

Progress of the World's Women 2002 ■ Volume 1

Executive Summary



**women
war
peace**

**The Independent Experts' Assessment
By Elisabeth Rehn & Ellen Johnson Sirleaf**

FOREWORD

As Executive Director of UNIFEM I have witnessed the impact of conflict on women in many countries. In the ‘Valley of Widows’ in Colombia, I met women who had lost their husbands and their land – everyone and everything important to them had been destroyed by civil war and drug lords. I have been to Bosnia and Herzegovina where women described abduction, rape camps and forced impregnation, and to Rwanda where women had been gang raped and purposely infected with HIV/AIDS. Stories like these were repeated again and again, in different languages, in different surroundings: East Timor, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guatemala. Only the horror and the pain were the same. Clearly the nature of war has changed. It is being fought in homes and communities – and on women’s bodies — in a battle for resources and in the name of religion and ethnicity. Violence against women is used to break and humiliate women, men, families, communities, no matter which side they are on. Women have become the greatest victims of war – and the biggest stakeholders of peace.

I was prepared to find bitterness and hatred among the women who had experienced such horrific violence and loss, and pervasive trauma, but in many places I found strength. I met women who had transcended their sorrow and discovered in themselves the courage and will to rebuild their lives and communities. Many believed the only way to stop the cycle of violence was to make security and justice key issues on the agenda for a new, more equitable society. A few years ago in South Africa I lit UNIFEM’s peace torch along with African women; it was sent to other conflict areas and then to Beijing to open the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. The women wanted peace, but they also wanted to be shapers of the peace process in their countries, to use their own suffering and transform it into a force that would build a more secure future for humanity.

That is the deeper story I want the world to know: that despite what they have experienced, many of the women I met have been able to rise to the challenge of building a sustainable peace, recognizing that the security and satisfaction of one side can never be based on the frustration or humiliation of the other. They were women like those in East Timor who created collectives to provide each other with emotional support as well as employment schemes to keep their families and villages going. They instituted literacy classes – at the end of the war, 90 per cent of rural women were illiterate – and demanded a role in political elections. In Sudan women from the North and the South took the initiative to come together across ethnic and religious divides to talk about building peace. In Ghana women refugees from Liberia learned construction skills through a UNIFEM-supported programme and built a safer camp for themselves and their families. In Afghanistan women met in secret to organize while the Taliban was in power. They developed maps of streets and neighbourhoods where underground homeschools for girls or medical help or jobs could be found, and shared them at weddings and birthdays.

We cannot expect women to do all this alone. Their efforts must be recognized, valued and supported. To build peace and contribute to the rebuilding of their countries, women need resources, skills, authority. Despite the work they have done on the ground, they are not at the peace table when warring factions sit down to negotiate. No one is held accountable for the enormous crimes committed against women. Although women are feeding their families and have taken in orphans, there are countries where they cannot inherit property or own land to farm. Their needs and their work are not systematically supported in the programmes developed by international agencies. Their rights are not enshrined in constitutions or protected by legislation. All this must change.

Women’s peace-building and reconstruction efforts must be supported, not only because it is the right thing to do, but because most nations consumed by conflict need the strength of their



women. The women are the ones who hold their families and communities together during the worst of the fighting, even while on the run from armies. They keep a measure of stability during times of chaos and during displacement. Now, as peace accords are negotiated and countries are rebuilt, those contributions must be recognized.

I appointed Elisabeth Rehn and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to conduct an independent assessment of women, war and peace so that people throughout the world would know and understand not only what women have suffered but what they have contributed. Many who read this report will already know what has happened to women in Bosnia, East Timor or Afghanistan, but I believe we have not recognized how pervasive violence against women is during conflict and how great the need for protection and assistance. We know a little about women building peace, but we have not yet recognized women as a force for reconstruction. New responses are vital if we want this century to banish the worst brutalities of the previous one. We must invest in the progress of women from war-affected countries.

For helping to make this assessment possible, my deepest appreciation goes to the bilateral donors and foundations that have supported UNIFEM's programme on women, peace and security. I would like to thank the Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department (CHAD) of the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom (DFID-UK) for its programme support. Thanks also go to the Governments of Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Sweden and the United Nations Foundation for support of initiatives in specific countries, and to the Government of Switzerland and DFID-UK for their ongoing support of *Progress of the World's Women*.

I also wish to acknowledge the support of several people within the United Nations system: Louise Fréchette, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations; Mark Malloch Brown, Administrator of the UN Development Programme (UNDP); Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General, Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO); Kieran Prendergast, Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA); Kenzo Oshima, Under-Secretary-General, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and Emergency Relief Coordinator; Thoraya Ahmed Obaid, Executive Director of the UN Population Fund (UNFPA); Sergio Vieira DeMello, High Commissioner for Human Rights; Ruud Lubbers, High Commissioner for Refugees; and Carolyn McAskie, Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator. Throughout this project the UN system cooperated as one to support the visits of the independent experts and to ensure that the voices of women would be heard. I firmly believe that the authoritative analysis presented here will help create the political will to move forward, to promote the skills, strengths and leadership of women as they work for peace.

Noeleen Heyzer
Executive Director
UNIFEM



INTRODUCTION

We were not strangers to war when UNIFEM asked us to carry out this independent assessment on the impact of armed conflict on women and women's role in peace-building. Elisabeth remembers the sound of World War II planes overhead. She witnessed the long rows of corpses and body parts as the mass graves of Srebrenica were exhumed. Ellen was one of only four government ministers who escaped assassination after the Liberian coup of 1980. As former Defence and Finance Ministers, and as Presidential candidates, we understand the world of politics, and we have a keen sense for ripe political moments. This is such a moment. This is an opportunity to improve protection for women in armed conflict and to strengthen women's contribution to peace processes and to rebuilding their communities.

In October 2000 the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1325 on Women and peace and security.ⁱ The resolution is a watershed political framework that makes women – and a gender perspective – relevant to negotiating peace agreements, planning refugee camps and peacekeeping operations and reconstructing war-torn societies. It makes the pursuit of gender equality relevant to every single Security Council action, ranging from mine clearance to elections to security sector reform.

This Independent Expert Assessment was commissioned by UNIFEM in response to Resolution 1325, as part of the effort to continue to document and analyse the specific impact of war on women and the potential of bringing women into all aspects of peace processes. This Assessment is also a direct response to the call from Graça Machel, the United Nations Secretary-General's Expert on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children, for a report on the gender dimensions of armed conflict and its relevance to international peace and security.ⁱⁱ

Our report is a companion to the study undertaken by the UN Secretary-General as called for in Resolution 1325.ⁱⁱⁱ That study provides far greater detail about the work of the UN system than this report, which focuses on the experiences of women who have lived through war, displacement and the struggle to rebuild their societies. Although the focus of the two reports differs, during our visits, we saw the challenges that the UN system confronts when it tries to honour the commitments made by governments to gender equality and women's rights; and we saw the opportunities lost due to inadequate resources and coordination, as well as from the failure to focus on protecting women and promoting their role in peace-building.

Over the course of one year, during 2001 and 2002, we traveled to many of the world's conflicts. Focusing on the impact of armed conflict on women and women's role in peace-building, we visited 14 areas affected by conflict: Bosnia and Herzegovina; Cambodia; Colombia; the Democratic Republic of the Congo; East Timor; the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including Kosovo; Guinea; Israel; Liberia; the occupied Palestinian territories; Rwanda; Sierra Leone; and Somalia. In all of these areas, we saw how the militarization of society breeds new levels of violence and how impunity for these crimes becomes endemic. We saw a continuum of violence that shatters women's lives before, during and after conflict.

In retrospect, we realize how little prepared we were for the enormity of it all: the staggering numbers of women in war who survived the brutality of rape, sexual exploitation, mutilation, torture and displacement; the unconscionable acts of depravity; and the wholesale exclusion of women from peace processes.

We collected first-hand data and testimonies by meeting with women victims and survivors of conflict; women directly involved in the peace processes; activists; eminent leaders from civil society; and members of women's groups, international and national NGOs, the media and religious organizations. We also met with representatives of United Nations agencies, at headquarters and in the

field, along with host governments, opposition groups and peacekeeping and humanitarian personnel to find out what they are doing for women and how they are approaching gender issues.

In addition, we relied on research and analysis from human rights groups and civil society, independent reports and UN documents. These raised policy issues that underscored what women themselves identified as priorities. While our goal was to focus on the testimonies of women we met during our visits, we wanted to demonstrate that their experiences are not country-specific, but global. Many of the trends we saw are universal phenomena, which is why we included a number of examples from places we could not visit.

In our report, we share the stories of many of the women we met to show the reality of war for women and to give a human face to the struggle for security. We have concluded that the standards of protection for women affected by conflict are glaring in their inadequacy, as is the international response. Only by ending impunity for crimes against women in war can nations be rebuilt. Gender equality in this context means enabling women as full citizens: as voters, as candidates, as decision-makers. It means supporting women's centrality to reconstruction – to reforming the constitution, the electoral system, and the policies and resources that support development. Without women's representation – without half the population – no country can truly claim to be engaged in democratic development and participatory governance.

