



PRIO

‘Women, Power and Politics’

International conference hosted by PRIO and FOKUS

PRIO Gender, Peace
and Security Update

Issue 5 2013

The PRIO Gender Peace and Security Update is an electronic newsletter launched by PRIO’s Gender Team in response to growing interest among the public for information about women, peace and security issues. The newsletter will keep readers informed of the latest developments both internationally and in Norway in relation to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security and subsequent resolutions.



Gro Harlem Brundtland, former Prime Minister of Norway, speaks at the conference Women, Power and Politics.

"Why is it so important to promote and safeguard gender equality? It is a matter of human rights. It is a matter of democracy. Also, it is pure common sense." - Gro Harlem Brundtland, 14 November 2013, at the international conference Women, Power and Politics: the Road to Sustainable Democracy.

On Thursday 14 and Friday 15 November PRIO, together with Forum for Women and Development (FOKUS), organized a large international conference in Oslo on the topic Women, Power and Politics: The Road to Sustainable Democracy.

With prominent speakers including

Gro Harlem Brundtland, former prime minister of Norway and now member of the UN appointed Panel of Elders, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women, Helen Clark, Administrator of UNDP, Louise Arbour, President of International Crisis Group, Bineta Diop, Founder and President of Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) and Sanam Anderlini, co-founder of the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN), the conference attracted a large Norwegian and international audience.

The international conference marked the closing of the celebration of the 2013 Centenary of Women’s Suffrage in Norway, focusing on the importance

of women's political rights in relation to matters of international peace, security and sustainable development. The aim was to look back in time as well as ahead to the future on how to involve new generations of women.

And indeed, it was a meeting point between longstanding practitioners, activists and researchers, and representatives of a younger generation realizing that the fight is not fought once and for all. This was also the message from several of the speakers, including Gro Harlem Brundtland. In her opening speech, she warned the younger generation(s) against thinking that we are already there, and that we can forget all debate about equal rights and opportunities. "Setbacks can easily happen when our attentiveness recedes," she warned, explaining that "New challenges in a constantly changing society need to keep us alert, need to be seen and acted upon." Gro Harlem Brundtland also spoke convincingly about the centrality of women to a prosperous and equitable world, illustrated by the fact that women's participation in the work force represents a larger component of the Norwegian GNP than the country's oil revenues.

In her opening remarks, the Executive Director of UN Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, stressed how women must be part of peace negotiations, saying that "Where women participate in peace negotiations, the participation of women in the political process and their political leadership in the country is enhanced." She also emphasized the need to include men in the struggle for gender equality, to make sure that the transformation is about society, about both men and women being transformed.

The two-day conference included sessions on International Legal Instruments for Women's Rights, Quotas and Women's Political Participation, The Effect of the Global Financial Crisis on Women, The Arab Spring and Women's

Role in Emerging Democracies, and Women's Participation in Peace Processes.

"Women must participate in Peace Processes"

In the session on women's participation in peace processes moderated by PRIO Researcher and project leader Torunn L. Tryggstad, Sanam Anderlini spoke from a wealth of experience on the topic. "We are getting the question of ending war confused with the question of making peace," she said, before pointing to how in today's peace processes, if you are violent and armed, you will be included in negotiations. "In the last 20 years, one of the things

specifically women's participation, was in focus during this session – which also included Bandana Rana, President of Saathi and member of the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, Nepal, and Adriana María Benjumea, Director of Humanas, Colombia. They spoke about women's participation in the peace process in their respective countries, describing one striking similarity in both cases: The women and women's organizations, which had been very active in different ways during the conflict, were excluded in the peace process that followed. In Nepal, women had been active across political and ethnic divides during the conflict, but in the aftermath the women's



Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women. Photo: Julie Lunde Lillesæter/PRIO

that have happened on the international level is that we recognized that there exist non-state actors in war," she said, "What we haven't recognized is that there are also non-armed actors: and typically women leaders are to be found here." Anderlini further emphasized that we have to practice a democratic process if we want a democratic outcome, referring to the multiplicity of actors and the need for inclusion of civil society.

