

PEACE & SECURITY - THIS IS OUR BUSINESS!

young experts from the South Caucasus



photo by Galina Petrashevili

If we don't end war, war will end us

THE PAST century has been a transformation in women's rights, with countries in every region expanding the scope of women's legal entitlements. Nevertheless for most of the women around the world the laws that exist on paper do not always translate into equality and justice. This unsatisfactory practice is not different when it comes to dealing with peace-building, recovery and post-conflict processes. Five United Nations Security Council resolutions have together recognized the impact of conflict on women, established that sexual violence in conflict is a matter of international peace and security and have put in place concrete measures to ensure accountability of governments.

When, in 2000, the UN Security Council passed the groundbreaking and the first one of these resolutions - resolution 1325, it was the first time that the importance of women's role in peace-building was recognized. The resolution emphasized the need for women's equal and full participation in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security. It also called for attention to the special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement, rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction.

Despite this progress and recognition, the number of women participating in peace processes remains small and provisions within peace agreements often fail to address women's rights adequately. A study of 585 peace agreements made since 1990 found that only 16 percent contain any references to women and only 7 percent include mention of gender equality or women's human rights.

Women's active participation in rebuilding the post-conflict state is crucial and starts with peace negotiations. It is important not only as a form of reparation but it is critical for

bringing about lasting and fundamental change in the societies. Peace agreements establish the overarching framework for the transition and democratization process in the respective country, often defining who has the power and how it will be exercised..

The reason why International Gender Policy Network (IGPN) started to implement the project "Support strengthening the role of young women in building peace and stability in the South Caucasus" is not only because the South Caucasus is an important part of region where IGPN operates, but because we strongly believe that international community has to be actively engaged in support of implementation of measures defined in resolutions, created at global scale to serve and pursue principles of human rights protection.

With the project we are launching, we would like to support young women in the South Caucasus to be prepared to take an active part in the peace negotiations in the region, because these negotiations open up the possibility of reframing political and civic leadership, with women at the center. Women's participation in the design of all post-conflict justice mechanisms, in peace processes and in political decision-making is essential for ensuring that the state advances women's rights and justice for all.



Kristina KOSATÍKOVÁ
 IGPN Executive Director

THE PROJECT - “Support strengthening the role of young women in building peace and stability in the South Caucasus” is the Regional project financed by OSI (Open Society Institute) and implemented by IGPN - International Gender Policy Network in partnership with Taso Foundation in Georgia.

The project aims to improve peace, security and democratic development in the Region of the South Caucasus via young women’s increased participation in peace and security policy analysis and planning. This will be done through the application of the international instruments such as UNSCRs on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and National Action Plans (NAP) for the implementation of UNSCRs on Women, Peace and Security which represents an important opening for the post-conflict Region of the South Caucasus to include women’s issues in the political and security agenda. This will be an effective mechanism to advance more open and participatory process as well as effective and stable security and peace building activities in the post-conflict environment of the South Caucasus countries.

Within the Project framework on August 2013, the South Caucasus Young Women Experts’ Network was established at the Regional Conference focused on Promoting Women’s Participation in Peace and Security. 10 young girls/graduate and postgraduate students with the educational background in political and social sciences from Armenia, Georgia and Azerbai-

jan gathered in Georgia and created the South Caucasus network of young professionals in order to actively participate in the Regional peace-building process.

The project has many planned activities, among is the issuance of quarterly electronic newsletter. The presented newsletter is the first attempt to share with the wider public the ideas on women’s participation in peace and security domain, their needs and requirements during and post-conflict environment, their role in post-conflict rehabilitation and peace building process.

We will be more than happy to get your opinion regarding this newsletter and the topics covered in it, so please feel free to contact us and share your thoughts and ideas.

