspects of poverty in definitions of human security was new and had the effect of redrawing the security policy map. Putting the emphasis on the individual's sense of security and living conditions in this way – not just the defence of the State and military actions – can be deemed a paradigm shift in the security debate.

A significant weakness of the UNDP report was that it failed to examine the fact that threats to and questions of human security are different for women and men. For example, it did not examine at all gender-based violence and oppression. It did not either draw attention to the fact that women are excluded from decision-making fora, both during periods of armed conflict and in peace time. In the latter part of the 1990s, the term was criticised by several

A nurse in Zimbabwe is preparing fluid replacement for treating cholera patients at the Budirir clinic in Harare.

Photo: SCANPIX/REUTERS/ Philimon Bulawayo

researchers including peace researcher Johan Galtung, who proposed an even more holistic and universal view of security in which discrimination and poverty for example constituted threats at the individual level. Betty Reardon, also a peace researcher, further nuanced the concept of human security. She stated that women must be included in order for human security to be an effective form of security, since this would mean that human security focuses on the needs of all people.[7] By the UNDP report being gender-neutral, that is, not specifically expressing women's participation and the threats to security specific to women, women's needs within the concept of human security were effectively rendered invisible. The point of departure was the male norm.

As the concept of security developed, how war was waged also changed. Today's conflicts are seldom between States; they are more often within States, between two or more combatant parties. Mary Kaldor, Professor at the *London School of Economics*, likens contemporary war to guerilla warfare. In other words, soldiers are highly mobile, they bear small arms, they do not always bear uniforms but may look like civilians, cities and residential areas are used as their battlefields, and they make use of high-speed IT communications.[8] In this type of low intensity conflict with highly mobile soldiers, it is irrelevant to conduct major military battles. Instead civilians – in particular women and children – become the targets and today make up the majority of those who were killed, wounded or displaced.[9]

PROGRESS FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

In parallel with the emergence and criticism of the concept of human security during the 1990s, the women's movement mobilised globally to draw attention to the fact that conflicts and violence affect women differently from the way they affect men. Subsequently, the UN adopted several documents dealing with women's human rights and violence against women, and the Final document from the *UN conference on the rights of women* in 1993 established that the rights of women are fundamental human rights, and that violence against women is a violation of fundamental human rights.[10] At the *International Conference on Population and Development* in Cairo in 1994, basic sexual and reproductive rights were agreed on, and that these are about the individual's right of determination over their own body, their sexuality and childbearing.[11] A year later, the *Platform for Action from the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women* in Beijing in 1995 was written, focusing on a number of issues related to women's rights, including women and poverty,

The organisation FADI at a meeting in Kiliba, South Kivu, DRC.

Photo: Kvinna till Kvinna/Ida Udovic

the education and training of women, women and the economy, women in power and decision-making, violence against women, the girl child and women and armed conflict.[12]

The 1990s were also the decade when the gaze of the world was turned on sexual violence in armed conflict, and for the first time these kinds of outrages received major international attention. The reason for this attention was in part due to to the documentation of sexual violence by women's organisations during the Balkans War and during the genocide in Rwanda. Previously, sexual violence had been viewed as an inevitable side-effect of war, which meant that it was seldom given any attention or documented. The first verdicts concerning sexual violence in armed conflict were handed down in 1998 at the *International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR)* and later the same year at the *International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY)*. At the ICTR, a former Mayor Jean-Paul Akayesu was sentenced to life imprisonment for, among other things, encouraging the sexual violence during the 1994 genocide.[13] His conviction, the first of its kind, was a milestone in the battle to end the impunity of perpetrators of sexual violence and in the work of making visible the fact that sexual violence can be used as a war strategy and can constitute genocide.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) was established by the UN in 2002 subsequent to the *Rome Statute of the International criminal Court* being adopted in 1998. In this Statute, rape and sexual violence were specified under the rubric of crimes against humanity,[14] which meant a legal strengthening of protection against sexual outrages, and the Statute was adopted as a consequence of it having become clear that there was insufficient coverage of and protection against violence in the form of systematic rape in international law. With the *Rome Statute*, the international community now had more effective tools for bringing the perpetrators to justice and convicting them.

Photo: AFP PHOTO / ANP VALERIE KUYPERS

These international documents, and the lobbying by women's rights activists from all over the world that lay behind them, paved the way for *UN Security Council Resolution 1325* in 2000. It was the first time that the Security Council, the highest body for international peace and security, had stressed the importance of women's involvement in all aspects of peace-building and reconciliation for a durable peace. That same year, the *UN's Millennium Declaration* was adopted, which among other things resolves to halve the number of people living in poverty in the world by 2015 and focuses on measurable efforts to eradicate poverty.[15] *The Millennium Declaration* established that efforts to eradicate poverty, and to improve education, health, peace, security, the environment, human rights and democracy belong together. With *The Millennium Declaration*, the international community underlined the link between development and security and demonstrated its will to eradicate poverty, also as a means of preventing armed conflict. ■

Tamara Nikorashvili, member of the Union of Wives of Invalids and Lost Warriors, at the refugee camp close to Gori in Georgia.

Photo: Christina Wassholm

We don't talk about territory

In August 2008, new battles broke out between Russia and Georgia in the almost 20 year long conflict over South Ossetia. The inhabitants of South Ossetia are divided into Georgians and Ossetians, and the battles in the region resulted in tens of thousands of internally displaced persons needing to flee the conflict. The administrative boundary line (ABL) between South Ossetia and Georgia has been closed since August 2008.

From the motorway between Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, and the city of Gori, you can see neat rows of thousands of identical houses with white walls and purple roofs, erected in fields and pasture-land, in the middle of nowhere. Tamara Nikorashvili lives in one of these hastily erected houses for internally displaced persons with her children and grandchildren around her.

"This is not my home," she says in the cold meeting hall in Gori, close to the border with South Ossetia, or the conflict line as the women around here call it. Whatever you call it, it effectively separates friends, families and relatives since the most recent armed conflict.

"My daughter lives 1 km from the conflict line inside South Ossetia. We can't see each other but we can almost hear each other if we shout out," says Nazi Beruashvili.

Tamara and Nazi are both members of the *Union of Wives of Invalids and Lost Warriors*, which has its office in Tbilisi and operations in Gori. For some years now, they have been working together with the *Association of Women of South Ossetian for Democracy and Human Rights*, based in South Ossetia's biggest city, Tskhinvali. When the war broke out anew in this conflict that had already lasted for many years, the collaboration between these organisations intensified. On the Georgian side, the women received the new internally displaced persons who came and invited them to join their organisation. It is a place for those who refuse to negotiate over their good relations with Osssetians and who dream of a life together again, in peace.

"Now I am a refugee in my own country. But I am continuing my work in the organisation, it must go on, we must build belief in the future. Nothing can be achieved with violence, nothing," says Nazi Beruashvili.

The two organisation are working on parallel programs on either side of the conflict line. They are educating women about human rights, democracy, *UNSCR 1325*, and about armed conflict. Barely a month after the conflict in August 2008, Tamara Nikorashvili attended a meeting with Ossetian women in Azerbaijan's capital, Baku.

They describe how they came together in grief and pain. And in memories of how things had been. They say that it was not easy to meet, but that they share a desire to live in peace.

Manana Tarashvili and Lira Tskhovrebova

Photo: Amnesty Press

”There was an Ossetian woman who had a photo of a boy in uniform in her purse. I asked about it. Her son was a soldier in the war. It is not easy to talk with the other side, to sit down with them. But we must learn to listen to each other,” says Manana Tarashvili.

Both organisations keep coming back to what is most important: to build trust anew between people. They do not bother with questions that they cannot resolve, but instead concentrate on nurturing good relations between each other instead.

”We know that there are painful issues. We try not to bring these up. We are tolerant and we ignore certain issues. We know that it is painful. We don’t talk about territory and personal status. We talk about our common history. We build trust, positive relationships. We get to know each other so that we can become more forgiving,” says activist Tina Kvaginidze.

