

1325 EU Partnership

Inaugural meeting

A briefing on operational strategy in ESDP operations – 1325 in action

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Speaking Notes

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Introduction to gender perspectives - SSR

I would like to warmly thank the organizers for inviting me to present to the inaugural meeting of the 1325 EU Partnership and I hope to contribute to the discussion.

1. Gender, SCR 1325 and SSR

UN SCR 1325 is a pivotal mandate for all of us working in the realm of peace and security.

1325 emphasizes the need for women's "equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security". It also highlights the importance of gender mainstreaming and to engage actively against sexual violence perpetrated against women.

2. SSR- the Actors

Some thoughts on what we define as the security sector: the security sector is commonly understood to include all the organisations that have the authority to use, or order the use of force, or the threat of force, to protect individuals, communities and the state.

The security sector includes: international and regional forces, including peacekeeping missions, military, police, border guards, customs authorities, and intelligence services, government bodies that manage and monitor the security sector, parliaments, and the institutions responsible for guaranteeing the rule of law, including the judiciary and penal system.

Civil society organizations and donors supporting SSR can play important roles in instigating and implementing SSR processes. Armed opposition groups and private security firms also need to be addressed within SSR.

The Reform process is commonly understood as the transformation of security sector institutions and oversight bodies, to increase democratic accountability and oversight as well as effective delivery of security and justice to individual and communities.

2.1 The challenges and problems:

SSR processes are not conducted quickly - they take time, energy, and a lot of resources and there is no 'one-model-fits-all'.

- We have started to notice that there is a lack of a coherent strategy to support SSR - donors still take an ad hoc approach - for example: funding individual training programmes for police without looking at how that training fits into the overall education system.
- There is a lack of capacity available to support SSR. Bilateral and multilateral actors depend on respective officers from armed forces or police to implement their programmes.
- There is a need to enhance oversight and cross-government training.

And as if this is not enough, here we find ourselves with an increasing recognition of the importance of gender issues and implementation of 1325, but *implementation* is the key.

The integration of gender issues in SSR entails two complementary strategies:

- Creating **representative and participative security sector institutions**: including on the basis of ethnicity, sex, geography, language and religion. Women are highly under-represented in security sector institutions, within Western Europe as well as post-conflict or transitional countries
- **Mainstreaming gender issues** into the security sector, which means ensuring that security and justice services are equally provided to men, women, girls and boys (for instance through increased capacity-building to address gender-based violence) AND that the policies, mechanisms and capacity is in place (for instance through a code of conduct) to prevent the perpetration of human rights violations by security sector personnel.

The benefits of gender-responsive SSR are many:

- **Increased local ownership**: women's organizations are not only security service providers and potential partners to increase intelligence and give gender training, they also serve as a bridge between policymakers and local communities and can help ensure local ownership of SSR processes.
- **Effective service delivery and comprehensive governance, oversight and accountability.**

2.1.1 DCAF Gender and SSR Toolkit

DCAF, in collaboration with the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) are developing a toolkit on gender and SSR that will be launched in early 2008. It is designed to be a resource for SSR practitioners and policy-makers and shows concretely what is meant by gender mainstreaming into the different security sectors.

3. Sexual violence in armed conflict – global overview and implications for the security sector.

DCAF has just published a new report *Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict* and the implications for the security sector; the work for the report was funded by Sweden and Norway. The report supports the worldwide efforts to fight against sexual violence in conflict and “calls upon all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual violence”. Hopefully, it will also act as a 1325 advocacy tool.

If you recall the conflicts in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Rwanda or Bosnia – you will not need to be reminded of the role of the security sector in committing crimes like sexual violence.

Our book has two parts – the first a compilation of 51 countries, with summaries of the conflicts going back 20 years. We outline the different forms, settings and perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence, and give, where available, quantitative data. Some countries that have experienced conflicts nevertheless have no available data on sexual violence.

The second part deals with peacekeeping forces, combatants, police and justice as actors, we look at the role of civil society organizations and give some recommendations.

I want to offer just a few thoughts: **peacekeepers** can play an important role in protecting civilians from sexual violence during armed conflict. The African Union firewood patrols in Darfur demonstrate a concrete military and policing strategy to prevent sexual violence. In peacekeeping contexts, lack of livelihood opportunities makes the local population extremely vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Whilst the UN is now taking action to address sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers, it is the responsibility of countries contributing troops and police to peacekeeping operations to ensure that strong codes of conduct and proper training are implemented, and that there is accountability for sexual violence. Increasing the deployment of women in peacekeeping has been shown to contribute not only to better relations with host communities, but also to better conduct by peacekeepers.

Police reform should consider how police services can better prevent and investigate crimes of sexual violence, provide support to the victims, and put in place effective measures to prevent and punish such abuses committed by police personnel. The Police Force in Haiti has a 20% HIV/AIDS infection rate – why is this? Reform strategies should aim to make the police service as a whole more gender sensitive and more responsive to gender-based violence by, for example, providing specialised services for victims of sexual violence.

The **justice sector** is responsible for providing justice for victims of sexual violence, ensuring accountability for the crimes committed, and supporting the long-term process of rebuilding communities. After conflict, transitional justice bodies, including *ad hoc* criminal tribunals, the International Criminal Court, Truth and Reconciliation Commissions and reparations programmes, should put in place mechanisms to address the specific needs of survivors of sexual violence.

Civil society organizations, women's groups in particular, have shown notable leadership as regards sexual violence in conflict, in documenting incidents of sexual violence, lobbying for stronger legislation, delivering training, providing care for the victims, and taking initiatives to ensure a more protective environment. An important part of post-conflict reconstruction is to build and maintain the capacity of such organisations, which can be leaders of social and institutional change within their communities.

Closing

- ESDP missions are both targets of gender-responsive reforms and potential implementers of gender-responsive SSR.
- EU parliamentarians have a key role to play in ensuring that gender issues are mainstreamed into ESDP missions and the SSR work of ESDP missions.