Thank you very much for your interest and cooperation,
Best regards,



Nino LAGVILAVA,
Project Manager
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THE NEW NETWORK, THE FIRST MEETING: GOALS & RESULTS Telavi, Georgia, 5-9 August, 2013

On 5-9 August 2013, within the framework of the Project - “Support strengthening the role of young women in building peace and stability in the South Caucasus” a Regional inception conference on Promoting Women’s Participation in Peace and Security was organized in the city of Telavi, Georgia. Four day conference included seminar and introductory information sharing on Women’s Human Rights and UN mechanisms and instruments for the implementation of women’s rights.

UNSCRs on Women, Peace and Security were also a day

topic including needs for NAPs for the resolutions’ implementation. The third day was dedicated to peace journalism, role of social networking/ blogging etc. Last day of the conference was full of inspiration, expectations, and new ideas and planning. Culmination of the conference was establishment of the South Caucasus Young Women Experts’ Network for Peace and Security.

On August 5, at 24:00, the conference participants joined the Global Bell Ringing for Peace and a World without War Ceremony. With candle lighting and bell ringing the Network members commemorated the anniversary of bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and joined the people around the world who wish to transform the remembrance of horror into a rededication of life. The Conference was ended by film show on women’s role in peacebuilding which was followed by live discussion. The conference once again proved the need for more strengthened participation of youth to advance more open and participatory peace-building process in the Region.



• The Meeting participants
Photo by Nina Ananiashvili

Cease-fire – a suspension of armed conflict agreed to by both sides. It may be aimed at freezing the conflict at place.



• UN Security Council

TOOLS FOR YOUR PEACEBUILDING

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 was passed unanimously on 31 October 2000. Resolution (S/RES/1325) is the first resolution ever passed by the Security Council that specifically addresses the impact of war on women, and women’s contributions to conflict resolution and sustainable peace.

BACKGROUND

The public gallery of the Security Council was filled with women on October 24, 2000. There was a lot of clapping that day and the word “historic” was used over and over again, and it was justified.

At last, after 55 years of the United Nations working to “end the scourge of war”, a women’s perspective on war and peace became visible in the Security Council under the Namibian Presidency. The suffering of women in war, the under-valued and under-utilized conflict prevention and peace building work of women and the leadership they show in rebuilding war-torn societies were all articulated in forty-one speeches in the Security Council chamber. The day before, Council members benefited from the expertise of NGOs in an Arria Formula meeting wherein women from Sierra Leone, Guatemala, Somalia and Tanzania spoke.

As a result, on October 31, 2000, Security Council Resolution 1325 was unanimously passed. This resolution calls for: the participation of women in decision-making and peace processes; gender perspectives and training in peacekeeping; the protection of women; and gender mainstreaming in United Nations reporting systems and programmatic implementation mechanisms. This resolution is an important tool in shifting the UN system from words to action.

NATIONAL ACTION PLANS

Implementing the Women, Peace and Security agenda is the responsibility of national governments as well as the UN. Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) contains specific text regarding national implementation, particularly in regard to women’s participation in decision-making and peace processes, the protection of women and girls and gender training. Noting slow implementation progress at the national level, in 2004 the Security Council called on Member States to implement resolution 1325 (2000), including through the development of National Action Plans (NAPs) or other national level strategies.

National Action Plans offer a tool for governments to articulate priorities and coordinate the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 at national level. NAPs serve as a guiding national policy document that is able to capture the diverse set of government bodies and stakeholders tasked with security,

foreign policy, development and gender equality.

NAPs have the potential to be effective tools for realizing the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda because they can mobilize different government branches and are often the result of the combined efforts of government and civil society. A NAP can facilitate non-duplicative interdepartmental coordination and accelerate gender mainstreaming and Security Council Resolution 1325 implementation across government.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON ACTION PLANS

Countries can also choose to collaborate on National Action Plans through a process called cross-learning, or twinning. More commonly, intergovernmental organizations develop Regional Action Plans. International and bi-lateral organizations also often offer funding and technical support or are directly involved in the development and implementation of NAPs.