In the political arena, however, the reverse is true: status is the only issue that matters, and very little is said about how things can be made better for the citizens in the meantime. The strategy employed by the women’s organisations is to work step-by-step, since the political context prevents any other approach. The organisations are working to spread their way of working to the rest of the country. They have had meetings with other organisations that are working with internal refugees in other locations in Georgia. In South Ossetia, this sort of cooperation is less popular but has begun to get more and more support from the public.

”Women can contribute to peace by involving more women in the work of peacebuilding and in building networks and peace movements. It is a laborious process and it takes time, but it is the only truly productive way,” says Lira Tskhovrebova from the *Association of Women of South Ossetia for Democracy and Human Rights* via e-mail from Tskhinvali.

No women from Georgia or South Ossetia to date have participated in any of the official peace talks that have been held – with the exception of the former Georgian Foreign Minister and Speaker of the parliament. There are very few women in any decision-making positions in each of these communities. A review of the international players in the conflict area shows that women are not represented to any great extent in for example the European Union Monitoring Mission.[16]

Lira Tskhovrebova has her priorities clear if she should ever get the chance to be involved in the peace negotiations:

”I would push the importance of repairing relationships and trust between people, and love and respect, and the goodwill we once had. Precisely in that order,” she says.

Meanwhile, they continue to meet, and to strengthen and educate more women.

”Our courses should be reaching out to thousands, not hundreds, of women. Clearly, this must be done with great caution, in small groups. People are afraid. But if we don’t re-establish trust, we cannot move on,” says Tina Kvaginidze.

Makvala Berishvili, who is sitting beside her, agrees:

”When the number of educated women reaches a certain tipping point, we will then have the tools and capacity to compel the government to listen to us,” she says.

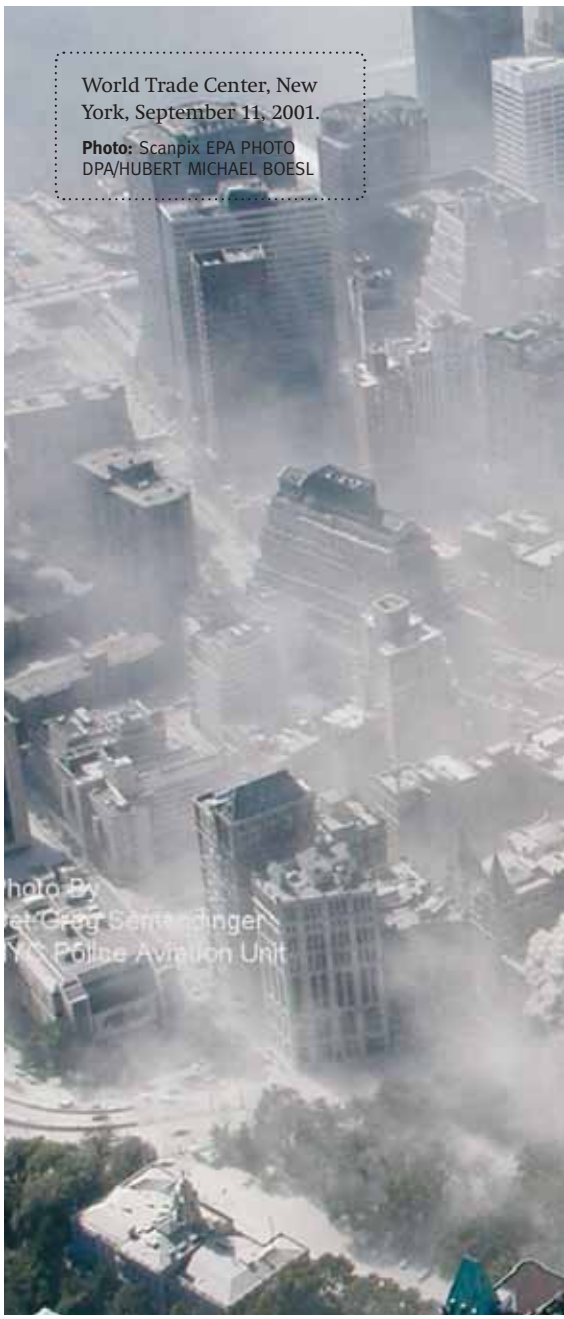
On 26 August 2008, Russia recognised South Ossetia as an independent State, and since then the region has had a *de facto* government and President. Georgia, however, continues to claim the region as part of Georgian territory. ■

Giorgian and Ossetian women meet in Baku, Azerbajdzjan.

Photo: Kvinna till Kvinna/Annika Karlsson

The war on terror – a setback for human security

As a result of the acts of terrorism on September 11, 2001, the general view of security was changed at one fell swoop. Then US President George W. Bush declared a war on terrorism – something that would come to have enormous consequences globally.



World Trade Center, New York, September 11, 2001.

Photo: Scanpix EPA PHOTO DPA/HUBERT MICHAEL BOESL

Human rights and human security were relegated to the background as everything was focused on waging this 'war on terrorism'. Former UN Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, stresses that if the acts of terrorism on September 11 had been viewed as crimes against humanity instead of as a territorial and national threat, then the object would have been to capture the individuals responsible for these deeds instead of attacking Afghanistan as a whole.[17] This view might have meant that military solutions would not have reigned supreme, and that democracy and human security would have been valued more highly.

The shock that resonated around the world from the acts of terrorism on September 11, 2001 united the international community, and global terrorism was seen as a common challenge that demanded a unified response.[18] The response that the international community arrived at was to support the USA's military invasion of Afghanistan in the hunt for Osama bin Laden and *al-Qaida*. Military actions are unequivocal and demonstrate resoluteness, which may be an explanation as to why the US Administration and many

Olfat Mahmoud, leader of the Palestinian Women's Humanitarian Organization, PWHO

Photo: Kvinna till Kvinna/ Saba Nowzari

Conflicts, lack of education, human rights violations – all this increases terrorism. The only way to stop this is to look at human security. I think terrorism is more related to lack of human security than to weak or failed states. It is not that difficult.[20]

Olfat Mahmoud, leader of the Palestinian Women's Humanitarian Organization (PWHO) in Lebanon.

other Western countries acted militarily rather than make use of legal and diplomatic means to capture the perpetrators. Professor of the History of War, Michael Howard, is of the view that terrorists have won an important battle when their attacks provoke the use of armed force and assaults on them, and that by declaring a war on terrorism, terrorists are endowed with both status and dignity because they are perceived as the enemy in a war.[19] A status that they would not have if they are deemed and seen as criminals.

There has been a steady decline in the number of armed conflicts in the world since 1990, but the big wars we have seen during the past decade are almost all related to international terrorism.[21] The so-called 'war on terror' has legitimised violence as a conflict resolution method. It has also reinforced the traditional view of security, with military actions and the nation as the object in need of protection. Women's organisations from around the world bear witness to how militarisation is generating a climate that strengthens traditional gender stereotypes regarding what is perceived as masculine and feminine, making efforts to increase gender equality more difficult. The masculine stereotype maintains a view of men as warriors and women as victims to be protected. The protective man's task is to fight and sacrifice himself for his family in order to protect them from external threats. An effect of the war on terrorism has been that women and marginalised groups, as well as people who challenge

or fall outside the frameworks, have become targets – just because they do not fit the stereotypical norms.[22]

In 2006, the UN issued a P lan of Action to reduce the spread of terrorism. This Plan of Action is historic in that the UN Member States have never before successfully agreed on a plan of action to counter terrorism. The foundation of the Plan of Action was that human rights and international humanitarian law must apply even when implementing measures to counter terrorism.[24] It stresses that you cannot counter terrorism unless the conditions that are conducive to the spread of terrorism are addressed, such as social, economic and political marginalisation, and prolonged and unresolved conflicts. However, the Plan of Action – and counter-terrorism in general – has been criticised for its lack of gender awareness.