This glimpse of bitter reality is shadowed by the deadly nexus of HIV/AIDS and armed conflict for women. It is fuelled by the economies of war, relief and reconstruction. Women do not receive what they need in emergencies, for development, peace-building or reconstruction. Their entreaties for education and health care go largely unanswered. At all levels – from the grass roots to the international – women's organizations continue to be insufficiently recognized and supported. In short, women and their organizations need more resources.

But our report also shows many ways in which women in conflict situations *are* being supported. A large number of United Nations agencies and many international and local NGOs are protecting women and supporting their role in peace-building. We maintain, however, that this excellent work needs to be amplified exponentially.

We are proud to pay tribute in this report to the courageous peacekeepers and humanitarian workers on the front lines and to showcase new models of protection for women in a peacekeeping environment. We are encouraged that civilian police are working to protect women from domestic violence and, in some cases, to prevent it. We are gratified to see peace operations support HIV/AIDS awareness. But we were also appalled by reports of flagrant violations against women by those with the duty to protect them. We support fully Secretary-General Kofi Annan's position that there must be zero tolerance and full accountability for these crimes. We take note of the report of the UN Office for Internal Oversight (OIOS) on sexual exploitation and efforts by the humanitarian community to strengthen measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse in humanitarian crises.^{iv}

We hope this report (the full version of which is available at www.unifem.org) will do more than set an agenda for action; we hope that it will bring a new perspective and new information to the substantive issues already present on research, policy and political agendas. We also hope that it will help strengthen the standards for women's protection. We will measure the success of our work by the commitment it generates, of both resources and political will, from the Security Council to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), from the General Assembly to the Group of 8 industrial nations (G8), from the non-governmental to the governmental. We will measure progress through the strengthened capacity of civil society and of women's organisations working in conflict situations. We are convinced that new modalities are needed and that the present institutional arrangements to protect women in war and to support their leadership are inadequate. Accountability must be established. Efforts must be financed. Without commitment and resources nothing will change.



We direct our findings to those with the power and resources to make a difference. Indifference is not an option. We accept full responsibility for our conclusions. They do not necessarily represent the position of UNIFEM whose courage we salute in commissioning this assessment. We pay special thanks to Noeleen Heyzer, UNIFEM Executive Director, for creating the political space for the assessment and for skillfully shepherding it to completion. We also owe thanks to Jennifer Klot, UNIFEM Adviser on Governance, Peace and Security for identifying the need for this report and her inspired leadership of the secretariat.

We are indebted to the experts who provided research specifically commissioned for this assessment. Radhika Coomaraswamy, the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, helped us understand the nature of sexual violence and exploitation in armed conflict. Angela M. Wakhweya, Catherine A. Rielly, Monica Onyango and Gail Helmer at the Center for International Health at Boston University conducted valuable research on the intersection of gender, HIV/AIDS and conflict, and Professor Donna Sullivan of the New York University School of Law provided much-needed guidance on the pursuit of justice and accountability for gender-based war crimes during post-conflict reconstruction. Victoria Brittain offered touching and insightful contributions.

We have relied enormously on the guidance of our Advisory Group, composed of eminent women and men from all regions of the globe whose expertise includes peace support operations, humanitarian assistance, human rights and peace-building. Their encouragement, support, knowledge and sheer intelligence have been invaluable to our work. In this regard, our thanks go to Rafeuddin Ahmed, Winnie Byanyima, Isha Dyfan, Asma Jahangir, Stephen Lewis, Jane Holl Lute, Luz Mendez, Faiza Jama Mohamed, Maha Muna, Milena Pires, Maj Britt Theorin and Stasa Zajovic. We would also like to thank all the experts – too many to name – who offered advice, information and encouragement.

We are grateful for the support of the secretariat staff at UNIFEM, Aina Iiyambo, Sumie Nakaya, Felicity Hill, Gaella Mortel and Liliana Potenza, and for the input of Carol Cohn and Karen Judd. We thank Maarit Kohonen, seconded from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), who helped get this initiative off the ground and provided much substantive input. Saudimini Siegrist of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) provided insight and expertise. Pam DeLargy of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) joined our field mission to West Africa and worked closely with the secretariat, contributing analysis and insights. Joyce Mends-Cole, of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), assisted with several of our field visits and commented on drafts. Our security adviser, Heljo Laukkala, was a great help during our visits. We express our deepest respect and appreciation to all the courageous humanitarians in the field who went far beyond the call of duty to help us in so many ways.

We would also like to thank the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) for their direct support of our work and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for facilitating our visits to camps in the West Bank and Gaza. Finally, we thank the women who inspired this report, who have committed their lives to peace and justice, for which they have waited too long.

Elisabeth Rehn and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Towards the full implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325, the Independent Experts call for:

Strengthened protection for women and measures to address violence against women and gender discrimination in conflict and post-conflict situations, including:

1. **An international Truth and Reconciliation Commission on violence against women in armed conflict as a step towards ending impunity.** This Commission, to be convened by civil society with support from the international community, will fill the historical gap that has left these crimes unrecorded and unaddressed.
2. **Targeted sanctions against trafficking of women and girls.** Those complicit must be held accountable for trafficking women and girls in or through conflict areas. Existing international laws on trafficking must be applied in conflict situations and national legislation should criminalize trafficking with strong punitive measures, including such actions as freezing the assets of trafficking rings. Victims of trafficking should be protected from prosecution.
3. **Psychosocial support and reproductive health services for women affected by conflict to be an integral part of emergency assistance and post-conflict reconstruction.** Special attention should be provided to those who have experienced physical trauma, torture and sexual violence. All agencies providing health support and social services should include psychosocial counselling and referrals. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) should take the lead in providing these services, working in close cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).
4. **All HIV/AIDS programmes and funding in conflict situations to address the disproportionate disease burden carried by women.** Mandatory gender analysis and specific strategies for meeting the needs of women and girls should seek to prevent infection and increase access to treatment, care and support.
5. **The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as a leading agency in the field of security sector reform, to ensure that women's protection and participation be central to the design and reform of security sector institutions and policies, especially in police, military and rule of law components.** UNDP should integrate a gender perspective into its country programmes.
6. **Establishment of macroeconomic policies in post-conflict reconstruction that prioritize the public provision of food, water, sanitation, health and energy, the key sectors in which women provide unpaid labour.** Special attention should be paid to the consequences for women of decentralization policies.
7. **The Security Council to formulate a plan for the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources.** Sixty years after being assigned the task, the Security Council should implement Article 26 of the United Nations Charter, taking into account the Women's Peace Petition which calls for the world's nations to redirect at least 5 per cent of national military expenditures to health, education and employment programmes each year over the next five years.
8. **A lead organization to be designated within the United Nations for women's education and training in conflict and post-conflict situations.** This lead organization, together with the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNHCR and UNICEF, should ensure that all education programmes for displaced persons provide for women as well as girls.
9. **The Secretary-General to appoint a panel of experts to assess the gaps in international and national laws and standards pertaining to the protection of women in conflict and post-conflict situations and women's role in peace-building.**

Increased coordination within the entire UN system to ensure implementation of commitments made to women, including:

10. **Strengthening of United Nations field operations for internally displaced women and of those bodies that support a field-based presence.** Protection officers from all relevant bodies, including UNHCR, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UNICEF and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), should be deployed immediately if a state cannot or will not protect displaced populations or is indeed responsible for their displacement. Resources should be made available for this purpose.

11. **Gender experts and expertise to be included in all levels and aspects of peace operations, including in technical surveys and the design of concepts of operation, training, staffing and programmes.** To this end, a Memorandum of Understanding should set out the roles and responsibilities among the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW).

12. **A review of training programmes on and approaches to the gender dimensions of conflict resolution and peace-building for humanitarian, military and civilian personnel.** United Nations entities active in this area should lead this process with support provided by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Task Force on Women, Peace and Security with a view to developing guidance on training policy and standards.

13. **UNIFEM to work closely with DPA to ensure that gender issues are incorporated in peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction in order to integrate gender perspectives in peace-building and to support women's full and equal participation in decision-making; and for UNFPA to strengthen its work in emergency situations in order to build women's capacity in conflict situations.** UNIFEM and UNFPA should be represented in all relevant inter-agency bodies.

Systematic monitoring, data collection and communications on the gender dimensions of conflict and post-conflict crises and assistance, including:

14. **The systematic collection and analysis of information and data by all actors, using gender specific indicators to guide policy, programmes and service delivery for women in armed conflict.** This information should be provided on a regular basis to the Secretariat, Member States, inter-governmental bodies, regional organizations, NGOs and other relevant bodies. A central knowledge base should be established and maintained by UNIFEM together with a network of all relevant bodies, in particular DPA.

15. **The Secretary-General to systematically include information on the impact of armed conflict on women and women's role in prevention and peace-building in all of his country and thematic reports to the Security Council.** Towards that end, the Secretary-General should request relevant information from UN operations and all relevant bodies.