CIVIL SOCIETIES ROLE IN NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION

National governments are responsible for implementing UN resolutions, while Civil Society holds government accountable by monitoring this implementation. Civil society often plays an important role in the development phase of a NAP, through consultations, submission processes and offering expertise to governments. Civil society will also often have a continuing oversight and monitoring role, being allocated a place in implementation bodies or through shadow reporting functions. The level of civil society involvement varies between nations, however comprehensive NAPs have extensive civil society involvement of civil society in common.

Outside formal processes, Civil Society also typically has an integral role in lobbying for a NAP, localizing implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, through education, training, promotion, advocacy and direct service delivery.

NAPs have the potential of being an effective tool for the implementation of the spirit of UNSCR 1325 only if a comprehensive process is undertaken and as long as it is recognized as a means to an end rather than an end in and of themselves. It is of vital importance that civil society and women’s organizations participate in process of developing a NAP as this serves to promote awareness about the role of gender equality not only to nations in conflict, but also to peaceful nations.

Source: PeaceWomen.org which is a project of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, United Nations Office.



Photo by Galina Petriashvili

Women's Rights and International Mechanisms

by Nino LAGVILAVA



• Eleanor Roosevelt with UDHR / Photo from UN archive

HUMAN RIGHTS AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Human rights are understood as “inalienable fundamental rights to which a person is inherently entitled simply because she or he is a human being.” Human rights are thus conceived as universal (applicable everywhere) and egalitarian (the same for everyone). What concerns women's rights, women's rights are entitlements to the same rights and freedoms men should enjoy; the idea is that women should have equal rights with men.

Issues commonly associated with notions of women's rights include, though are not limited to the right: to bodily integrity and autonomy; to vote (suffrage); to hold public office; to work; to fair wages or equal pay; to own property, to education; to serve in the military or be conscripted; to enter into legal contracts; and to have marital, parental and religious rights.

Conflict resolution – efforts to address the underlying causes of a conflict by finding common interests. It includes generating trust through reconciliation initiatives and building the institutions and processes through which the parties interact peacefully.

BACKGROUND HISTORY TO HUMAN RIGHTS

THE MODERN concept of Human Rights can be traced to Renaissance Europe and the Protestant Reformation, alongside the disappearance of the feudal authoritarianism and religious conservatism that dominated the Middle ages.

Starting in the late 18th century, rights, as a concept and claim, gained increasing political, social and philosophical importance in Europe. Movements emerged which demanded freedom of religion, abolition of slavery, rights for women, rights for those who did not own property and rights to universal suffrage.

In the late 18th century the question of women's rights also became central to European political debates and the women started demanding women's rights promotion. Its origins are attributed to 18th century France and Britain. In October, 1789 6000 Parisian women marched to Versailles to request bread to Louis XVI. In 1791 the French playwright and political activist Olympe de Gouges published the Declaration of the Rights of Women and the Female Citizen, modeled on the Declaration of the Rights of Men and of the Citizen of 1789. The Declaration was ironic in formulation and exposes the failure of the French Revolution devoted to equality. It states that: “This revolution will only take effect when all women become fully aware of their deplorable condition, and of the rights they have lost in society”. In 1840 women in America started a campaign against slavery.

THE SUFFRAGE - THE RIGHT TO VOTE

Women's suffrage is the right of women to vote on the same term as men and to run for office.

It was in Britain in 1865 Women submitted petition to Common Chamber to give an active votes rights to women. 19th century movement for women's rights spread through Britain and its colonies, the United States and northern Europe. New Zealand was the first self-governing nation country to give women the right to vote on a national level in 1893. After 1893 women's suffrage quickly became a central element in New Zealand's image as a progressive 'social laboratory' of the South Pacific. In New Zealand too, women still had a long way to go to achieve political equality.