Since the "war on terrorism" began our images of men and women, as warriors and victims, have become more rigid.[23]

Professor in International Relations, Ann J. Tickner

COUNTER-TERRORISM AFFLICTS WOMEN

A lot of attention has been focused on how the war on terror has impacted on human rights globally. That it has had specific consequences for women's human rights, however, has not been made visible – a fact that is confirmed by the UN's former Special Rapporteur on human rights and counter-terrorism Martin Scheinin, among others.[25] Those who have been subjected to gender-based violence are often pressed between being targets for terrorist groups and becoming the victims of State anti-terrorist measures. Scheinin's view too is that women's human rights are sold out to appease extremist groups or terrorists. Two examples that can be mentioned are that women in Algeria have been arrested as suspected terrorists after having reported sexual violence; and that the Somali government is not working to strengthen women's rights for fear of alienating conservative forces in the country.[26]

When the situation for women and human rights has been on the agenda, the international community has sent mixed messages. On the one hand, women's rights have been used to legitimise military action, as in the case of Afghanistan, while at the same time these rights have been negotiable, as in the case of Iraq. The attack on Iraq in 2003, which was supposed to result in greater freedom for the people, had the effect of fundamentalist groups acquiring greater power and influence in parts of Iraq, and women's human rights and freedom of movement being curtailed drastically. Through a nationwide campaign, and with the help of international pressure, Iraqi women pushed for and succeeded in getting the resolution that placed family law under the religious courts abolished. However, international support did not follow through all the way, and women's human rights were eventually negotiated away. The women's organisations were not successful in removing Article 41 of the Constitution, adopted in 2005. Under Article 41, Iraqi citizens can choose between the religious or secular courts when it comes to family law issues and how conflicts between Muslims, Christians and Jews are to be resolved – a fact that puts women in a poorer initial position. Organisations in Iraq tell how Article 41 has had direct consequences for their work with women's rights, including their work to counter men's violence against women. The Iraqi human rights activist Hanaa Edwar points out that there is no general agreement either within or between groups when it comes to family law cases. She claims furthermore that Article 41 fosters sectarianism and tensions between groups in Iraq, and stresses that it is not just a question of women's rights but of national security.[27] That women's rights are negotiated away

A demonstration in Lahore against violence against women, November 20, 2010.

Photo: AFP Photo / Arif ALI

is motivated by the view that there are cultural aspects that must be taken into consideration, or women's human rights are something that has to be postponed to a later stage.

War and armed conflict can be seen as instigators of religious fundamentalism while fundamentalist politics often results in war. Religious fundamentalism is a global phenomenon and can be linked to virtually all the world religions, and there is much to indicate that it is counter-terrorism that has strengthened fundamentalist groups. This has negatively impacted on women's rights, since women's freedom of movement is often circumscribed, their lives become more regulated and their rights are ignored. Thus, a conclusion that can be drawn is that women risk ending up squeezed between terrorists on the one hand and State counter-terrorism measures on the other.

ROOM FOR CIVIL SOCIETY IS SHRINKING

Civil society is comprised of different types of groups with a variety of different agendas. Some of these groups are undemocratic and discriminate against other groups. However, being able to organise in groups must be a central part of a living democracy. Martin Scheinin is critical of how the fight against terrorism has been conducted, and has expressed fears about how measures to counter terrorism are affecting civil society. He stresses the necessity of keeping to already established norms and regulatory frameworks such as conventions on human rights and national constitutions and laws.[28] If the established regulatory frameworks are retained, it is more difficult to arbitrarily single out and attack women's organisations and groups working for human rights, for example.

The tangible, and in many cases, dire effects on women's organisations and other civil society organisations (CSOs) come from the new control and surveillance opportunities created by the so-called 'war on terror'. In order to prevent organisations from financing terrorism, donors and governments want them to register themselves, their members are investigated and the flow of money to and from the organisations is scrutinised.[29] In addition, the intelligence agencies of many countries work together and share information, often entirely without any form of security policy.[30] If this type of information falls into the wrong hands, it can have devastating consequences for activists and organisations. In addition, authoritarian regimes now have access to a permitted and highly effective tool with which to silence opposition groups and individuals that they find inconvenient. For example, regimes have justified the arrest and harassment of women's human rights activists by claiming that they have terrorist connections, and civil society organisations have been called terrorist organisations for having criticised authoritarian regimes.[31]

The lack of a common definition of terrorism, and the question of who has the right to determine who is a terrorist, thus results in violations of human rights and undermines human security.[32] For instance in the Philippines and Sri Lanka, these countries' leaders have made use of broad definitions of terrorism in order to punish organisations working for gender equality and women's human rights.[33]

Since Barack Obama became President, the US Administration has more clearly linked women's rights to security policy. Supporting women's human rights is seen today as an important part of countering extremism and terrorism. What long term consequences this will have for women in terms of politics in practice remains to be seen.

Civil society and civilians have played and continue to play an important long term role in lessening the chances for terrorism to gain a foothold. Civil society organisations, including women's rights organisations, are important actors in working for justice, and against discrimination, violations of human rights, corruption and political and economic marginalisation. These are all factors that the UN has identified as conducive to the growth of terrorism.[35] To reduce the spread of terrorism, local ownership is important and the participation of civil society is essential. Local ownership, that is, local support at all levels, generates long-term results, since local experience is utilised, networks are created and knowledge and information is spread.

It could be argued that the 'war on terror' has been conducive to the growth of fundamentalist forces and consequently terrorism, which in plain language means that the measures to counter terrorism have turned out to be counter-productive. At the same time, in their eagerness to combat terrorism, governments have pulled the rug from under actors in civil society who, through their work in fighting discrimination and to eradicate poverty, have been providing alternatives for people who otherwise risk being recruited to terrorist groups. State priorities in countering terrorism and the fact that dictators and regimes that violate human rights have become important and legitimate collaborators raises the question: whose security are we trying to maintain? ■

The call for a war on terror was a call to arms and he continued: Terrorists succeed when they render countries fearful and vindictive; when they sow division and animosity; when they force countries to respond with violence and repression.[34]

Former UK Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, David Milliband.

Increased militarisation

The costs of the war on terror have not been investigated and debated to a sufficient extent. Neither have the possible advantages or benefits of this war been investigated and placed in relation to other methods of solving the problem of terrorism.

Military actions are expensive, and there are no studies that show that terrorism is reduced when it is responded to with military violence. It is more probable that terrorism spreads and insecurity increases when military action is prioritised.[36] Before the war in Iraq, that country was responsible for 7 per cent of all terrorist attacks in the world. 2007 the same figure has risen to 69 per cent.[37]

The number of armed conflicts in the world has declined since the 1990s, but during the same period military costs and weapons sales have risen. The military actions in Afghanistan and Iraq are primarily responsible for the rise in costs and weapons sales. In 2010, the total cost of the world's military expenditure, which is largely financed by the taxpayers of various countries, came to USD 1,630 billion, representing an increase of 50.3 per cent since the year 2000.[38] The global financial crisis that began in 2008 has not had any impact on this steady rise, despite the fact that all over the world this crisis has resulted in huge cuts in spending in areas such as health and medical care, care of the elderly and education. Military armament costs globally on average amount to just on 4 billion USD per day.

British soldiers at a military exercise in Kuwait before the Iraq war, Mars 2003.

Photo: AP Photo/Gaz Armes, POOL/Scanpix

The five permanent members of the UN Security Council are the countries that spend the most on weapons. In other words, these countries are responsible for 76 per cent of the world's weapons exports.[39]

In Europe the military expenditure fell 2.8 per cent between 2009 and 2010. But between the years 2000 and 2008, Europe has increased its military expenditure by 16 per cent.[40] This is due mainly to the fact that many EU Member States are engaged in military actions in Afghanistan. As a consequence of this, the EU's formerly so successful role as a third party in conflicts has been diminished. Third party means here to act as an intermediary between the warring parties, which the EU has continued to do only sporadically in the 2000s.[41] Civilian crisis management could have been an arena for increased peace-building for the EU. [42] But instead the significant military involvement of EU Member States in Afghanistan risks being an obstacle to other small-scale interventions, where the EU's capacity as a civilian crisis manager could have been utilised. In other words, despite the fact that the EU has been highly successful in the past as a third-party mediator, these days this is not an area in which the EU is investing its resources.

One year's military spending

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, (WILPF), has looked at what one year of the world's military expenditure could amount to.