16. **Operational humanitarian, human rights and development bodies to develop indicators to determine the extent to which gender is mainstreamed throughout their operations in conflict and post-conflict situations and ensure that gender mainstreaming produces measurable results and is not lost in generalities and vague references to gender.** Measures should be put in place to address the gaps and obstacles encountered in implementation.

17. **Increased donor resources and access for women to media and communications technology, so that gender perspectives, women's expertise and women's media can influence public discourse and decision-making on peace and security.**



18. **Gender budget analysis of humanitarian assistance and post-conflict reconstruction** to ensure that women benefit directly from resources mobilized through multilateral and bilateral donors, including the Consolidated Appeals Process, the Bretton Woods Institutions and donor conferences.

High-level and consistent commitment to gender equality and women's equal representation in all peace-building activities, including:

19. **The Secretary-General, in keeping with his personal commitment, to increase the number of women in senior positions in peace-related functions.** Priority should be given to achieving gender parity in his appointment of women as Special Representatives and Envoys, beginning with the minimum of 30 per cent in the next three years, with a view to gender parity by 2015.

20. **Gender equality to be recognized in all peace processes, agreements and transitional governance structures.** International, regional organizations and all participating parties involved in peace processes should advocate for gender parity, maintaining a minimum 30 per cent representation of women in peace negotiations, and ensure that women's needs are taken into consideration and specifically addressed in all such agreements.

21. **A United Nations Trust Fund for Women's Peace-building.** This Trust Fund would leverage the political, financial and technical support needed for women's civil society organizations and women leaders to have an impact on peace efforts nationally, regionally and internationally. The Fund should be managed by the UNIFEM, in consultation with other UN bodies, and women's civil society organizations.

22. **The Security Council, the General Assembly and the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to give serious consideration to the above recommendations and adopt relevant decisions to operationalize them.** The Secretary-General should thereafter formulate an implementation plan addressing each of the recommendations contained in those decisions and submit an annual report to the Security Council and all relevant bodies on the progress made and obstacles encountered in implementation.

Chapter 1: Violence Against Women

Violence against women in conflict is one of history's great silences. We were completely unprepared for the searing magnitude of what we saw and heard in the conflict and post-conflict areas we visited. We knew the data. We knew that 17 per cent of internally displaced women and girls surveyed in Sierra Leone had experienced sexual violence – both war- and non-war related – including rape, torture and sexual slavery.^v That at least 250,000 women were raped during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.^{vi} We read reports of sexual violence in the ongoing hostilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Algeria, Myanmar, Southern Sudan and Uganda. We learned of the dramatic increase in domestic violence in war zones such as Afghanistan, and of the growing numbers of women trafficked out of war torn countries such as Cambodia who become forced labourers and forced sex workers.^{vii}

But knowing all this did not prepare us for the horrors women described. Wombs punctured with guns. Women raped and tortured in front of their husbands and children. Rifles forced into vaginas. Pregnant women beaten to induce miscarriages. Foetuses ripped from wombs. Women kidnapped, blindfolded and beaten on their way to work or school. We saw the scars, the pain and the humiliation. We heard accounts of gang rapes, rape camps and mutilation. Of murder and sexual slavery. We saw the scars of brutality so extreme that survival seemed for some a worse fate than death.

Violence against women during conflict has reached epidemic proportions yet little is being done to prevent this violence or to support and protect women. Women's bodies have become a battleground over which opposing forces struggle. The extreme violence that women suffer during conflict does not arise solely out of the conditions of war, but is directly related to the violence that

exists in women's lives during peacetime. Throughout the world, women experience violence because they are women, and often because they do not have the same rights or autonomy that men do. They are subjected to gender-based persecution, discrimination and oppression, including sexual violence and slavery. Without political rights or authority, they often have little recourse. War exponentially intensifies the inequities that women are living with.

Sexual Violence is a horrific but all too common aspect of modern conflicts. On every continent we visited, we learned of gang rapes, rape camps, sexual mutilation. We met women forced to use their bodies as barter, selling sex in order to get food, shelter or protection for themselves and their families. In some instances, women were raped and purposely infected with HIV, a form of slow murder.

Trafficking and sexual slavery are inextricably linked to conflict. Many young girls and women described being forced to watch as their families were killed and then being abducted and forced to have children. Women are trafficked out of one country into another to be used in forced labour schemes that often include forced prostitution. The breakdown of law and order and border controls during conflict, combined with the free markets and open borders fostered by globalization, have contributed to creating an environment in which the trafficking of women has flourished.

Domestic violence is common during peacetime, but until recently the fact that it increases during or after conflict was generally overlooked. Many things contribute to the increase in domestic violence – the availability of weapons, the violence male family members have experienced or meted out, the lack of jobs, shelter and basic services.

The children born of rape and sexual exploitation and their mothers are in need of social services, medical and

psychosocial attention and economic support. But in many countries, the children have become a symbol of the trauma the nation as a whole went through, and society prefers not to acknowledge these needs. In some cases the children are growing up in orphanages or on the streets, although in many countries a significant proportion of women have accepted the children and are raising them.

Security and support for women subject to violence are woefully inadequate. Their access to protection, services and legal remedies is limited in many ways. The upheaval of war itself makes it nearly impossible for women to seek redress from government entities. But cultural and social stigmas, as well as women's status in society, also affect their ability to protect themselves or seek outside protection. In many cases, the arrival of peacekeeping personnel has the obvious advantage of providing the local population with an increased sense of security, but it may also have some negative repercussions.

Greater specificity is needed in codifying war crimes against women and in recognizing the distinct harm that results from violations like forced pregnancy. States must adopt special legislation incorporating human rights, humanitarian and international criminal law into their own legal systems. Procedures and mechanisms to investigate, report, prosecute and remedy violence against women in war must be strengthened. Otherwise, the historic refusal to acknowledge and punish crimes against women will continue.

Because the legal and political recording of war crimes has so often omitted the crimes committed against women, an international Truth and Reconciliation process would correct the historical record and generate knowledge about the magnitude, severity and patterns of war crimes against women. It would also educate the legal, political and activist communities on the definitions and procedures outlined in the

Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court relating to gender and sexual violence. The Statute and the Court itself represent a dramatic and positive shift towards providing recourse for the war crimes committed against women.^{viii}

On Violence Against Women the Experts call for:

1. An international Truth and Reconciliation Commission on violence against women in armed conflict as a step towards ending impunity. This Commission, to be convened by civil society with support from the international community, will fill the historical gap that has left these crimes unrecorded and unaddressed.

2. Targeted sanctions against trafficking of women and girls. Those complicit must be held accountable for trafficking women and girls in or through conflict areas. Existing international laws on trafficking must be applied in conflict situations and national legislation should criminalize trafficking with strong punitive measures, including such actions as freezing the assets of trafficking rings. Victims of trafficking should be protected from prosecution.

3. Domestic violence to be recognized as systematic and widespread in conflict and post-conflict situations and addressed in humanitarian, legal and security responses and training in emergencies and post-conflict reconstruction.

4. The UN, donors and governments to provide long-term financial support for women survivors of violence through legal, economic, psychosocial and reproductive health services. This should be an essential part of emergency assistance and post-conflict reconstruction.



Chapter 2: Women Forced to Flee

Armed conflict, political violence and civil unrest forcibly uproot hundreds of thousands of civilians every year. Communities are being torn apart by the routine tactics of war. Intimidation, terror, murder, sexual violence and forced displacement drive people out of their homes, leaving them without food, water, shelter or health care. This is often not an indirect effect of war but a careful calculation by combatants. As Secretary-General Kofi Annan said in his report to the Security Council on protection for humanitarian assistance to refugees and others in conflict situations, “the forced displacement of civilian populations is now often a direct objective, rather than a by-product, of war.”^x

As with all aspects of war, displacement has specific gender dimensions. Women are more likely than men to end up as displaced persons and to become sole caretakers for children. They may find themselves vulnerable to attacks and rape while they are escaping conflict and even when they find refuge. If they find shelter, they have to learn to cope as heads of household, often in environments where, even in peacetime, a woman on her own has few rights. In a hostile environment, without access to basic services, women are expected to provide the necessities for themselves and for their families. After talking to women in many different countries, we learned that too often this may mean being forced to provide sexual services in return for basic assistance or protection.

The Responsibility to Protect lies first and foremost with the government of the state in which the displaced persons are living. Armed opposition groups also have legal and moral responsibilities not to assault civilians or subject them to human rights abuses and to protect the rights of the displaced people in the territories under their control. These rights, however, are regularly violated. The question of who should provide protection and assistance, and when, is one that is hotly debated.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs): Whose responsibility? The number of people who have been uprooted from their homes but are unable to cross international borders to receive assistance has been growing dramatically. The internally displaced now make up the majority of displaced people, but unlike refugees, who are entitled to assistance and protection under international law, the situation for IDPs is less clearly defined. Humanitarian agencies can only assist the internally displaced if the host country allows access. In addition, there is no single agency within the United Nations mandated to provide for IDPs.