Civil society participation, and more

movement became fragmented as a result of the politics of the leaders. In the case of Colombia, women came to be conceived as opponents to peace, in their demands for justice. In Adriana María Benjumea words, "we are not [opposed to peace], but we also need justice. Peace that does not include women will be a very weak peace."

Religious barriers

One recurring topic during the conference concerned the situation of women living in countries dominated by strong



Khalida Popal, Women's rights activist and former Captain of the National Afghan women's football team. Photo: Julie Lunde Lillesæter/PRIO

patriarchal structures, particularly in Muslim countries. The programme also included a session dedicated to the Arab Spring and Women's Role in Emerging Democracies, with Shirin Ebadi, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and Human Rights Advocate, Madeleine Rees, Secretary General at Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), and Hibaaq Osman, CEO and Founder of Karama – Dignity and Equality, a Cairo-based organization working in the entire Middle East.

Nobel Laureate Shirin Ebadi praised the Saudi women who started the campaign for the right to drive for their choice of argumentation. As she said, "since there is nothing about driving in Islam, they cannot tell these women that they are not Muslims." She explained how the patriarchic culture in Islamic countries takes a wrong interpretation of Islam as a discourse and discriminates against women. Her advice to Muslim women was this: to find a way to fight for women's rights through religion, get to know Islam well in order to be able to interpret it correctly.

Ebadi also spoke of the situation for women's and human rights in her own country, Iran, which she described as even worse than before. Iran had elections in 2013, and the new president did not appoint a single woman as a minister. He even said openly that he is against the appointment of women as ministers. Furthermore, about two years ago the Iranian government introduced gender quotas at Universities, with the result of bringing down the number of women who enroll in certain careers. As Shirin Ebadi said, "They don't want women to have higher education – because a woman who is educated, she knows her value."

Looking to the Future

The conference ended on a note for reflection. Looking to the future, the young generation was given the stage. Hala Al Dosari, Researcher of health services and women's rights advocate, Saudi Arabia, and Khalida Popal, Women's rights activist and former Captain of the National Afghan women's football team, were joined by Maria Kristine Gøthner, City Council Secretary to the Oslo City Council Governing Mayor and board member

of the Norwegian Young Conservatives, in a discussion about their visions for the future in terms of opportunities and challenges for equal rights and opportunities.

With one panelist from Saudi Arabia, the country with the lowest employment rate for women in the world, and another that has fled her home country after receiving threats to her life caused by her wish to play football, this session left us all with an afterthought. Concerned with the situation of women in the country when the NATO forces are leaving Afghanistan, Khalida Popal urged the international community not to abandon the women of Afghanistan. "We need your help" she said, "It is not easy to be women in Afghanistan. But we will be the future of Afghanistan, if you let us."

No representative of the younger generation should doubt that there is still much to be done in the fight for women's rights and gender equality after listening to these words from a young Afghan football player.

Did you miss out on the conference?

Photos: Women, Power and Politics (Flickr Set)

Video recording: Day 1 or Day 2

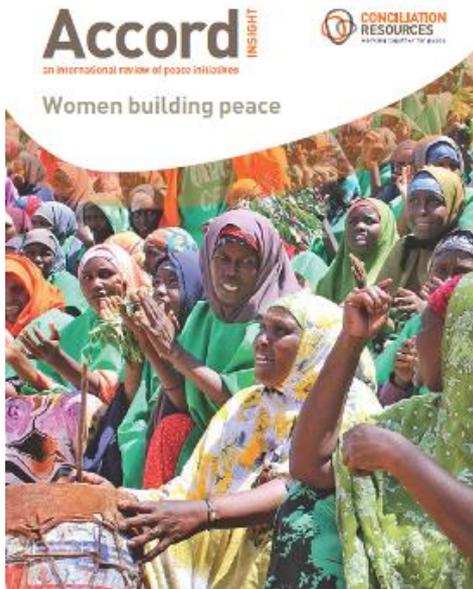
Twitter: #WPPOslo ■

"Women Building Peace"

A report by **Conciliation Resources** was launched at a seminar at PRIO on 11 November 2013.