- 1 year's military expenditure would cover 700 years of the UN's regular budget.
- 1 year's military expenditure would be enough for UN Women, the new UN unit for women's rights, for 2,928 years.
- 1 year's military expenditure would be enough for 43 years of costs so that all would have access to sexual and reproductive health care and information.[46]

Sweden has a stated ambition to increase its participation in International peacekeeping missions. The military costs of these missions have gradually increased and the State budget allocates SEK 2 billion annually to these. According to the audit by the Swedish National Audit Office (Riksrevisionen), this is not the full story. These costs are reported in several places, so it is difficult to get a complete picture of the costs involved, and the Swedish National Audit Office is of the view that the costs are many billions higher in reality. In addition, the audit points out that there are no explicit goals for what this money is to achieve in these international missions.[43] In other words, there are no requirements to achieve specific results, such as security and stability, for example.

REDISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES

These military costs divert resources that could be directed towards basic threats to human security such as poverty, disease and climate change – problems that something could be done about if funds were allocated. According to the World Bank, it would cost between USD 40 and 60 billion per year (from 2002 to 2015) to achieve the *Millennium Development Goals* and thus halve the number of people living in poverty in the world.[44]

Civil society is the loser when military expenditure rises. For a society to be stable, resources need to be redistributed and priorities changed. The causes of today's conflicts include poverty, lack of water, battles over access to natural resources and violations of human rights.[45] In order to counter these threats, resources are needed. But the international community also needs not only to acknowledge that these factors constitute a threat to peace and security, but also that it realises that measures other than military measures are required to solve the problems.

The UNDP has calculated that the cost of a tank could vaccinate 4 million children and the price of a Mirage

Iraqi soldiers collect weapons.

Photo: SCANPIX/AP/Khalid Mohammed

Private security company Blackwater, in Iraq 2004.

Photo: SCANPIX/AP, Gervasio Sanchez

Swedish minister of Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen and German minister of Foreign Affairs Guido Westerwelle are discussing the military operation in Libya at an informal meeting of NATO, Berlin 2011.

Photo: Scanpix/AFP/JOHN MACDOUGALL

2000-5 fighter plane could pay for one year's schooling for 3 million children.[47] In a report, the UNDP points out that military investments made in poorer countries hold up vital investments in clean water and sanitation. Pakistan is mentioned in particular, since this country invests 47 times more money in the military than in water and sanitation, while 118,000 people die annually from diarrhoea in the country.[48]

Military actions are expensive. In the broader perspective, the costs of using military means for conflict resolution are much higher than actual figures. If the costs of medical care and rehabilitation for people injured in conflicts were included in the calculations, the figures would be quite different. The costs of disarmament and the collection of weapons, the costs of clearing land mines, the costs of rehabilitating child soldiers to a normal life and the costs of reconstructing infrastructure are not included in the figures for military expenditure.

The costs of military actions are not just a matter of money. The Platform for Action from the *UN's Fourth World Conference on Women* in Beijing expressed clearly already in 1995 that military expenditure and the spread of weapons afflicts women, in particular women living in poverty, the hardest.[49] Weapons such as land mines tend to be left behind even after the conflict is over. The costs are calculated in the costs of medical care, lives lost, loss of income and personal trauma. Small arms also tend to be left behind after a conflict has concluded. The existence of small arms has a profound impact on how societies regenerate themselves after a conflict, since the presence of these weapons has a negative impact on social structures.[50] The mental and physical injuries that this type of weapon inflicts heal slowly and demand a great deal of professional help. This is financially burdensome not only for the individuals but also for civil society, since it makes it difficult to re-establish a stable society. There are around 900 million small arms and light weaponry in circulation in the world. Around 8 million new weapons are produced every year, while only around 800,000 are destroyed yearly.[51] One effect of this enormous number of weapons being in circulation is that deadly violence in domestic relationships is on the rise.

Military expenditure is rarely evaluated. Considering the fact that the war on terror has not reduced the incidence of terrorism, the efficiency of the money invested in military equipment and military action ought to be called into question. Dr Carol Cohn on Gender, Security and Human Rights, describes the problems thus: "The efficiency of violence is consistently over-estimated, while its costs are undercounted".[52] ■

Profitable security companies

Many have derived financial gain from the war on terror. In the wake of the privatisation of the military, private security companies and contractors have become more and more common in wars and armed conflicts, and this has shown itself to be a lucrative industry. Many security companies have made millions in Iraq in recent years, for example.[53] It has also been highly profitable for contractors who work with logistics and ground services in Iraq. And as journalist Jeremy Scahill concludes, the employees of these contractors are protected by private security companies paid for by the US government, which means that the money is being channelled less and less to the reconstruction works for which it was intended.[54]

These private security companies are dependent on logistic companies, who are dependent on the protection that the security companies can provide.
A co-dependence that it is advantageous for both parties to maintain.

Violence and exclusion – threats to half of humanity

The violence of men and exclusion from decision-making arenas are among the biggest threats to security facing women today according to women's organisations all over the world.

This violence and exclusion are obstacles in the way of women's human rights being fully respected, and thus undermine the foundations for justice and democratic societies, and for economic development.

According to the UN Security Council, sexual violence is a threat to international peace and security.[55] Women and girls are the main targets of sexual violence and it is used as a weapon and a conscious strategy of war in armed conflicts. *UNSCR 1820*, which was adopted in 2008, focuses on sexual violence in armed conflicts, and that sexual violence crimes should be excluded from amnesty provisions in the context of conflict resolution processes, and that perpetrators must be brought to justice. To further strengthen work in this area, the Security Council adopted *Resolution 1960* in 2010, which focuses on the perpetrators and provides concrete means for working to end impunity in such cases.

Sexual violence is a weapon of war that has long-term destructive effects on both individuals and societies. It is traumatic and destroys family structures. Other effects are that women who are victims of sexual violence are stigmatised, with many being rejected by their families and additionally suffering from sexually transmitted diseases. In armed conflict where sexual violence is used as a weapon, women's marginalisation is often increased in the wake of the conflict, and this has a negative impact on their security and undermines their social status.[56] When women's voices are not heard, close to half the population's needs are ignored.

It has been shown that in armed conflict where sexual violence is used as a weapon, the violence spills over into the civil sphere, both because the soldiers take this behaviour back with them when they return to civilian life, and because the behaviour has been sanctioned as the norm and thus is not perceived as a problem. A report from *Oxfam* from 2010 shows this in detail. Civilians have taken on military and paramilitary behaviour patterns. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), which the report describes, there are huge problems with the generations that have grown up and are growing up with violence as the norm – in particular, sexual violence.[57] In May 2011, a new study was published claiming that 1100 women are raped every day in DRC.[58] The figures were immediately and vigorously debated, but irrespective of the statistics, it is clear beyond reasonable doubt that security for women in the Eastern DRC is virtually non-existent.

Another form of violence is the abortion of female foetuses and the murder of newborn baby girls. In 1990, it was estimated that humanity is missing over 100 million women.[59] The figure has increased since that time. By appropriating women's bodies and their wombs, you effectively control reproduction, and foetal diagnostics that provide the opportunity to determine the sex of the unborn child have meant that in 2010,

Nadja Duhacek and Armela Bejko are protesting against men's violence against women, Nis, Serbien.

Photo: Kvinna till Kvinna

120 boys were born for every 100 girls in parts of India and China.[60] Boys are prioritised over girls for many reasons. In many societies, it is the sons who inherit land, but they are also prioritised because boys give the family higher status and more income, since it is often the woman's family who must pay a dowry. Whatever the causes, the violence against women is allowed to continue.

Sexual violence is not the only form of violence facing women. The *UNFPA* has shown that throughout the world, one in three women has been subjected to violence and the perpetrator in most instances is someone known to her – her husband or some other male member of her family.[61] Researchers have pointed to a link between a country's level of family-related violence and its level of military conflict management.[62] It is more likely that societies with higher levels of violence in domestic relationships will resolve conflicts with violence even at the State level, than societies that have lower levels of domestic violence. This link may be somewhat easier to see from the opposite perspective, namely, that high levels of violent conflict resolution in a society sanction violence in domestic relationships. This is in part due to the fact that the violence is legitimised, and in part, as we have seen, because soldiers bring back with them from the front a propensity for violent behaviour into the civil and private sphere. The effect of this is that the level of aggression remains high even after the war or armed conflict is over.