Women would not gain the right to stand for Parliament until 1919, and the first female MP (Elizabeth McCombs) was not elected until 1933 - 40 years after the introduction of women's suffrage. Australia gave women the right to vote in 1902. A number of Nordic countries gave women the right to vote in early 20th century: Finland (1906), Norway(1913), Denmark(1915). With

the end of the First World War many other countries followed – the Netherlands (1917), Austria, Canada, USSR, Poland, and Sweden (1918), Germany and Luxembourg, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia (1919), United States (1920). Spain gave women the right to vote in 1931, France in 1944, Belgium, Italy, Romania and Yugoslavia in 1945; Iran gave women the rights to vote in 1963; Switzerland gave women the right to vote in 1971, and Liechtenstein in 1984.

In the subsequent decades women's rights again became an important issue in the English speaking world. By the 1960s the movement was called “feminism” or “women's liberation.” Reformers wanted the same pay as men, equal rights in law, and the freedom to plan their families or not have children at all. Their efforts were met with mixed results.

WOMEN'S CIVIL SOCIETY MOVEMENT

A civil society is a public space between the state, the market and the ordinary household, in which people can debate and tackle action. Human rights organizations have been said to “translate complex international issues into activities to be undertaken by concerned citizens in their own community”. Human rights organizations frequently engage in lobbying and advocacy in an effort to convince the United Nations, supranational bodies and national governments to adopt their policies on human rights. Many human-rights organizations have observer status at the various UN bodies tasked with protecting human rights.

All major international documents adopted by UN are result of civil society activists' and international women's movement. Started in the 1920s and 1930s, women's international organizations, still young though, had interesting collaboration with the first inter-governmental peace organization, the League of Nations. After the WWI, when in 1919 the League of Nations and ILO were created, women founded the Inter-Allied Suffrage Conference (IASC), calling for the promotion of universal suffrage in Member States, abolishing trafficking in women and children, creation of an international education and health bureau and the control and reduction of armaments. The League of Nations established a body for international legal protection of the human rights of particular minority groups and organizations, this was the start of the dialogue between international non-governmental. INGOs were estimated to represent 45 million women, but “a leadership cohort of middle and upper-class British, Scandinavian and American women who met on a regular basis in London

Citizen diplomacy – unofficial contact between people of different countries, as differentiated from official contacts between governmental representatives. It includes exchanging the people, like student exchanges, international religious, scientific and cultural activities.

or Geneva coordinated women's international work.” Newly-established women's international organizations arranged the first parallel NGO conference to coincide with an inter-governmental conference. The aim of the parallel conference was to make women's voices heard in governmental discussions. However, it was not until 25 years later, at the founding of the UN, that some of the proposals made in 1919 by women reached the ears of the governments. Women's early proposals included international collaboration in fields such as education and health care; but the world had to wait until 1946 to see the UN establish the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to address these issues. Women also had clear demands regarding disarmament and arms control—issues that were to become fundamental elements of the UN's work from the outset.

In recent decades, parallel NGO conferences have become a permanent feature in connection with UN world conferences and gather thousands of people from around the world to monitor the inter-governmental events. These people's fora create massive publicity for issues that women activists from around the world want to bring to the public's attention. All results on women's issues at UN as well as national level are achieved with strongest participation and pressure of women's civil society movement at all levels. Four UN World conferences on Women have been organized to advance women's issues and gender equality.



An eye for an eye will make whole world blind



• Women Movement has a strong background

THE UN AND INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Many of the basic ideas that animated the HR movement developed in the aftermath of the WWI and WWII. The atrocities of WWI and WWII including the Holocaust, culminated in creation of United Nations and adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by UN General Assembly in 1948. UN Charter of 1945 and Universal Declaration of Human Rights both enshrined "the equal rights of men and women", and addressed both the equality and equity issues.

UN CHARTER OF 1945

UN support for the rights of women began with the Organization's founding Charter :Article 1:"To achieve international co-operation ... in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion."

Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 was the first international document that recognized equal rights for men and women: Article 2: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" and that "everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status"

WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS IN HUMAN RIGHTS PACTS

UN subsequently elaborated on HR in details in its two following conventions, so called HR Pacts which together with the UDHR made up the Bill of Rights - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Accountability – the notion that individuals, including public affairs, should be held responsible for their action. Political accountability means responsible or obligation of government to act in the best interests of the society.