As of 2002, there were just over 13 million internally displaced people in Africa, 4.6 million in Asia and the Pacific, 3.2 million in Europe, 3 million in the Americas and 1.5 million in the Middle East.^x Many of them must fend for themselves or rely on poorly run, often dangerous camps that are not always under the protection of international agencies. The indecision about how to increase protection for the internally displaced is exacerbating the crisis.

The United Nations has developed a set of Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement that recognize the specific needs of women. Some countries, but far from all, have agreed to abide by these principles.

Violence against Women in Camps involves domestic violence, sexual violence and discrimination against women and girls in the distribution of everything from food to soap to plastic sheeting. It has been particularly shocking to learn that even some humanitarian workers are contributing to violence against women.

Urban Displacement: In recent years, many displaced people have fled to cities where they live with virtually no assistance or protection. Some are hoping to avoid violence in camps. Others hope to find jobs, training, medical help and access to other services. Most urban refugees have little or no documentation, either because they left

identification papers behind when they fled their homes or because they never had any. Without proper documentation, they are often unable to receive even minimal protection and assistance.

Long-term Displacement and the Impact of Returning Home: Many displaced people cannot return home for years, and struggle to survive and raise their children in camps, where services may be minimal. Even in those places where peace agreements have been signed, families who want to return home but have lost everything in flight find it hard to start over. Often safety is a concern, but many widows and female heads of households also have no way to support themselves if they return home. Because women in some countries cannot inherit land or other property from either their husbands or their parents, unless they have sons they cannot claim property that might help support their families.

We call on the United Nations to recognize the gender dimensions of the great tragedy that envelops people swept up in violent conflict who are forced to flee their homes. We ask it to help women rebuild their lives, to protect them and their children and to prevent the sexual exploitation of them and their daughters.

On Refugee and Displaced Women the Experts call for:

- 1. Strengthening of United Nations field operations for internally displaced women and of those bodies that support a field-based presence.** Protection officers from all relevant bodies, including UNHCR, OHCHR, OCHA, UNICEF and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), should be deployed immediately if a state cannot or will not protect displaced populations or is indeed responsible for their displacement. Resources should be made available for this purpose.
- 2. Governments to adhere to the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement,** and incorporate them into national laws to ensure protection, assistance and humanitarian access to internally displaced persons within their territory.
- 3. Refugee and internally displaced women to play a key role in camp planning, management and decision-making** so that gender issues are taken into account in all aspects, especially resource distribution, security and protection.
- 4. Women to be involved in all aspects of repatriation and resettlement planning and implementation.** Special measures should be put in place to ensure women's security in this process and to ensure voluntary, unhindered repatriation that takes place under conditions of safety and dignity, with full respect for human rights and the rule of law.
- 5. All asylum policies to be reformed to take into account gender-based political persecution.** Women, regardless of marital status, should be eligible for asylum and entitled to individual interview and assessment procedures.

Chapter 3: War and Women's Health

Women are not only victims of the general violence and lack of health care that war creates – they also face issues specific to their biology and their social status. There are gender aspects to most conflict situations, including environmental dangers and problems of malnutrition and stress-related conditions. Women also must cope with reproductive health problems, unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and the physical and mental trauma of sexual violence.

In addition women's responsibility for caring for others does not change when they are in the midst of war. Women still try to protect and tend to their children and the elderly, and they still provide support for their husbands, their siblings and their parents. The responsibility of care for others is so embedded that even in the most desperate conditions, women still try to take care of everyone around them. In our travels, we heard about the despair women felt when they watched their loved ones suffer or die, when their children were abused or starved or when they had to leave elderly relatives behind as they ran for their own lives. The guilt and helplessness that the women felt in these situations, and still feel, is an almost unbearable burden.

Women in conflict situations need support. They need sufficient food, safe drinking water, protection from violence, basic primary and reproductive health care, and psychosocial support. These are extensions of what women need at all times. Yet even though war-affected women have greater needs, they often end up with fewer, if any, services. The knowledge and the tools exist to protect women's health, even in complex emergencies – but is the political will there? There are guidelines for psychosocial counseling, for providing reproductive health services, for ensuring safety in camp situations, for distributing food

in a gender-sensitive way. But these services and protection arrangements remain the exception, not the norm.

There are good examples of health support that can be built on. In a three-month period in 1999, Albania received, accommodated and cared for almost 500,000 refugees from Kosovo, yet there were no serious outbreaks of infectious disease. The Albanian Government coordinated with numerous UN agencies and NGOs to ensure that all camp inhabitants had food and water, basic primary health care and protection against infectious diseases. For the first time, reproductive health care was widely provided and psychosocial needs were anticipated, even if services were still very basic. As a result, most of the refugees were able to return to Kosovo a few months later with their physical health intact.

Even in the most difficult circumstances, programmes can be up and running quickly. In the area of reproductive health, for example, a large group of NGOs, UN agencies and bilateral donors have worked together to determine the standards which should be applied and have developed a Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) of supplies and interventions to be provided in emergency situations. WHO, UNHCR and UNFPA have produced a field manual that provides detailed guidelines for basic care during acute emergencies and for expanded services when the situation stabilizes. An accompanying set of pre-packaged supplies, stocked by UNFPA for immediate deployment, includes everything needed for various interventions, from safe home-birthing to family planning to STI treatment to hospital-based emergency obstetric care. Training health staff to attend to reproductive health is also an important part of the package.

Many humanitarian agencies would do more for women's health, and for health in general, if they had the staff and the resources. Yet health programmes are



notoriously underfunded. Each year, when the annual UN Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) is launched for countries in crisis, health programmes receive less than a quarter of the funds requested. For some countries, donors provide no emergency support for the health sector at all. Within the health sector, some issues appeal to donors more than others: Children's health gets more attention than women's health; immunization gets more attention than HIV prevention.

It is tragic that basic health care for war-affected women must compete with food, shelter and landmine clearance. All of these interventions are required to ensure that people survive as healthy, contributing members of their societies. The needs of war-affected populations are all linked. Providing health services alone cannot save lives if other vital requirements – for security, food, water, shelter, sanitation and household goods – are not satisfied. Surely there is enough money to support all of these important interventions. Surely the physical and mental health of individuals and communities is critical for conflict resolution, for national rehabilitation and for recovery.

On War and Women's Health the Experts call for:

- 1. Psychosocial support and reproductive health services for women affected by conflict to be an integral part of emergency assistance and post-conflict reconstruction.** Special attention should be provided to those who have experienced physical trauma, torture and sexual violence. All agencies providing health support and social services should include psychosocial counselling and referrals. UNFPA should take the lead in providing these services, working in close cooperation with WHO, UNHCR and UNICEF.
- 2. Recognition of the special health needs of women who have experienced war-related injuries, including amputations, and for equal provision of physical rehabilitation and prosthesis support.**
- 3. Special attention to providing adequate food supplies for displaced and war-affected women, girls and families in order to protect health and to prevent the sexual exploitation of women and girls.** The World Food Programme (WFP) and other relief agencies should strengthen capacities to monitor the gender impact of food distribution practices.
- 4. Protection against HIV/AIDS and the provision of reproductive health through the implementation of the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) as defined by the Interagency Manual on Reproductive Health for Refugees (WHO, UNHCR, UNFPA, 1999).** Special attention must be paid to the needs of particularly vulnerable groups affected by conflict, such as displaced women, adolescents, girl-headed households and sex workers.
- 5. Immediate provision of emergency contraception and STI treatment for rape survivors to prevent unwanted pregnancies and protect the health of women.**

Chapter 4: HIV/AIDS

War and HIV/AIDS are inextricably linked. The surest way to contract HIV is to be exposed to infected blood. During armed conflicts, civilians and combatants alike suffer torture, wounds and injuries where they risk such exposure. In addition they may receive medical care with contaminated instruments or get transfusions of unscreened blood, magnifying still further the risks of contracting HIV/AIDS. Sexual violence and exploitation, all too common in conflict and post-conflict settings, contribute to transmission as well, both directly and indirectly. Rape by an infected man directly exposes women to the virus, and the abrasions or tearing of vaginal tissues which may result from a rape increase the risk of infection in future sexual encounters. The presence of combatants (either regular military forces or rebel forces) among civilian populations can increase the chances of infection since military forces almost always have much greater rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) – which can increase the risk of HIV infection – and HIV than civilians. In many conflict settings combatants are involved in sexual exploitation of women, regular relations with sex workers and, in some places, high levels of sexual violence.

All of these factors contribute to the high HIV risk for women in war zones. They are exacerbated by the already low status of women and girls in most regions of the world that are experiencing armed conflict. Women in the places we visited were powerless to control their sexual relationships or to negotiate safe sex. They were at the mercy of their partners or of strangers even in peacetime and became more vulnerable during conflict. Even when conflicts subside, extremely difficult economic and social conditions often leave many people unemployed and unable to resume their normal community or family lives. Many women are forced to become sex workers.