It has been suggested that a high level of gender equality correlates with a low level of military solutions to international disputes. Mary Caprioli, a researcher in conflict and security, has drawn the conclusion in a study that a State's level of military action falls as gender equality increases. Some of the parameters used to measure gender equality in the study were how long women had had the right to vote in the country, the proportion of women in parliament and in the paid workforce, the birth rate and access to reproductive health care.[63]

WOMEN PROTECTING WOMEN

Women's rights organisations are extraordinarily important in giving women protection; not only in purely physical terms in the form of safe houses, but also by drawing attention to women's needs and rights. Women's rights activists defy the norms on a daily basis and challenge the prevailing power structures by demanding human rights for women. That women's rights organisations are often the target of threats and harassment is evident in a study conducted by *The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation* in collaboration with *Frontline Human Rights Defenders and Urgent Action Fund*. Because activists often question the traditional female role, they are subject to threats and harassment not only from repressive regimes and religious leaders, but also from their own family members. This can range from complaints that they are not keeping up with the household chores to rape and being rejected by their families.

An effective hindrance for women activists in their work is isolation. This is an effective method because women are very dependent on the support of their local communities. This can be done in a number of different ways: their opportunities for receiving finan-

Women on boards

A study of trade and industry has shown that when there are women on company boards and in corporate management, performance improves. If at least 30 per cent of board members and the corporate management team are women, companies are more successful, according to their own criteria.[68] The study looked at primarily large corporations in Europe, America and Asia and analysed 58,240 responses from 101 private and public enterprises operating in areas ranging from energy distribution to financial institutions.

cial assistance are impeded, they are cut off from national and international networks that would be able to provide them with support, their freedom of movement is circumscribed, or they are criminalised. Campaigns to spread libel and rumour are initiated which call into question their honour. In addition to all of this is the fear of sexual violence, which is ubiquitous among activists. Rape of themselves or those close to them such as their daughters and sisters is used as a means of punishing them and as a weapon to stop their work. But the single biggest threat to defenders of women's rights is the lack of acknowledgement of the violence. Outrages are concealed in the 'generally accepted violence against women' and are seldom seen as violence that directly targets human rights activists or as a security issue.

Working for women's human rights is generally not seen as part of the "real" work of protecting, respecting and promoting human rights.

SECURITY DEMANDS PARTICIPATION

Men's violence towards women is a manifestation of a lack of gender equality. It undermines women's social status and limits their opportunities for inclusion and participation in public and political life. The consequence of this is that women end up with only a marginal influence in the life of their societies and even fewer opportunities to influence what issues are taken up on the agenda. In a report from the latter half of 2006, the UN Secretary-General identifies violence as the most serious expression of a lack of equality between the sexes – and that which perpetuates gender stereotypes.[65]

The lack of gender equality is particularly telling in the over-representation of men in the parliaments of the world. Only 25 of the world's 186 countries have 30 per cent or more women representatives in their parliaments. Nine countries have zero per cent and 42 countries have between one and ten per cent women in their parliaments.[66] Rwanda has the highest proportion of women in its parliament in the world after a quota system was introduced to guarantee that women were represented in decision-making bodies. This has resulted in Rwanda having 48.8 per cent women in its parliament.[67] The quota system in Rwanda is linked to work to increase gender equality, to educate people, to ensure that public administration remains transparent, and that civil society and the State work together.

Asuda is The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation's partnerorganisation in Kurdistan, Iraq. They provide a hotline, sheltered accommodation and psychological and legal support to women subjected to violence.
Photo: Kvinna till Kvinna

Because so few women participate in decision-making, and because men have inadequate knowledge of the role that women's human rights play in society as a whole, women's rights are rendered negotiable or made invisible. An example is Libya, where in 2011 the UN Security Council adopted *Resolutions 1970* and *1973* as part of its efforts to protect the civilian population there. But although the Security Council itself has emphasised that sexual violence in armed conflict is a serious threat to security in a number of its resolutions in recent years, there are no actual references to sexual violence in either of these two *Resolutions 1970* or *1973*.[69] Because sexual violence is not mentioned, there is an overhanging risk that sexual violence has been pushed down on the security policy agenda, which will have consequences for future prioritisations with respect to the

international community's interventions in Libya. It also means that there is a risk that impunity for such crimes will not end, and that rape and sexual violence will, by default, be sanctioned again.

A clear example of how women's human rights can become negotiable was the USA's turnaround after the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. Before the invasion, the USA's then Minister of Foreign Affairs Colin Powell assured the international community that the rights of Afghan women would not be subject to negotiation. Only a few weeks later, the US Administration explained that they did not want to force their own values on either the Afghan people or the Taliban, and made it clear that there were now other priorities that were more important.[70] Because the US Administration did not want to aggravate the Taliban and other conservative forces, women's rights were sold out. The exclusion of Afghanistan's women has continued. During the *London Conference on Afghanistan* in January 2010 on Afghanistan's democratisation, only one Afghan woman was included, and gender-related issues were almost entirely invisible.[71] In this respect, the *Afghan National Consultative* Peace Jirga in June 2010 was somewhat better. Thanks to the active lobbying of women's organisations to increase women's participation, 400 of the 1600 delegates were women.[72]

Protesters at the Tahir Square, Cairo, Egypt 2011.
Photo: AP Photo/Khalil Hamra

For the most part, it has been male experts from the West who have said that women cannot sit at the negotiation table in Afghanistan. The reason that has been given is that if women were allowed, the Taliban would then not sit down at the negotiation table. However, as author Ann Jones has stated: "Taliban, 'ex-Taliban', and Taliban sympathizers sit down with women every day in the Afghan Parliament (...)".[73] Jones concludes that it is remarkable that it is the male experts from the West who have excluded Afghan women, and not, as would be easy to believe, the Taliban. Even more remarkable is that these experts listen to the most extreme Taliban, thereby legitimising their right to exclude over half of Af-

ghanistan's population. Cultural norms are frequently cited by experts from the West as arguments for not including women, along with the claim that it is not possible to influence who the local parties choose to include in their delegations.[74] The consequence of this is that the international community and Western experts hand power to those who are in fact not interested in building peace.

A NEW SET OF EARLY WARNINGS

In the past 90 years, more women and girls have died because of their gender than all war related deaths in all the wars that were fought in the 20th century.[75] In other words, it can be said that an incessant, low-intensity war is being waged on women at the peripheries of the main security policy debate. At the same time as this violence is permitted to go on, women are discriminated against and excluded from decision-making, which helps to explain why issues relating to women's security do not get onto the agenda. If the same violence and exclusion had been directed towards an ethnic group, in all likelihood it would have occasioned quite different reactions within the international community.

As has been mentioned previously, the UN claims that threats to human security such as poverty, social and economic inequalities, and a lack of democracy can give rise to war and armed conflict. Following from this, both the exclusion of and violence against women should be classified as threats to peace and security. Preventing conflict and instability thus needs politicians, security experts and the international community to develop new early warning signs in order to be able to assess the security situation accurately.

Security threats targeting women can be indicators of future conflict and thus can be used as early warnings of such. If gender-based violence were to be included in the list of early warnings of armed conflict, increased violence against women would become something that the international community is forced to react to.[76] The long-term exclusion of women from the political process, a dramatic drop in women's representation, men only in the public sphere, economic discrimination and differences between men's and women's education levels and positions in working life can be examples of early warnings. The international community ought also to be alert to gradual changes in a society from being open and tolerant to closed and intolerant, and in particular to those changes that result in more restrictive laws and regulations related to women.