"Women Building Peace" is an Accord Insight publication featuring first-hand accounts of women's peacebuilding experiences in Cambodia, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Papua New Guinea (Bougainville), Northern Ireland, Angola, Sudan, Indonesia (Aceh) and Somalia. The report provides insights for peacebuild-

ing practitioners and policymakers into what women peacebuilders can achieve, their challenges and innovations, and how they can be effectively supported in their efforts.



Accord Insight: Women Building Peace.

Teresa Dumasy, Head of Policy and Learning, and **Sanne Tielmans**, Policy Analyst, from Conciliation Resources gave a presentation of the report, as well as presented Conciliation Resources' engagement on Women, Peace and Security and reflected on current international responses and thinking. The seminar was chaired by PRIO Researcher **Torunn L. Tryggestad**.

This Accord Insight presents nine articles drawn from previous editions of Accord that examine the roles women have played in addressing violence and building peace. The case studies cover a period from 1998 to 2010 and contexts as far apart as Bougainville and Sierra Leone, Aceh and Northern Ireland. ■

Female Empowerment in DR Congo

New Project in Collaboration with Denis Mukwege

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a woman. Eastern DRC is a region with massive levels of sexual and gender-based violence. Norwegian and Congolese researchers will collaborate on research to improve the situation for women in Eastern DRC. Funds for this project have recently been granted by the Research Council of Norway (NOR-GLOBAL).

Dr. Denis Mukwege, who represents the Congolese partner in this project, was in Oslo in December attending the NORAD conference on aid for health and education. Mukwege is the founder and Medical Director of the General Referral Hospital Panzi in Bukavu DRC, where he has been working with survivors of sexual violence and women with severe gynecological problems for over 15 years. Apart from having treat-

ed thousands of women and being considered one of the globally leading experts on repairing the physical damage from rape and sexual violence, Dr Mukwege is one of the world's most visible advocates for women's rights and quality health care for all. When in Oslo he also visited PRIO to discuss future research collaboration.

The new project is based on a partnership between the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) and the International Centre for Advanced Research and Training (ICART) in DRC. This centre is a collaborative initiative between researchers from the Panzi Hospital, Panzi Foundation DRC, and the Université Evangelique en Afrique in Bukavu, DRC.

The project has three parts:

1. Building local research capacity through workshops and intensive training of ICART researchers in topics such as research methodology and academic publishing, particularly for female researchers;
2. Investigating how survivors of sexual and gender-based violence can be empowered and reintegrated into society through socioeconomic support pro-



PRIO Director Kristian Berg Harpviken and PRIO Senior Researchers meeting with Denis Mukwege. Photo: Julie Lunde Lillesæter, PRIO.

grams; and

3. Understanding gender relations in the area more broadly by considering both gender roles and intimate partner violence. Here we will explore general perceptions and attitudes towards gender roles and the potential for strengthening gender equality.

We will combine surveys and in-depth interviews. Research will be carried out and disseminated through close collaboration between researchers based in Norway and the DRC. Our aim is that findings from the project can be used by policy-makers and NGOs to set up more efficient programs to empower women and prevent sexual violence in the future. The project will generate knowledge within a field of critical importance globally and for Norway's development aid policy, and lessons from the project will also be relevant beyond the Congolese context.

The PRIO Researchers involved in the project are Siri Aas Rustad, Gudrun Østby, Ragnhild Nordås and Lynn P. Nygaard. ■

Armed Conflict and Maternal Health in Sub-Saharan Africa

New Young Research Talent Project

The odds that a woman in Sub-Saharan Africa will die from complications related to pregnancy and childbirth is one in 20, compared to one in 6,250 in the developed world, resulting both from high fertility and maternal mortality rates. The majority of the countries in this region have experienced armed conflict since the end of the Cold War, and this poor health performance may in part be due to the detrimental effects of armed conflicts. A new project entitled Armed Conflict and Maternal Health in Sub-Saharan Africa led by



Women in Bongouanou, Côte d'Ivoire, during a prenatal medical consultation.
Photo: UN Photo/Hien Macline.