Legal accountability means the mechanisms by which public officials can be held liable the actions that go against established rules and principles.

(Civil Pact) of 1966 (entered into force in 1976) and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Social Pact) of 1966 (entered into force in 1976). Provisions for gender equality in the Human Rights Pacts: Art.2. Civil Pact/Social pact: (...) guarantee that the rights enunciated in the present Covenants will be exercised without discrimination of any kind as to race, colour, sex, (...) or social origin; Art.3. Civil Pact/ Social Pact: Equal rights of men and women to exercise all rights set forth in the present Covenants; Art.7. Social Pact: Right to equal remuneration for work of equal value and guarantee of conditions of work not inferior to those enjoyed by men; Art.10. Social Pact: Protection accorded to mothers before and after childbirth; Art.23. Civil Pact: Equal rights and responsibilities of spouses as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution; Art.23. Civil Pact: (...) guarantee to all persons equal and effective legal protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, (...).

Though universal conventions pioneered the protection of human rights of women, however the concept and application of these conventions were essentially male centered and although these instruments reflected the growing sophistication of the UN system with regard to the protection and promotion of women's human rights, the approach they reflected was fragmentary, as they failed to deal with discrimination against women in a comprehensive way. In addition, there was concern that the general human rights regime was not, in fact, working as well as it might to protect and promote the rights of women.

(to be continued)

YOUNG COLLEAGUES, BE BOLD AND AMBITIOUS!



Tamara HOVNATANYAN
ProMedia Gender NGO Head.
/Armenia /

SECURITY – THE QUESTION FOR YOU

Today, when many people feel their vulnerability to various circumstances, they suffer from lack of confidence and uncertainty not only

of tomorrow, but also the current day, the term "security" has entered our political lexicon. It is directly connected to the aspects of female participation to prevent emerging threats - both at the regional, and international levels. Under the conditions of the extremely painful and inconsistent transformations taking place in the new states, in social – political and spiritual spheres, there appear new challenges and threats. There is much to talk about.

And we are talking about it. We understand that very few people hear, but we still say: "Women should be involved at all levels, including the intergovernmental level to solve security problems".

For 20 years, the South Caucasus has been an area of conflicts. All this time women worked for conflict settlement. Women's organizations have made a great contribution to the understanding of the conflict, its resolution and prevention. I can tell you about hundreds of events, in which we participated. Many of them were organized by different coalitions, which we created together with colleagues from Georgia and Azerbaijan. Are we closer to peace? I find it difficult to answer this question. Civic groups have limited access to public policy. This is the main problem. There are no women in national delegations who are engaged in peace talks. There are no women in the power ministries. This is a problem! This is harmful for the development of our countries. I believe that the situation will change. I therefore welcome the young women who aspire to make a career in this field. The number of women in this field should grow.



WE BELIEVE IN YOU

Mehriban ZEINALOVA
The Clean World NGO Leader
/ Azerbaijan /

Time has come for us, women to start talking strictly. We are half of the world, we give this world half of the budget paid from our pockets, we give lives to generations, we fill up the human resources - and what we are left with? Our money is being used on implementation of military projects and what we have in the end is wars, destroyed ecology and immeasurable violence.

We are talking about this, trying to make ourselves heard but with no success. Time has come for to demand, not ask. We should demand to show us how money from the budget we create is used - we have to make sure that the money is spent adequately.

We have to initiate laws against grown military budgets, we have to decrease financial support to these budgets and increase funding of social, cultural and gender projects.



Photo by Galina Petriashvili

I like project very much and a new network of young women experts. I wish more ambition that will bring success! We, your mothers and elder sisters, will support you maximum way we can. We are happy to learn from you, and find new inspiration. Good luck to you!



ASK YOUR QUESTIONS!