Women's security will never be on the agenda while ever women's human rights and women's perspectives continue to be negotiated away or postponed into the future, and this impacts the possibility of sustainable peace. In order to build stable societies, women need to participate in the life of their societies and in peace processes. In order to participate, there must be conditions that are conducive to their participation, and security for women must be valued more highly than it is today. ■

Examples of indicators that should be seen as early warnings of armed conflict:

- A marked increase in domestic violence against women.
- Rising aggression in the society in general.
- Large groups of unemployed young men roaming the streets.
- Rising intolerance for men who do not fit the stereotypical male 'ideal'.
- A rise in gang violence against men who belong to out-groups or those who refuse to take up arms.
- A rise in weapons in circulation.
- Media scapegoating of women accusing them of political or cultural betrayal.
- Growth of fundamentalism.
- Sex-specific refugee migrations. [77]

Women's participation indispensable for peace and democracy

That women are important as actors for development, democracy and peace is a well-known fact within the international community. Women are the fastest growing economic force in many regions today.

In development cooperation it has become clear that it is best and most efficient to invest in women, since this also benefits families and society as a whole. This applies in particular when a society needs reconstruction in the wake of an armed conflict. *UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1888* and *1889* all stress the importance of women's participation in the various parts of peace processes and in the phases of reconstruction. Women are crucial partners in creating the conditions for sustainable peace: economic recovery, social cohesion and political legitimacy. The presence of women is important because it increases the legitimacy and local ownership of the peace process. A bigger proportion of the population is involved and more perspectives are integrated into the process. In this way too, a more comprehensive understanding of the causes of the conflict is gained, along with insight into alternative methods of conflict resolution.[78]

But in spite of all this experience and research, in many parts of the world, women remain excluded from these arenas. Gender researcher at *Sweden's National Defence College* in Stockholm, Sophia Ivarsson expresses the problem in the following way: "The subtle, silent, well-meaning disinterest is the biggest obstacle. There are no ongoing negotiations, therefore nothing happens. Processes of change demand negotiation and debate. But processes of change are difficult. That's why it ends up being business as usual. This is remarkable. We do as we've always done. In which case things remain as they always have."[79]

Excluding women is something that goes on all the time. For example, when what came to be called the Arab Spring

Afghan parliamentarians vote, Kabul, January 2011.
Photo: SCANPIX EPA/S. SABAWOON

began in North Africa and parts of the Middle East in 2011, women in Egypt were very much involved and active in the fall of President Hosni Mubarak. But in the provisional constitution adopted in March 2011, there were no references to gender equality or to women's human rights. One of the women activists said the following to Catherine Ashton, the High Representative for the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy: "The men were eager enough to have me along when we were demanding that Mubarak must resign. But now that he is gone, they want me to go home."[80] Another example from North Africa is *Libya's National Transitional Council*, which was appointed in spring 2011. Men hold 38 of the 40 positions that the Council has so far appointed.[81] And in spite of the unanimous adoption of *Resolution 1325* by the UN Security Council in 2000, it was possible for the Middle East Quartet, (the UN, the EU, the USA and Russia), who were involved in the mediation between Israel and Palestine, to say: "Our mandate does not cover issues related to women."[82]

In 2009, *UNIFEM* conducted a survey of women's participation in peace negotiations which showed that of the 21 peace processes begun since 1992, only 2.4 per cent of the signatories to the final peace agreements were women. The same study also showed that only 5.9 per cent of those present during the peace negotiations were women.[83]

It is problematic that the international community implements its own agreements only sporadically. It took exactly 10 years from the time that *Resolution 1325* was adopted before a

UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Margot Wallström.

Photo: SCANPIX/ AFP PHOTO GWENN DUBOURTHOUMIEU

woman was appointed as an EU Special Representative.[84] During this ten-year period, 20 such appointments were made. In the *EU's External Action Service*, there are 84 positions at senior level. Of these, 54 are held by men, 16 by women and 14 are vacant.[85] These figures are from a Statement from February 2011.

The UN has never appointed a female chief negotiator for peace negotiations and only a few times appointed female negotiators at all. After the adoption of *Resolution 1325* in 2000 and until 2008, there were no female UN negotiators at all. In 2008, there were female negotiators included in three of the five peace negotiations, but male negotiators held between 70 and 80 per cent of the negotiator positions.[86] Margot Wallström, the UN's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, has proposed a quota system to address the low percentages of women in peace negotiations, and in addition she has raised the question of a potential prohibition on single gender delegations in peace negotiations on several occasions.[87]

WOMEN AS ACTORS FOR PEACE

An argument that is often touted to exclude women is that there are no women available, which in principle is never true. But since women are kept out of decision-making fora and power hierarchies, they choose other routes by which to exert their influence. Many women organise themselves in civil society and it is there that you will find them. Women's organisations have other networks and thus other areas of influence than the official power structures and they often reach out broadly within their immediate surroundings. They create meeting places, lobby politicians, and initiate dialogue and negotiate across the borders of conflicts. Political leaders often do not comprehend the significance of civil society, of women's circumstances and the important roles that women play in peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction. Civil society is broad and groups, organisations and activists within it are driven by a range of forces and agendas, not all of which are peaceful. But this is not an argument for excluding civilian groups and organisations that are working for democracy and human rights from peace talks and decisions on post-conflict reconstruction.

An example of how women activists are working to counter violent solutions comes from Iraq. In the wake of the Arab Spring in 2011, protests also flared up in the northern parts of Iraq. In the city of Suleimania, hundreds of demonstrators streamed into the central parts of the city to show their solidarity with the Tunisians and Egyptians, and to demand reforms and an end to corruption in Iraqi Kurdistan. The protests rapidly became violent and the Kurdish military responded to protesters who threw stones with live ammunition, killing a number of people. When the violence escalated, women activists joined together and created the Suleimania's Women's Group which, through meetings and actions, demanded dialogue and an end to the violence. In 2011, the parties will be sit-

ting down together to hold a dialogue, which is largely the result of the pressure applied by *Suleimania's Women's Group* and other actors who protested against the violence. The activists have continued their work and during spring 2011, the women's organisation *Asuda* together with other organisations and activists began a peace campaign to put pressure on the warring parties to build peace in the region. They stress that a sustainable peace requires agreements that address the interests of the population and come to grips with the fundamental causes of the conflict.

A study conducted by *The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation* of more than 10 years of work for peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina provides additional examples. Many organisations tell about how they began to organise themselves in order to be able to offer legal aid, for example, to women who had fled and needed new identification papers. In their conversations with these women, a new problem emerged: that so many of them had been subjected to domestic violence. In their attempts to help, the organisations found themselves compelled to learn more. In addition, they noted the holes in the legislation and started lobbying in order to achieve better legal protection for women. In their lobbying activities, they noted that female politicians found it easier to understand the needs, but also that there were far too few women in political assemblies. As a consequence, they began working to get more women to vote and more women to stand as candidates for political positions. When eventually the legislation was improved, the women activists continued to educate social welfare workers and the police in how to deal with cases where women had been subjected to violence.[88]

There is a strong link between the role of civil society in peace negotiations and successful peace-building. If civil society actively participates in the negotiations, the resulting peace is more sustainable. But if civil society is excluded from the peace process, the peace negotiated is undermined, which a study from 2008 shows clearly.[89] In four of the 25 peace negotiations examined in the study, civilian groups sat at the negotiating table and the subsequent peace resulting from these four negotiations has been sustained. Women participated actively, both directly at the negotiating table and through indirect effects and influencing the negotiations. Where civilian groups were not included, the conflict flared up again in nine out of 13 cases. In three of these 13 cases, the countries were already on the verge of conflict and the functions of society had ceased to operate. In only one case was the peace sustained. Even in cases where civil society did not have any places directly at the negotiating table, but were still permitted to have an influence, the resulting peace was more sustainable.[90] In that civil society is included in peace negotiations, the monopoly on power exerted by the warring parties in the conflict is called into question. If the peace negotiations include only the warring parties, the risk is great that violence is again seen as a solution when the negotiations run up against problems.