Gudrun Østby, is one of five Young Research Talent projects which have received funds from the Research Council of Norway under the funding scheme for Independent Basic Research Projects (FRIPRO).

The primary objective of the project is to improve our understanding of how conflict affects maternal health and how to improve maternal health in post-conflict societies. This is crucial for formulating humanitarian policies to improve women's health after conflict.

We will study how civil war affects various health indicators as well as investigate what factors impact maternal health in post conflict societies. We combine statistical analysis of secondary data, such as national surveys, with qualitative analysis through fieldwork in Burundi, the DR Congo, and Liberia. While many studies focus exclusively on the direct effects of specific interventions to improve maternal health such as e.g. family planning services and the provision of obstetrical care, we broaden the scope and also consider the more distant impact of political, socio-economic, and cultural factors. Furthermore, this project is the first

systematic attempt to study determinants of maternal health in post-conflict societies at the local (sub-national) level.

In addition to Gudrun Østby, the project team includes PRIO researchers Henrik Urdal, Andreas Forø Tollefsen and Chi Primus Che, as well as Theodora-Ismene Gizelis from Essex University and Philip Verwimp from the Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management. ■

International News

The second High-Level Seminar on Gender and Inclusive Mediation Processes took place in [Helsinki on 8-10 October](#).

The UN Security Council adopted [Resolution 2122 \(2013\)](#) on 18 October 2013, aiming to strengthen women's role in all stages of conflict prevention and resolution.

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted [General Recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations](#) on 18 October 2013.

The government of Colombia appointed Ms. Nigeria Renteria to be part of its chief negotiating team on 19 November 2013. Ms. Renteria is the first woman chief negotiator to be appointed in the peace talks between Colombia's government and the FARC movement.

The UN General Assembly's Third Committee adopted a [resolution on women's rights defenders](#) on 27 November 2013. The resolution calls on all states to publicly condemn violence against women human rights defenders, amend legislation that hinders them and give activists free access to UN bodies. ■

News from Norway

PRIO and FOKUS (Forum for Women and Development) organized the international conference [Women, Power and Politics: The Road to Sustainable](#)

[Democracy in Oslo](#) on 14-15 November 2013. The conference marked the closing of the official celebration of the 2013 Centenary of Women's Suffrage in Norway (see separate story).

NUPI hosted Laura Sjoberg for a theory seminar and a book presentation of the new book entitled [Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War](#) (Columbia University Press, 2013) on Thursday 5 December.

Kvinner Frivillige Beredskap (KFB) hosted the Conference ["Sikkerhetspolitikk i et kvinneperspektiv"](#) ("Security policy from Women's Perspective") on Tuesday 5 November. The conference was part of the celebration of the 2013 Centenary of Women's Suffrage in Norway. ■

News from PRIO

PRIO and Aschehoug Publishing hosted a book talk with PRIO's Inger Skjelsbæk and the woman she has written about in the book ["Statsfeministen, statsfeminismen og verden utenfor"](#), Helga Hernes. The book talk took place at PRIO on 15 October.

The PRIO Gender Research Group hosted a seminar with Conciliation Resources on 11 November 2013 (see separate story).

The Research Network on Gender, Peace and Security held its winter meeting at PRIO on 2 December 2013. The Research Network is coordinated by PRIO Researcher Torunn L. Tryggestad.

PRIO Senior Researcher Gudrun Østby has been awarded a Young Research Talent Project on [Armed Conflict and Maternal Health in Sub-Saharan Africa](#)

from the Research Council of Norway (see separate story).

PRIO Researchers will work in collaboration with Congolese researchers, including the doctor and women's human rights defender Denis Mukwege, on a new project on [Female Empowerment in DR Congo](#) (see separate story).

A new project on Gender in Politics in Somalia led by PRIO Research Professor Cindy Horst has been funded by the Research Council of Norway.

Helga Hernes

- Gave a lecture entitled "Justifications and arguments concerning women's suffrage in Norway: 1913 and 1970 compared." University of Oslo (Arena), 25 October 2013.
- Published an article entitled "Norwegian Gender Equality Policies from 1970 to 2012" in the journal *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift*, no 4, 2013.