Peacekeeping forces can also have an impact on HIV transmission. These forces are composed of a variety of national troop

contingents that have widely varying levels of knowledge about HIV as well as different patterns of interaction with the local population. Such forces can become a part of the problem or part of the solution, depending on their training and their behaviours. Resolution 1308^{xi}, adopted by the UN Security Council in 2000, recognized the spread of HIV/AIDS and STIs as potential threats to international peace and security and also recommended that HIV prevention be incorporated into all peacekeeping initiatives. Security Council Resolution 1325 specifically cited the special concerns of women in relation to HIV/AIDS. Ultimately, as nations attempt to recover from conflict, HIV is a direct threat to both human and national security since the epidemic undermines the economic and social participation of the population during a critical time of national rehabilitation and recovery.

The UN Consolidated Appeals Process has begun to include projects on HIV prevention and care in fundraising for emergency situations. Guidelines have been developed. But, as we saw so graphically during our visits to conflict areas, none of the conferences, resolutions or guidelines have yet been able to help the young women on the streets of Freetown, nor those taking up 80 per cent of the hospital beds in Burundi, nor the many women dying of HIV/AIDS in other war zones.

With sufficient resources, basic HIV prevention can be provided in emergency situations and expanded as conflicts are settled. Basic prevention includes protection against sexual violence, provision of HIV information and female and male condoms, as well as the assurance of universal precautions and a safe blood supply. Expanded programmes require treatment of STIs, education and communication initiatives, voluntary counselling and testing (VCT), treatment of opportunistic infections and prevention of mother-to-child transmission. Care and support of those with AIDS must also be provided.



On HIV/AIDS the Experts call for:

1. All HIV/AIDS programmes and funding in conflict situations to address the disproportionate disease burden carried by women. Mandatory gender analysis and specific strategies for meeting the needs of women and girls should seek to prevent infection and increase access to treatment, care and support.

2. HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention programmes to be implemented during conflict and in post-conflict situations, with care and support provided whenever there is access to affected populations. National governments, national and international NGOs and UN agencies should incorporate HIV/AIDS prevention into all humanitarian assistance. Donors should strongly support these interventions.

3. Vulnerability assessments to be carried out in each humanitarian situation to determine links between conflict, displacement and gender. Information and data collection should be strengthened in order to document this relationship and to guide appropriate responses. Governments and agencies should work together to document vulnerabilities.

4. Clear guidelines for HIV/AIDS prevention in peacekeeping operations. All troop-contributing countries should make available voluntary and confidential HIV/AIDS testing for their peacekeeping personnel. Counselling and testing should be provided for all contingent forces and civilian personnel participating in emergency and peace operations before and during deployment on a regular basis. HIV prevention as well as gender training should be provided in all missions to all personnel.

5. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Reference Group on HIV/AIDS in Emergency Settings to

develop clear policy guidelines for HIV prevention and care in humanitarian situations and application of these guidelines to be supported by national authorities, humanitarian agencies and donors.

6. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria to make special provisions for support of HIV/AIDS programmes in conflict situations, including in countries without the government capacity to manage the application process. In such cases NGOs and UN agencies should be eligible to submit proposals. Further, we encourage the systematic consideration of gender issues in all programme funding.

7. Institutions and organizations to address HIV prevention in conflict situations. In particular, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) should take a leadership role in that region.

8. The development and enforcement of codes of conduct for all UN and international NGO staff to protect against abuse and exploitation of women and girls. All such staff should receive training in prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, as well as reproductive health information, including STI and HIV/AIDS prevention.



Chapter 5: Women and Peace Operations

Of the 14 war-torn areas we visited, international peacekeepers were present in nearly half of them. Among these peacekeepers, we met inspired and dedicated mission leaders and force commanders who understood that protecting women from violence was an important part of their work. Yet sometimes opportunities to promote gender equality were squandered by inaction.

Over the past two years, four out of 15 peace operations have had dedicated staff working on gender issues: These staff are usually referred to as gender units or offices even though they may consist of only one person. The UN Transitional Authority in East Timor (UNTAET), the Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the one in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) have gender units/offices, while UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone has a gender specialist within the Human Rights Section of the mission. Although a Senior Gender Adviser is proposed for the mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the position will not be funded from the mission budget and will have to rely, therefore, on the benevolence of donors.

So far, the range of responsibilities given to gender advisers appears to exceed both their authority and their limited resources. Although the units' effectiveness relies almost entirely on the commitment of the operational management team, particularly the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), the few gender advisers in office have not had consistent access to the Head of Mission. In addition, they occupy lower positions in the hierarchy than those they are expected to coordinate with or even oversee. In a bureaucracy, this can be debilitating. At present, gender advisers have no official channel through which to communicate or receive support from UN Headquarters or from UN agencies in the mission area. As a result, these advisers

told us they lack clarity about whom to turn to for support and guidance and often feel isolated.

Gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations requires specialized expertise and training in all aspects of mission operation. It requires programmatic integration of gender into all elements of activity, throughout the various 'pillars' of governance and humanitarian efforts. It requires regular monitoring, reporting and evaluation of progress made and obstacles encountered, as well as systems for holding the operation accountable to achieving its goals. Finally, it requires resources to put all of these measures in place.

Gender mainstreaming needs to start from the very beginning of a mission to ensure that structures and programmes are designed to address the different needs of women and men for protection, assistance, justice and reconstruction. To the best of our knowledge, gender expertise has not been utilized during assessment missions or technical surveys conducted prior to the design or establishment of UN peacekeeping operations nor, most importantly, in the blueprint for action, the concept of operation or the budget.

Peacekeepers face many challenges. Peace operations protect people at risk by making sure that humanitarian assistance reaches them and by separating armed elements from civilians in camp settings. In many situations peacekeepers are the only ones with access to those in need, whether they are in rebel-controlled territories, in landmine-infested regions or in flight from one conflict area to another. In these circumstances military personnel may be called on to protect the delivery of humanitarian assistance – to protect relief workers and supplies – or even to assess humanitarian conditions.

When UN personnel commit actual crimes such as rape or trafficking, it is often difficult to bring them to justice. To increase



the protection of women in peacekeeping environments, we support the Secretary-General's call to establish an Ombudsperson in every peace operation who would handle reports of abuse by peacekeeping personnel. Together with an Inspector General or an office set up specifically for this purpose, she or he could carry out investigations and impose disciplinary measures in cooperation with the SRSG, the Force Commander and the Office of Internal Oversight Services. In all instances, a community relations office with national staff, similar to the model established in the Cambodia mission, should act as liaison with the host community and facilitate the complaints process.

On Women and Peace Operations the Experts call for:

- 1. Gender experts and expertise to be included at all levels and in all aspects of peace operations, including technical surveys and the design of concepts of operation, training, staffing and programmes.** To this end, a Memorandum of Understanding should set out the roles and responsibilities among DPKO, DPA, UNIFEM and DAW.
- 2. A review of training programmes on and approaches to the gender dimensions of conflict resolution and peace-building for humanitarian, military and civilian personnel.** United Nations entities active in this area should lead this process with support provided by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Task Force on Women, Peace and Security with a view to developing guidance on training policy and standards.
- 3. All UN peace operations to include a human rights monitoring component, with an explicit mandate and sufficient resources to investigate, document and report human rights violations against women.**

4. The improvement and strengthening of codes of conduct for international and local humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel and for these codes to be consistent with international humanitarian and human rights law and made compulsory. An office of oversight for crimes against women should be established in all peace operations. The office should regularly monitor and report on compliance with the principles set forth in the IASC Task Force on the Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises.

5. No exemptions for peacekeepers from prosecution by international tribunals, the International Criminal Court and national courts in the host country for all crimes committed, including those against women. All states maintaining peacekeeping forces should take necessary measures to bring to justice their own nationals responsible for such crimes, as called for by the Security Council (S/RES/1400{2002}).

6. UN peace operations to improve opportunities for collaboration with women's groups to address gender issues in a peacekeeping environment.

7. Member States and DPKO to increase women's representation in peace operations, including through the recruitment of police, military and civilian personnel.



Chapter 6: Organizing for Peace

Women have sacrificed their lives for peace. They have challenged militarism and urged reconciliation over retribution. They have opposed the development, testing and proliferation of nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction and the small arms trade. They have contributed to peace-building as activists, as community leaders, as survivors of the most cataclysmic horrors of war. They have transformed peace processes on every continent by organizing across political, religious and ethnic affiliations. But their efforts are rarely supported.

Women's leadership is most visible in their communities; it is there that they organize to end conflict and develop the skills necessary for peace-building and reconstruction. Women's organizing at the grass roots level often lays the groundwork for organizing across borders – in sub-regions and internationally. Yet women are rarely included in formal negotiations, whether as members of political parties, civil society or special interest groups. Nor are they present in representative numbers in post-conflict governments.