Galina PETRIASHVILI
GenderMediaCaucasus Journalists'
Association President
/ Georgia /

Threats that surround us are numerous and hard to overcome. There are military, political, economic, eco-

logical, demographic, regional, global and other threats around us...

All this concerns us and leads to our personal desperation vis-a-vis these challenges. Oftentimes we are likely to believe that we are powerless and that we should not even ask our questions.

Security service! State security official! These words are so important. Something that should be discussed in the governmental cabinets or proclaimed from the state tribunes only. But in case when your son or your husband becomes a direct participant of these issues – will you be able to view it all as an abstract only? It is difficult to understand why, but the security issues are discussed (behind the closed doors, generally) by men only, who have a huge experience of being politicians and governmental officials. Why is it this way? Democratic principles and common sense give us a good hint, pointing out that these issues need an outsider's critical opinion. But those, who are used to work in a closed, secret zone dislike civil control and do their best to stop discussion as much as they can.

This is a very interesting issue from the point of view of gender. The question can be put simply: why is the field, which is vitally important for both men and women, and which is supported by the taxes of both men and women, given to the men only?

Here is the question. Let's ask.



• Meeting in Telavi 5-9 August:
participants from Azerbaijan
Photo by Galina Petriashvili



THE MAIN WORD

The most common word we hear nowadays, I think, is democracy, but do we really understand the meaning of that governing form? Of course every single person gives its own definition, but the guideline of democracy is that every citizen is equal without any discrimination.

While many scholars argue that for peace making the democracy is the best environment, others claim that system when everyone is equal is impossible to exist in nature ...

But if we go deeper, the very first thing to survive is to have peace. There are many ways how to build peace, like supporting each other in war situation, spreading peace messages, creating organizations or simply use the new technology to stay in touch and let the sound of peace heard by everyone through internet.

When the peace becomes the most important problem to be solved, many States with their different views or lifestyle can find the common decision to live in harmony, however it does not mean that only governments are responsible for our better lives.

We all are able to build our happy and peaceful life, eliminate violence and help each other through peacebuilding activities.

Nina ANANIASHVILI
Young Experts' Network member
/ Georgia/



WE CAN DO IT!

It's a little bit trivial to repeat all the time that peace-building and security issues are very important and necessary. Of course, it is, and everyone knows about that. And there are a lot of different projects which work for peace and stability issues. But the essential feature of the project "Support strengthening the role of young women in building peace and stability in the South Caucasus" is that the participants are only young women who are educated and motivated. I want to say that for me personally it's very interesting project. What do I hope to achieve? Well, I'm more than sure that it will be very beneficial and fruitful. I hope this project will help me develop my professional skills and contribute to peace-building processes

in this region where I live. It will be a useful experience. Every organization and community needs professional and experienced persons who can make contribution to different social activities; it can be done through the individuals like me and my friends from this project. I will try my best in order to be an active member of the recently established Network for advancing regional peace and security and bring the knowledge and experience I will get from the Network to my community for improving our lives and peaceful environment.

Milana IBRAHIMOVA
Young Experts' Network member /
Azerbaijan/



WHERE TO LOOK FOR HARMONY?

Women have always directed their energy in proper direction; women don't have the "unwritten obligatory rules" which are common for the men's world, women are more restricted in their instincts, let's say they are in a 'higher level of civilization'. In the ancient Egyptian civilization the era of matriarchy is remembered as a period of prosperity and peace, while the patriarchy (an era which is still maintained)-an era of war. In this respect the matriarchy is not a mirror-image of the patriarchy, it is a period of "original unity", the unity of male and female beginnings with the help of which the harmony is created in the universe; it is known from the ancient times that the absence of male and female equality leads to disasters. The harmony has been violated under the patriarchal era, that's why the "rule of war" is still dominating. The best solution to re-establish the "art perceptions" (typical for matriarchal era) is to seek the equality of two beginnings especially in the development and implementation of peace and security processes.

Lilit PIPOYAN
Young Experts' Network member
/ Armenia /



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