"…the international community supported the war lords and nationalist parties. I don't know how they expected that those who had started the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina would build peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It's idiotic. But that's what they did."[97]

Mara Radovanovic from the organisation Lara in Bijeljina, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The civilian population suffers the most when there is armed conflict. It ought to be obvious that those worst affected by a conflict are also those who should have a given place at the peace negotiations and in addition set the tone dur-

Martti Ahtisaari

Photo: Scanpix/REUTERS/Adam Hunger

"... peace negotiations are often conducted by a small elite. In the future we better achieve a broader participation in peace processes. Particularly, there is a need to ensure the engagement of women in all stages of a peace process." [92]

Nobel Peace Prize winner Martti Ahtisaari..

ing post-conflict reconstruction. Military and political leaders comprise only a small part of a society, but often take up an inordinate amount of room at peace negotiations. John Paul Lederach, Professor of International Peacebuilding, sees the ideal peace negotiation as a pyramid where the military and political leaders comprise the topmost section. A top that is entirely dependent on the middle section, which is comprised of representatives from the fields of education and agriculture, humanitarian organisations and academics among others, and with a base made up of local leaders, representatives of refugee camps and hospitals, etc.[91] That is, civil society must be included to build a peace that provides civilians, and thus also women, with security. Future problems and conflicts are seeded if the needs of civilians are ignored in the peace process.

Having the gender perspective included in ceasefire agreements has been demonstrated to be materially important. In a study of how *Resolution 1325* has impacted peace processes, two researchers in international law, Christine Bell and Catherine O'Rourke, concluded that what is included in a ceasefire agreement determines what is subsequently given priority.[93] If sexual violence is forbidden in the ceasefire agreement, this means that the peace agreement will be breached if sexual violence occurs. On the other hand, if sexual violence is not mentioned in the ceasefire agreement, outrages of this kind will not be viewed as a security problem. They established in their study that only 16 per cent of the studied peace agreements after 2000 contain references to women and women's rights. Their study showed that women's status in peace agreements is decisive for their future participation in political life and in the judicial system, since the peace agreement lays the foundations for and sometimes may even comprise the new constitution.[94] That women are visible in the ceasefire agreement and peace agreement thus means that the chances of achieving a sustainable peace are greater, and that women's human rights are secured in that it becomes more difficult to ignore women and women's needs in the society to be reconstructed.

WARRING PARTIES DON'T BUILD PEACE

Building peace and stable societies is thus not an imperative for the warring parties alone. After armed conflict or any other major social upheaval, final decisions are made that have long-term consequences for the country's inhabitants. In order to build long-term, peaceful solutions, broad cooperation that also includes giving space and influence to parties who were not directly involved in the conflict is essential.

Gé-Gé Katana Bukuru member of Solidarité des Femmes Activistes pour la Défense des Droits Humains, and Chantale Chinengene member of Femmes en Action pour le Développement Intégré, DRC.

Photo: Kvinna till Kvinna/Anna Lithander

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Libera, during the Africa-EU Summit in 2010.

Photo: Scanpix/EPA/MOHAMED MESSARA

Who participates in the talks and negotiations and what interests they are promoting has great significance for how the future is shaped and how the peace can be maintained.

If access to weapons and an army are the only criteria for participating in peace processes, the conflict's underlying causes along with the needs of the civilian population are ignored. When the warring parties are often those who take up the most room in the peace negotiations, this also reinforces the power structures of the conflict, which are then carried over into the reconstruction phase. This makes it virtually impossible for women to get into political parties and decision-making positions. In addition, it is common for women's confidence and legitimacy to be questioned, something that men, and even more so the warring parties, are seldom subject to.

There are many examples of peace processes where women and civil society have not participated and where the conflict remains latent. Such an example is Bosnia-Herzegovina. The peace agreement, called the *Dayton Agreement*, was signed in 1995 in Dayton. In April 2011, Valentin Inzko, High Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, warned that the situation had got to the worst point since the war ended, because ethnic tensions were still strong. All the achievements since the end of the war were at risk of being rolled back.[95] From the beginning, Bosnian women's organisations have criticised the *Dayton Agreement* on a number of points. A fundamental problem is that the peace was negotiated by the warring parties and the peace agreement effectively divided the country along the lines of the conflict, thus cementing a geographical division of the ethnic groups. No Bosnian women or representatives from civil society participated in the peace negotiations, which resulted in an agreement and a constitution without a gender perspective. The differences in the effects of the conflict on women and men, respectively, were not made visible at all. A diplomat close to the EU's then Special Representative at the peace negotiations in Dayton said in an interview some years later: "As far as I know, gender aspects were never discussed; the parties focused

Track II in Guatemala

An example of a successful Track II process was the one in Guatemala in 1996, when Luz Mendez participated in the official negotiations as the only woman and the representative for the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG). Through Luz Mendez, the women's organisations had a greater opportunity to influence the peace negotiations. A special women's section of the Assembly for Civil Society (ACS), a network of CSOs and political parties were part of the Track II process. The women's section was included so that gender equality and gender issues would be included in the peace agreement, and as its representative, Luz Mendez presented the section's proposals to the main negotiations or Track I process. Unfortunately, the peace agreement included no mechanisms for monitoring its implementation, and it was therefore never fully implemented.[100]

on letting armed hostilities conclude."[96]

Directly after the peace negotiations, women's organisations began to work actively together across the borders of the conflict, discussing how best to reconstruct schools and the judicial system among other things in order to renew trust between people and to counteract hate and suspicion. Concrete proposals were sent to the relevant decision-makers, but none of the organisations' proposals or their knowledge was ever utilised by the parties involved in the peace negotiations or by the international community.

PARALLEL PROCESSES FOR INFLUENCING PUBLIC OPINION

In the parallel processes that are termed Track II processes,[98] there are many examples of how women's organisations have made a difference. The Track II process is a process that runs in parallel with the main negotiations, or Track I process. The track II process gathers together influential members of society who are not involved in the official negotiations. They may be academics, journalists and representatives of CSOs, members of think tanks, etc. They are people who are able to approach each other in a way that does not normally exist at the main negotiations because of what are often rather deadlocked political stances. New creative solutions can be fed into the official negotiation process and those who are part of the Track II process are of great importance for information about the possible peace agreement being spread into the wider community. Since this process is open to different actors, it is a way of getting more women involved in the negotiation process.

An example is Uganda in 2006, where women's argumentation led to *Resolution 1612* concerning children and armed conflict, and *Resolution 1325*, being acknowledged and written into the ceasefire agreement. Public debate also arose concerning women's participation in the peace negotiations and a number of critical questions were raised about the roots and consequences of the conflict.[99] For the Track II process to make a difference, it is important that there are direct channels in to the official negotiation process so that the proposals developed within the Track II process can function as a guide to the main negotiations. The participants need financing, access to information about the main negotiations and the opportunity to influence the official talks. Track II representatives can also be included in the work of overseeing the implementation of the peace agreement.

There are also examples of women having influenced and participated in the peace process even outside of Track II negotiations. In Liberia, it was the women's organisations that pushed for peace by demanding that then President Charles Taylor and the rebel groups stop the war. When these negotiations were held in 2003, women barricaded themselves outside the negotiating room, forcing the negotiating parties to come to some agreements. ■

Men's competence is never questioned

Participants at the Women's Peace Coalitions Conference in Struga, Macedonia 2007.

Photo: Kvinna till Kvinna

Igballe Rogova from the Kosovo Women's Network called it historic, that first conference in Macedonian Struga where women from Kosovo and Serbia met for the first time since the war.

She remembers very well the opening of the conference hosted by the newly formed *Women's Peace Coalition.*

"The intention was that we should all say welcome together but I was asked to sit down. I was confused and a little worried, but I sat down. And then they just stood there, all the Serbian women, in front of us, and one after one they asked for forgiveness. Previously, the war had not been able to get to me, but at that point the tears came. We had longed for this, as a nation we had longed to hear someone say to us that they were sorry for what we had been subjected to, that someone would apologise."

The *Women's Peace Coalition* was formed in 2006, at the same time as the negotiations on Kosovo's political status were going on, led by UN negotiator Martti Ahtisaari. There were no women in the Kosovo delegation, and only one woman in the Serbian delegation, This was criticised by both Kosovo's women's network and the *Women in Black* network in Serbia. They decided to combine forces to put pressure on the parties participating in the negotiations. Applications were made, a strategy group was formed and plans were forged. The women wanted to use *Resolution 1325* to demand women's participation in the ongoing negotiations.