To date, the use of quotas has been one of the most successful methods for guaranteeing a minimum percentage of women in official negotiations as well as in government positions. The Beijing Platform for Action calls for a 30 per cent minimum representation of women in decision-making bodies and UN Security Council Resolution 1325 urges the appointment of women in decision-making bodies and peace processes. Some NGOs have expressed dissatisfaction at the 30 per cent minimum, especially when considering the lack of progress in the seven years since Beijing. Instead, they call for parity, with a range of 45 to 55 per cent as acceptable in a democracy.

International organizations can be facilitators for women in the peace process, bringing different groups together for working

sessions. A particularly successful partnership enabled Afghan women in the diaspora to meet with women from inside the country to develop an agenda on how to contribute to national reconstruction. Many national and international groups also serve as trainers, offering the skills women will need in order to participate in peace negotiations and peacetime governments. UNIFEM, along with various NGOs, has supported capacity-building meetings for women from Burundi and the DRC.

Women's participation in peace processes and new governments, and their efforts to rebuild judicial and civil infrastructure, cannot be achieved unless their organizing is supported. The women organizers we met needed four things to contribute to peace processes and decision making about security: safety, resources, political space and access to decision-makers.

Safety: In conflict situations, political activists and their organizations frequently face security threats; many have been killed and many more abducted, beaten and tortured. Women are particularly vulnerable, first because they are subject to sexual attacks in addition to the other dangers, and second because they are often seen as stepping outside their traditional role. Without adequate protection, women are frequently compelled to abandon activism. An enabling environment, that allows organizations and individuals to express their opinions in safety and security, would sustain current activities and encourage more women to become active.

Resources: Almost all the groups we visited, whether they are coping with a country in conflict, in transition or in post-conflict reconstruction, have significant unmet needs. A much larger pool of funds is necessary to maximize the potential of women's organizing efforts.

Political Space: Ensuring women's role in building peace requires carving out space and time for women to meet and trade information and experiences with each other.



Recent initiatives, such as that supported by Femme Afrique Solidarite and WOPPA-DRC (Women as Partners for Peace in Africa-DRC) to enhance women's participation in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD), show what can be accomplished with foresight and funding.

Access to decision-makers: While activists and NGOs are often viewed as a source of innovative ideas and information, governments and international organizations sometimes ignore them or regard them as a threat to their interests. In order to be fully and consistently represented, women's organizations must be heard and heeded by governance structures.

On Organizing for Peace the Experts call for:

1. The Secretary-General, in keeping with his personal commitment, to increase the number of women in senior positions in peace-related functions. Priority should be given to achieving gender parity in his appointment of women as Special Representatives and Envoys, beginning with the minimum of 30 per cent in the next three years, with a view to gender parity by 2015.

2. Gender equality to be recognized in all peace processes, agreements and transitional governance structures. International and regional organizations and all participating parties involved in peace processes should advocate for gender parity, maintaining a minimum 30 per cent representation of women in peace negotiations, and ensure that women's needs are taken into consideration and specifically addressed in all such agreements.

3. A United Nations Trust Fund for Women's Peace-building. This Trust Fund would leverage the political, financial and technical support needed for women's civil society organizations and women leaders to have an impact on peace efforts nationally,

regionally and internationally. The Fund should be managed by UNIFEM, in consultation with other UN bodies and women's civil society organizations.

4. UNIFEM to work closely with DPA to ensure that gender issues are incorporated in peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction in order to integrate gender perspectives in peace-building and to support women's full and equal participation in decision-making; and for UNFPA to strengthen its work in emergency situations in order to build women's capacity in conflict situations. UNIFEM and UNFPA should be represented in all relevant inter-agency bodies.

5. Peace negotiations and agreements to have a gender perspective through the full integration of women's concerns and participation in peace processes. Women's peace tables should be established and enabled through financial, political and technical assistance.

6. The UN and donors to invest in women's organizations as a strategy for conflict prevention, resolution and peace-building. Donors should exercise flexibility in responding to urgent needs and time-sensitive opportunities, and foster partnerships and networks between international, regional and local peace initiatives.

7. National electoral laws and international electoral assistance to establish quotas to achieve gender parity in decision-making positions, beginning with a minimum of 30 per cent, to ensure voter registration and education for women, to increase the ratio of women in electoral commissions and observer missions and to provide training for women candidates.



Chapter 7: Justice

Our visits to conflict situations confirmed the stark reality that women are being denied justice. With few exceptions, those who commit heinous crimes against women in war are not punished, nor are women granted redress. Worse yet, with alarming consistency, little is being done to prevent new abuses.

In times of war and societal breakdown, crimes against women reach new levels of brutality and frequency. Throughout history soldiers have abducted, raped, tortured and enslaved women in wartime. But attacks against women and girls in contemporary conflicts seem to occur on a greater scale and have reached an even higher level of depravity. These attacks spread terror, destroy families and shatter community cohesiveness. Violence does not happen randomly – it is determined and deliberate. Assaults on individuals and basic decency must be identified, and those responsible must be held accountable.

Each conflict runs its own brutal course and demands a unique approach to seeking accountability. Recognizing the tragedies of history is one way to protect against their recurrence. Without accountability for crimes against women, the legal foundations of new governments will be weakened, the credibility of governing institutions will be undermined and women will continue to suffer discrimination.

Increased levels of violence against women continue into the post-conflict period. Criminal activity thrives in such situations, where law enforcement is generally weak and there is rarely an effective judicial system. Women are exposed to physical and sexual violence in camps, on the street or in their homes. Perpetrators may be returning combatants, neighbours or family members. Women have nowhere to turn: law enforcement agents, military officials, peacekeeping forces or civilian police may be complicit or

themselves guilty of these acts. The failure to prevent and punish such crimes is a betrayal of women on a massive scale.

In the process of rebuilding their societies, women in conflict situations may have the opportunity to reform laws and traditions that restricted their human rights even before the conflict began. They may be able to put an end to patterns of discrimination that have gone on for centuries. A fair and effective national justice system is vital for women. Without it, and without laws that adequately protect them from domestic violence, rape and other gender-based violence, women cannot seek justice or compensation.

Rarely have women been consulted about the form, scope and modalities for seeking accountability. Historically, women have been underrepresented in judicial processes. The failure to deal with crimes committed against women in war has only recently begun to be addressed. Ultimately, ensuring accountability to women within the justice system will require a range of strategies. These can be carried out at national, regional or international levels, and through a variety of judicial methods, such as the International Criminal Court (ICC), ad hoc tribunals, special courts and tribunals and national justice systems.

In post-conflict situations where widespread atrocities have been committed, national judicial systems may lack adequate financial and human resources to handle the large number of cases. Given the limited number of cases that international and national courts can handle, traditional and community-based approaches are being viewed in some cases as a complementary, if not alternative, system of justice. However, it is essential that traditional justice mechanisms are consistent with international human rights norms and protect the rights of witnesses, victims and defendants.

Non-judicial methods, such as truth and reconciliation commissions and tradi-

tional mechanisms, can also play an important role in establishing accountability for crimes against women in war. A combination of methods may be appropriate in order to ensure that all victims secure redress.

The jurisprudence of the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and for Rwanda (ICTR) have raised the standards of accountability for crimes of sexual violence against women. They have clarified definitions of sexual violence and recognised rape as a means of torture and a form of persecution. Sexual slavery, forced nudity and sexual mutilation have also been included within the scope of their judgements.^{xii} The ICC has also become a standard bearer for dealing with crimes against women. The Rome Statute of the ICC includes forms of sexual violence in the definition of crimes against humanity and war crimes.^{xiii} Despite these advances, change is still slow overall and in many cases non-existent.

On Justice the Experts call for:

- 1. The Secretary-General to appoint a panel of experts to assess the gaps in international and national laws and standards pertaining to the protection of women in conflict and post-conflict situations and women's role in peace-building.**
- 2. States Parties to the Statute of the International Criminal Court to undertake national law reform to ensure compatibility with the Statute as a matter of priority, with particular attention given to the substantive and procedural provisions regarding crimes against women.**
- 3. National legal systems to penalize and remedy all forms of violence against women in conflict and post-conflict situations.** Specially trained police units should be established to investigate crimes

against women and law enforcement officials, including judges, police and armed forces, should be sensitized about such crimes. Women's access to justice should be ensured through legal literacy programmes, support services and legal aid.

4. Gender equality in constitutional, legislative and policy reforms. The principle of gender should be integrated into all relevant constitutional clauses, reaffirming the principles of non-discrimination, equality, affirmative action, freedom and security. Special attention should be given to family, civil and labour laws and land reforms.

5. Rapid establishment by the UN of interim judicial systems capable of dealing effectively with violations against women by family members and society at large. Rape and sexual violence should be addressed by post-conflict truth- and justice-seeking mechanisms at national and local levels. The treatment of crimes against women in traditional mechanisms should be consistent with international standards.