Inger Skjelsbæk

- Has given three lectures at the Department of Psychology at the University of Oslo (where she holds a position as Adjunct Associate Professor) on the themes of "Gender, Peace and Conflict" and "Victims and Perpetrators of Sexual Violence Crimes in War" at both Bachelor and Master levels, during the month of October.
- Was part of a panel debate on an article by Lene Bomann Larsen in *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift* entitled [Gender Diversity in the Armed Forces](#). Institute for Social Research (ISF), Oslo, 19 November 2013.
- Gave a lecture at the [Institute for Criminology at the University of Oslo on Victim's experiences in war](#). Oslo, 22 October 2013.
- Chaired the opening session at the conference [Women, Power and Politics: The Road to Sustainable](#)

Democracy. Oslo, 14-15 November 2013.

Torunn Tryggestad

- Gave a presentation of the High-Level Seminar on Gender and Inclusive Mediation Processes at a PRIO open meeting for MFA staff. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo 16 October 2013.
- Chaired seminar and commented on Conciliation Resources Report on Women and Peacebuilding. PRIO, 11 November 2013.
- Chaired panel on Women's Participation in Peace Processes at the international conference Women, Power and Politics: The Road to Sustainable Democracy. Oslo, 15 November 2013.

Christin Ormhaug

- Attended the UN Security Council's annual open debate on UNSCR 1325, in addition to having meetings with UN Women, WILPF and representatives from the Norwegian delegation to the UN. New York, 18 October 2013.
- Presented the OSCE project on UNSCR 1325 national action plans and other national strategies at the winter meeting of the Research Network on Gender, Peace and Security. PRIO, 3 December 2013. ■

Recent PRIO Publications

Tryggestad, Torunn L. (forthcoming 2014). FNs Sikkerhetsrådsresolusjon

1325 om kvinner, fred og sikkerhet - relevant for Forsvaret? (UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security – relevant for the Armed Forces?) in Anita Schjølset (Ed.) *Gender i Forsvaret. Fra teori til praksis*. Abstrakt forlag: Oslo. ■

Other Recent Publications

Coleman, Isobel (2013). *Paradise Beneath her Feet. How Women are Transforming the Middle East*, Second Edition, Random House, New York.

ICAN (2013). *From Subjects to Citizens: Women in Post-revolutionary Libya*. What the Women Say Brief 9. International Civil Society action Network (ICAN), Washington.

Mazurana, Dyan & Keith Proctor (2013). *Gender, Conflict and Peace*. Occasional Paper, World Peace Foundation at the Fletcher School, Massachusetts.

OECD (2013). *Gender and Statebuilding in Fragile and Conflict-affected States*. Conflict and Fragility, OECD Publishing.

Schjølset, Anita (Ed.) (forthcoming 2014). *Gender i Forsvaret. Fra teori til praksis* (Gender in the Armed Forces. From Theory to Practice). Abstrakt forlag: Oslo.

Sjöberg, Laura (2013). *Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War*. Columbia University Press, New York.

Taylor, Sara et al. (2013). *Mapping Women Peace and Security in the UN Security Council 2012-2013: Report of the NGOWG Monthly Action Points*. NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, New York.

Tripp, Aili Mari, Myra Marx Ferree & Christina Ewig (Eds.) (2013). *Gender, Violence, and Human Security: Critical Feminist Perspectives*. New York University Press, New York.

Wright, Hannah (2013). *Gender, peace and security and the post-2015 framework*. Expert paper prepared for the Expert Group Meeting on Structural and policy constraints in achieving the MDGs for women and girls, Mexico City. ■

Coming Events

Book launch of *Gender i Forsvaret. Fra teori til praksis* (Gender in the Armed Forces. From Theory to Practice) at Oslo Military Society Friday 24 January 2014. <http://hogskolene.forsvaret.no/forsvaret-s-hogskole/Sider/gender-bok.aspx>

The fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 10 to 21 March 2014. The theme for this year's session is challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls. <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw> ■



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