But first and foremost they wanted to re-establish and make new contacts, meet, talk about what had been, and through action demonstrate that reconciliation was possible and that people are more important than territory. The strategy group held many meetings in Belgrade and Pristina, but for the big conference planned for 60 or 70 women, Struga on the banks of Lake Ohrid in Macedonia was selected as the meeting site. Not all women in Kosovo had the old Yugoslavian passports or

Stasa Zajovic and Biljana Kovacevic in Struga, Macedonia 2007.

Photo: Kvinna till Kvinna

ID cards required to get to Serbia. It would not be entirely uncomplicated either for Serbian women to travel to Kosovo.

The Coalition included many women who knew each other well. But the vast majority were meeting for the first time. For many, it was also the first time they had spent any time with someone from 'the other side' since the war.

"I was so nervous prior to that first conference," says Igballe Rogova.

The Coalition received wide media coverage in both Kosovo and Serbia. It was presented in a positive light in Kosovo, while the Serbian press called the activists from *Women in Black* traitors to their country. When the Coalition issued a statement saying that it supported independence for Kosovo, the campaign against the

women in Serbia was intensified by both the media and the politicians. The activists were accused of subversive activities and of breaching the constitution, and in the Serbian parliament a proposal was debated to ban *Women in Black* and other organisations that expressed sympathy for Kosovo's strivings for independence.

"When we issued the statement, things went very bad for the Serbian women. So we had to be their voice. We wrote letters to the international community, to human rights organisations, to the Serbian government – yes, in fact to them, too – to draw attention to how menacing the situation had become."

The Coalition was not successful in changing the composition of the negotiation delegations, but was very successful in bringing about meetings with both the UN's negotiator Martti Ahtisaari and with groups of experts from the UN Security Council when they visited Kosovo. Igballe Rogova is critical of how the international community acted towards them:

"There was no political will either from them or from our own government. They thought that it was their table. The UN Security Council never wants to meet with women, so we were forced to really keep at it. And if we had not had an ally in Ahtisaari's team who told us what was going on, we would not have known much. There was no transparency. When they talked about security, it was only in terms of borders, police and the military.

"Men's competence is never questioned. It's always former soldiers who are invited to the negotiating table. I would invite women who have experience of and a vision for peace-building. And I would include the younger generation," says Igballe Rogova.

"As peace activists, we want to prevent war, so we keep on pointing out the costs of war and the military. Patriarchy and militarism are intimately linked," says Nevena Kostic from the *Women in Black* network.

The Coalition was at its most active during the period 2006-2008. However, the cooperation between the women has continued in other forms, through the regional women's lobby and an initiative on women's tribunals, among other things.

In the negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia, a number of steps forward were taken on some points, but on the main issue itself, the status issue, the situation remained deadlocked. In spring 2007, Ahtisaari presented his proposal for a solution. Although the word "independence" was not mentioned specifically, the Ahtisaari plan for peace advocated extensive rights for Kosovo. On 17 February 2008, Kosovo declared itself independent. Relations between Kosovo and Serbia remain very tense and the international community, including the UN, is very uncertain about what its attitude should be to the the current balance. ■

Final comments

Building Security shows that parts of the security policy priorities of today in practice are at loggerheads with the international community's consensus that peace is intimately linked with economic development and democracy.

They are also at odds with the experience and research that says that, in practice, women's security means security for all.

Women participating in peace processes and in decision-making assemblies on the same terms as men is therefore not just a matter of gender equality and democracy, but a matter of building peace and security. Women identify and are subject to different threats from those to which men are subject. They bring to the table different perspectives on the peace process and they have knowledge of the conditions of civil society, which other parties in the process lack. Research and experience shows that where women have participated in a peace process, the resulting peace is more sustainable. Thus, the positive effects of women's participation are not just to the advantage of women but to the benefit of society as a whole. Most armed conflicts in the world are conflicts that are already latent within the society, and which have been reawakened. This means that if all of civil society participates in the peace process, the resulting agreements will be embraced a much broader cross-section of society. The resulting peace is then built on deeper foundations and is more stable. And if women are not included during the peace process – when is it then time to include them?

Peace is not just about finding means of conflict resolution. It is also essential to work to reduce factors in society that can function as breeding grounds for conflict. By achieving the Millennium Development Goals of halving poverty, and improvements in education, health care and gender equality, we can also reduce the risk of conflicts breaking out. But for this you need resources – resources that are currently being diverted to military ends. If, from the year 2002, the world had instead invested just 3.7 per cent of what it annually pours into military expenditure in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, according to the World Bank, the world would have achieved these goals by 2015.

Women's participation, violence against women and women's security are not part of current security policy discourse and analysis on what constitutes threat to human security. The security policy that has been pursued has manifestly not worked. It is time to change direction and act instead on the basis of what we know and have learned. ■

Appendix

A SELECTION OF REGULATIONS THAT PROVIDE FOR SECURITY AND PARTICIPATION

There are a number of international regulatory frameworks that have the purpose of strengthening human security and protecting people against violence and injustice, violations of their rights and discrimination in both peace time and during armed conflict. Many of these regulatory frameworks are legally binding, such as for example the Geneva conventions on the rules of war, and the UN's Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Other regulatory frameworks are politically binding, such as for example the UN's Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

- The UN's Universal Declaration on Human Rights from 1948 is fundamental to the protection of human rights and among other things established that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.[101]

- The four Geneva conventions form the core of international humanitarian law (IHL) and in general can be said to be about reducing people's pain and suffering during armed conflict. The fourth Geneva Convention from 1949 focuses specifically on the protection of civilians during wartime.[102]

- The UN General Assembly in 1979 adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).[103]

- The UN General Assembly in 1993 adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women.[104] The text of this declaration supplements CEDAW.
The final document from the UN world conference on human rights in Vienna in 1993 expressed for the first time that women's rights are human rights.[105]

- At the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994, basic sexual and reproductive rights were agreed on, and that these are about the individual's right of determination over their own body, their sexuality and childbearing.[106]

- The Platform for Action from the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995 focuses on a number of issues concerning women's security including poverty, education, armed conflict, economy, influence, human rights and the girl child.[107]

- The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), was established and adopted in 1998. In this Statute, rape and sexual violence come under the rubric of crimes against humanity.[108]

- An optional protocol to the CEDAW was adopted in 1999.[109] This protocol made it possible for individual women or groups of women to submit individual complaints regarding violations of their human rights to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. This Committee was also given the power to hold a State accountable for systematic violations of women's human rights.

• A five-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing + 5) was adopted in 2000 in New York, and points out that States are obliged to exercise due care and do their utmost through legislation and other measures to prevent and punish violence against women. [110]

• The UN General Assembly in 2005 adopted the principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P). This principle means that the international community has the right to transgress the sovereignty of a State, going in and offering people protection when a State is incapable of or unwilling to protect its own people.[111]

WHILE THE REGULATORY frameworks listed above primarily protect women against violence, during the 1990s, demands grew ever more strongly for women to be recognised as actors in all phases of conflict management, and not just as victims. The result was the UN Security Council's adoption of Resolution 1325

• The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 "Women, peace and security", in 2000, states that women's participation at all levels in conflict resolution, peace processes and in reconstruction builds peace and security.[112]

• UN Security Council Resolution 1820 was adopted in 2008 and expresses for the first time that effective steps to prevent sexual violence can significantly contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security.[113]

• UN Security Council Resolution 1888, adopted in 2009, builds on Resolutions 1325 and 1820, and initiates the apointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict.[114]

• UN Security Council Resolution 1889 was adopted in 2009, and focuses on strengthening women's participation in the post-conflict phase.[115]

• UN Security Council Resolution 1960 was adopted in December 2010, and encourages the UN Secretary-General to provide detailed information on parties to armed conflict that are credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for acts of rape or other forms of sexual violence in the Secretary-General's annual report.[116]

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ISBN: 978-91-979583-0-1