Chapter 8: Media Power

When hate is spread along airwaves, across television screens and on the Internet, calls for violence against women may become part of war propaganda. In 1994 prior to the genocide in Rwanda, journalists at government-owned Radio Television Libre des Mille Collines broadcast messages inciting genocide and encouraging Hutus to rape Tutsi women and then either to kill them or leave some alive to bear so-called Hutu children. In the massacre that enveloped the country, “almost all females who survived the genocide were direct victims of rape or other sexual violence, or were profoundly affected by it.”^{xiv} It is estimated that at least 250,000 women were raped. Afterwards the UN commander in Rwanda in 1994, General Romeo Dallaire, was quoted as saying that “Simply jamming Hutu broadcasts and replacing them with messages of peace and reconciliation would have had a significant impact on the course of events in Rwanda.”^{xv}

The power of the media in warfare is formidable. It can be a mediator or an interpreter or even a facilitator of conflict, whether by explicit propaganda or by editing away facts that do not fit the demands of air time or print space. The relative shortage of women at all levels in journalism, but especially in war coverage, exacerbates this problem and can have a profound effect on the type of news that is produced and disseminated. According to a 1995 UNESCO study, women constitute only 3 per cent of the staff of media organizations worldwide.^{xvi} A more recent study in the US showed that women made up only 14 per cent of top media, telecom and e-company executives in 2002.^{xvii} Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR), a US-based organization that monitors the media, conducted a survey of *New York Times* and *Washington Post* op-ed pages for the three weeks after the September 11th attacks, and found a striking gender imbalance. At the *Post* only seven out of 107

op-ed pieces were written by women, while at the *Times* eight out of 79 were written by women.^{xviii} This dearth of women’s voices and perspectives has disturbing policy implications.

Women and Media was identified as one of 12 critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action (PFA).^{xix} In ascribing to the PFA, 189 nations made a commitment to increase women’s participation in and access to media, and to promote balanced and non-stereotyped images of women. However, we have seen little change in the mainstream media; the perspectives on women are rarely nuanced, especially in conflict situations. When women appear, they are often portrayed as victims rather than as activists or analysts. They are shown huddling in doorways, crying and cradling their injured children in their arms. Ironically these images, designed to evoke sympathy, make it easier to objectify the women who survive and the horrors they have lived through. The mainstream media focuses primarily on sexual violence and victimization and rarely considers women newsworthy in their varied roles in peacekeeping and conflict resolution processes.

Nevertheless, women are increasingly learning to use the media to tell their own story, to document human rights violations and to report on peace-building. Everything from comic books to call-in radio shows, from street theatre to videos to traditional story telling is being utilized. Everywhere we went we saw women using media in creative ways to build peace. Women’s media and information networks have tended to focus on the community level, where they can communicate in a local language about issues of local importance. Many activists are calling for community media to be considered as a vital part of post-conflict infrastructure alongside housing and water.

Radio is a vital lynchpin of community information networks. The



majority of the world's 960 million illiterate people are women and radios are one of the few means available to them for receiving and creating information. Radio is a perfect medium for reaching large numbers of people, especially during conflict when small transistors may be the only source of information for uprooted populations.

At the opposite end of the technology spectrum, women are finding that digital communication offers another kind of grassroots access. Women isolated by conflict can send and receive information, and get access to organizing tools through the web.

Whether or not we have entered an 'information era,' as many people say we have, there is no doubt that the information the media spreads around the world affects war and peace as never before. We need to put women into the picture – both as producers of media information and as subjects of it. Otherwise, women's role in peace-building will continue to be ignored, and the primary images from conflict zones will be ones of despair.

On Media and Communications the Experts call for:

- 1. Increased donor resources and access for women to media and communications technology, so that gender perspectives, women's expertise and women's media can influence public discourse and decision-making on peace and security.**
- 2. UN, government, private and independent media to provide public information and education on the gender dimensions of peace processes, security, reconciliation, disarmament and human rights.**
- 3. Hate media, under any circumstances and particularly when used for direct and public incitement to commit crimes against women, to be prosecuted by national and international courts.**
- 4. Donors and agencies to support the training of editors and journalists to eliminate gender bias in reporting and investigative journalism in conflict and post-conflict situations, and to promote gender equality and perspectives.**
- 5. A panel of experts to undertake an assessment of the relevance and adequacy of standards on the military use of 'psychological and information warfare' and its impact on women.**
- 6. The Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression of the Commission on Human Rights to carry out a study on gender, media and conflict.**

Chapter 9: Prevention

Preventing deadly conflict is as much about knowing the signs as it is about acting on them. Women have much to offer but their analysis is often devalued and their solutions deemed irrelevant. The absence of information about and from women has been signalled in recent UN resolutions and reports, including the Secretary-General's July 2001 report on conflict prevention, in which he called on the Security Council to make protecting women's human rights part of conflict prevention and peace-building, and urged it to include a gender perspective in its work.

The Security Council reaffirmed this, in its Resolution 1366 on conflict prevention, which calls for greater attention to gender perspectives in the implementation of peacekeeping and peace-building mandates as well as in conflict prevention. While the importance of gender is well recognized, concrete measures to improve the flow of early warning information from and about women have not been put in place. If preventive visits and fact-finding missions to areas of potential conflict were to routinely include gender expertise and consultations with women's organizations, systematic and useable information about women could be collected and analysed. Only then could "gender perspectives" be turned into concrete early warning indicators.

Women's efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts are equally as important as the information they gather as they go about their day. Women's peaceful protest can also reveal new opportunities for non-military preventive action. Though successful in the short term, women's often bold and creative efforts at peace-building are rarely followed up or supported, despite the plethora of opportunities to do so.

Preventing future conflicts requires that a thorough and fair disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process is put into place. Disarmament is the

most essential and most frequently neglected component of the DDR effort. When weapons remain in communities after peace has been declared, women are often caught in a growing spiral of violence. Women most affected by guns often have the best ideas about how to remove them from the community. Women combatants or women who have been kidnapped and forced to accompany combatants are often ignored during demobilization efforts. Their needs must be met in everything from training in vocational alternatives to supporting their autonomous decision-making to overcoming the difficulties they face in receiving financial payments when they do not have bank accounts.

Setting quotas to address the extreme gender imbalance in the security sector is another important aspect of prevention. Different security priorities are likely to emerge when women participate in all sectors. Security sector reform also requires that the police, military and judiciary are open and democratic. This is doubly true when security sector functions are privatized, as is happening in many countries. Private organizations and mercenaries increasingly play roles once considered the preserve of governments. Their lack of accountability is a cause for concern as well as the absence of any legislation to regulate their activities, including their treatment of women.

Increased military spending has not increased world security. Women's organizations have been at the forefront of researching and protesting the enormous resources devoted to war, asserting that the ability of military violence to achieve its aims is routinely overestimated, while the extent of its costs are underestimated. The Security Council has yet to act on Article 26 of the United Nations Charter calling for it to formulate a plan "for the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources."

On the Prevention of Conflict the Experts call for:

1. **The Secretary-General to systematically include information on the impact of armed conflict on women, and women's role in prevention and peace-building in all of his country and thematic reports to the Security Council.** Towards that end, the Secretary-General should request relevant information from UN operations and all relevant bodies.

2. **The systematic collection and analysis of information and data by all actors, using gender specific indicators to guide policy, programmes and service delivery for women in armed conflict.** This information should be provided on a regular basis to the Secretariat, Member States, inter-governmental bodies, regional organizations, NGOs and other relevant bodies. A central knowledge base should be established and maintained by UNIFEM together with a network of all relevant bodies, in particular DPA.

3. **The Security Council to formulate a plan for the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources.** Sixty years after being assigned the task, the Security Council should implement Article 26 of the United Nations Charter, taking into account the Women's Peace Petition which calls for the world's nations to redirect at least 5 per cent of national military expenditures to health, education and employment programmes each year over the next five years.

4. **UNDP, as a leading agency in the field of security sector reform, to ensure that women's protection and participation be central to the design and reform of security sector institutions and policies, especially in police, military and rule of law components.** UNDP should integrate a gender perspective into its country programmes.

5. **Operational humanitarian, human rights and development bodies to develop indicators to determine the extent to which gender is mainstreamed throughout their operations in conflict and post-conflict situations and ensure that 'gender mainstreaming' produces measurable results and is not lost in generalities and vague references to gender.** Measures should be put in place to address the gaps and obstacles encountered in implementation.

6. **Inter-governmental and regional organizations to strengthen and expand women's role in conflict prevention and peace-building.** To this end, the UN together with regional organizations should convene an Expert Group Meeting to improve collaboration, share information and develop expertise.

7. **In cooperation with relevant UN bodies, UNIFEM to develop and test a set of gender-based early warning indicators for mainstreaming into the UN Early Warning Framework and explore use of such indicators with regional organizations.**

8. **Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) initiatives to equitably benefit women ex-combatants and those forced into service by armed groups.** Resettlement allowances and other forms of support should be provided on a long-term basis.

9. **The UN to conduct a 'lessons learned' study on the gender aspects of DDR processes in which it has been involved.**

Chapter 10: Reconstruction

In making a transition from war to peace, resources matter. Whether in the midst of conflict or after peace agreements were signed, we met women spending hours of unpaid labour to provide basic necessities such as water, fuel and food for themselves and their families. Women also provide health care at home. Restoring basic public services will lessen burdens on women, but reconstruction efforts of the past decades have neglected, by design, that essential task.

While seemingly gender-neutral, every policy decision made in relation to public services will drastically affect women's lives since this is precisely the area in which women provide the majority of their unpaid labour. The privatization of electricity, water and land is particularly devastating for women, who generally do not have the means to purchase land and are unable to afford market rates for electricity and water. Even in countries where women have traditionally been allowed to own land, transactions are likely to be negotiated by men. That means that when land is available for purchase widows and single women who are without a male relative may be unable to obtain credit, capital and other necessary resources. Education could also play a critical role for women by providing them with the capabilities that would allow them to participate fully in the new economy and nation being created.

Reconstruction provides a rare opportunity for women not only to help shape emerging political, economic and social structures, but to benefit from the large amount of funds pooled by bilateral and multilateral donors. For women to benefit equitably from transitional aid, specific policy and programme strategies are needed. Data must be broken out by gender, so that those developing a transitional assistance plan can understand how it will affect women.

Although the 2002 Needs Assessment for Afghanistan, prepared by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, made important gestures to improving women's status, it did not include women or gender issues as a specific sector. Only .07 per cent of funds were requested for women-specific projects in the \$1.7 billion UN-sponsored Immediate and Transitional Assistance Programme for 2002.^{xx} We understand that this should not be taken as the only indicator to measure how reconstruction benefits women; there is no question that women will benefit from funds and programmes in other sectors. But the fact that gender remains one of the least funded sectors in a country where women's inequality was so central to the conflict is wholly unacceptable.

Similar data emerges from other transition plans. The World Bank Reconstruction and Development Programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina has no gender analysis.^{xxi} The World Bank Group Transitional Support Strategy for Kosovo does not mention gender or women at all. Nor did the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) Consolidated Budget for 2001, except for one gender-training project costing \$31,000, or approximately .006 per cent of the total budget of \$467 million. No money is committed to supporting this project after the initial funding.^{xxii} In East Timor's draft national budget, the Office of Equality was given only 6 permanent staff out of a total of nearly 15,000 civil servants, and a budget of less than half of one per cent – \$38,000 – of a total budget of approximately \$77 million.^{xxiii}

Understanding how donors and governments give priority to women in their budgets is often referred to as 'gender budget analysis' – the assessment of whether budgets give priority to women. Using this to assess the budgets of transitional assistance plans and national programmes helps to clarify whether women will benefit from available resources.

International financial institutions, donors and the United Nations can help ensure that gender equality is a part of governance programmes and economic reforms. When funding reconstruction – building roads, and supplying transportation systems, power, telecommunications, housing, water and sanitation – these institutions can insist on policy and structural reforms that are responsive to women’s needs and can create entry points for their participation.

Post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building must support a society’s transition while also addressing root causes of conflict. This process – neither strictly humanitarian nor developmental in character, but an amalgam of both – cannot take place without involving women. There is no doubt in our minds that reconstruction and peace-building require specific strategies to support women, and that women can be engaged in all phases of the transition to a peacetime economy. Indeed, investing in women may be one of the most effective means for real, sustainable development and peace-building.

On Reconstruction the Experts call for:

1. Gender budget analysis of humanitarian assistance and post-conflict reconstruction to ensure that women benefit directly from resources mobilized through multilateral and bilateral donors, including the Consolidated Appeals Process, the Bretton Woods Institutions and donor conferences.

2. Establishment of macroeconomic policies in post-conflict reconstruction that prioritize the public provision of food, water, sanitation, health and energy, the key sectors in which women provide unpaid labour. Special attention should be paid to the consequences for women of decentralization policies.

3. A lead organization to be designated within the United Nations for women’s education and training in conflict and post-

conflict situations. This lead organization, together with UNESCO, UNHCR and UNICEF, should ensure that all education programmes for displaced persons provide for women as well as girls.

4. The World Bank, bilateral donors, UNDP and all other relevant UN departments, funds and agencies to integrate gender analysis in needs assessments for post-conflict reconstruction and throughout the planning, design, implementation of and reporting on programmes.

5. International organizations and governments to introduce affirmative measures that give local women priority in recruitment during emergencies and post-conflict reconstruction.

6. Affirmative measures to be adopted to guarantee women’s socio-economic rights including employment, property ownership and inheritance and access to UN and public sector procurement in post-conflict reconstruction.

7. The International Labour Organization (ILO) to expand vocational and skills training for women in post-conflict situations including in non-traditional, public and private sectors, in a manner that is sustainable and responsive to the local and national economy.



ENDNOTES

- ⁱ S/Res/1325 (2000) <http://www.un.org/>
- ⁱⁱ Graça Machel, "War-Affected Children," *The Machel Review 1996-2000*.
- ⁱⁱⁱ The Secretary-General's Study on Women, Peace and Security, New York: United Nations, 2002.
- ^{iv} Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services A/57/465, 11 October 2002.
- ^v "War-related Sexual Violence in Sierra Leone," Physicians for Human Rights with the support of the UN Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone, Massachusetts, 2002.
- ^{vi} Organisation of African Unity (OAU) [currently African Union (AU)], "Rwanda, the Preventable Genocide," Report of the International Panel of Eminent Personalities to Investigate the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda and the Surrounding Events, Organization of African Unity (OAU), 2000.
- ^{vii} "Report of the Special Rapporteur on Systematic Rape, Sexual Slavery and Slavery-like Practices During Armed Conflict," E/CN.4/Sub/2/1998/13, 22 June 1998.
- ^{viii} Charlotte Lindsey, *Women Facing War*, Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, 2002.
- ^{ix} Report of the Secretary-General on protection for humanitarian assistance to refugees and others in conflict situations, 22 September 1998, paragraph 12, <http://www.un.org/>
- ^x Norwegian Refugee Council, Global IDP Project, <http://www.idpproject.org/>
- ^{xi} S/Res/1308 (2000) <http://www.un.org/>
- ^{xii} The ICTY and ICTR have upheld convictions of rape and other forms of sexual violence as instruments of genocide (*Akayesu*), crimes against humanity (*Akayesu*, *Kunarac*), war crimes (*Celebici*, *Furundzija*), forms of torture (*Kunarac*, *Celebici*, *Furundzija*), means of persecution (*Kvocka*), and forms and indicia of enslavement (*Kunarac*)
- ^{xiii} Articles 7 and 8 of the Statute (crimes against humanity and war crimes) list gender-specific crimes, including rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization and other forms of sexual violence of comparable gravity. <http://www.un.org/law/icc/statute/>
- ^{xiv} OAU, "Rwanda, the Preventable Genocide," op. cit.
- ^{xv} Media Network, "Counteracting Hate Radio," Radio Netherlands Wereldomroep, <http://www.rnw.nl/realradio/dossiers/>
- ^{xvi} Margaret Gallagher, *An Unfinished Story: Gender Patterns in Media Employment*, Geneva: UNESCO, 1995.
- ^{xvii} Annenberg Public Policy Center (APPC), "The Glass Ceiling in the Executive Suite: The second annual Annenberg Public Policy Center analysis of women leaders in communication companies," University of Pennsylvania, 2002, <http://www.appcpenn.org/press/>
- ^{xviii} Cited in Danny Schechter, "Warring with the Coverage of War: Dissent disappears from media coverage," *Resist*, December 2001, <http://www.resistinc.org/newsletter/>
- ^{xix} <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/media.htm>
- ^{xx} http://www.aims.org.pk/funding_updates/
- ^{xxi} <http://www.worldbank.org/ba/ECA/>
- ^{xxii} UNMIK Kosovo Consolidated Budget for 2000, <http://www.seerecon.org/Kosovo/UNMIK/>
- ^{xxiii} The East Timor Combined Sources Budget 2002-2003, Budget Paper No.1, Draft (pending final clearance of text by Council of Ministers, 7 May 2002).

Elisabeth Rehn and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf travelled to many of the world's conflict zones and talked to women and girls who have experienced the devastating impact firsthand. Their analysis, insights and recommendations provide food for thought to the Security Council, as well as for the UN system and civil society.

Kofi Annan
Secretary-General of the United Nations
UN Security Council
October 28, 2002

In addition to bringing the voices of women to the Security Council, Elisabeth Rehn and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf performed a remarkable job by bringing the Security Council to women who are coping in the midst of crisis. The faith of women in a better future is strengthened when they know that their message is heard, lessons are learned from their accounts and the potential they offer is utilized. Women provide a major contribution to international peace and security.

Tarja Halonen
President of the Republic of Finland

An honest, frank and courageous report that can help mobilize public opinion to recognize that we cannot have weapons-based security—it leads to the destruction and horrors we have seen affecting women in various parts of the world. We need true human security, as well as economic and social justice, which makes development possible.

Jayantha Dhanapala
Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations
for Disarmament Affairs

