



PRIO

‘Women Count for Peace’

Interview with Inés Alberdi, Executive Director of UNIFEM

PRIO Gender, Peace
and Security Update

May-June Issue 2010

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.

Resolution 1325
10 years 2000 - 2010



Inés Alberdi, Executive Director of UNIFEM. Interviewed by Suk Chun and Torunn L. Tryggestad, PRIO. Photo: UN

Inés Alberdi, executive director of UNIFEM, visited Norway on 7 June to talk about the new UN gender equality entity under establishment at the UN. She first met with representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and later with Norwegian civil society organisations. In addition to discussing the gender equality entity, she also shed light on how UNIFEM is commemorating the 10th anniversary of UNSCR 1325.

When was the idea of the new gender equality entity conceived, and what motivated the establishment of such an entity?

The process started in November 2006, when the establishment of a new gender entity was suggested by the High Level Panel on System-wide Coherence to improve coordination between the existing four UN gender entities: the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW). The

new entity was suggested as a response to the growing expectations and demands from civil society for the UN to more effectively address the issue of gender equality. There was a need for more financial and human resources to increase field capabilities, as well as a need to strengthen the authority of gender equality work within the UN system. A resolution was adopted by the General Assembly last year to formally establish what is called a ‘composite gender unit’ consisting of all the four gender entities listed above. Of the four existing UN gender entities, UNIFEM is by far the largest, representing 90% of the human and economic resources available for gender equality purposes.

The launch of the new gender unit will most likely coincide with the 10th anniversary of Resolution 1325 later this year. The aim is to have the new gender entity in place by the end of 2010. The mandate of the new gender unit is not entirely clear, but it will integrate all the already existing mandates from the four entities in question, coupled with some new elements.

How far has the process progressed?

UN ambassadors from Estonia and Tunisia have been appointed as interlocutors to build consensus among UN member states for the new gender entity. UNIFEM has coordinated several working groups. Norway has been very active and supportive of UNIFEM and the establishment of a new gender entity; Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg was one of the two co-chairs of the High Level Panel on System-Wide Coherence. Thus Norway has had a special focus on the gender entity issue. Currently, we are in the process of selecting a new Under-Secretary-General for the gender entity. We hope to be able to release the name of this person by the end of September. Tentatively, the newly appointed USG will assume office in January next year.

That said, what may delay the launching of the new gender entity is the lack of consensus amongst member states over the issue of funding and accountability. Should the new entity be financed through assessed or voluntary contributions? Developing countries want assessed contributions, whereas UNIFEM, for instance, is happy with voluntary contributions. When it comes to accountability, UNIFEM would prefer the new entity to be governed by an independent segment of the already existing board of directors through UNDP. We believe the members of such a board have accumulated expertise on development issues and are more likely to be sympathetic towards the new entity's needs. The coalition of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the G-77 and China has strongly advocated establishing a new board, consisting of 20% donor countries and 80% developing countries. UNIFEM is concerned that the establishment of a totally new board may not only prolong the delay, but also increase the start-up price for the new gender entity. Zambia has recently proposed a compromise solution: It calls on member states to adopt a board of existing UNDP board members to be reviewed after three years.

I also believe it is important that the new gender entity garner capability and authority to conduct and carry out programmes in the field. Thus UNIFEM believes it would be ideal for the new gender entity to become an independent agency similar to UNICEF – responsible to the General Assembly. Being placed under the UN Secretariat places more limitations on the entity to being active in the field.

What would be the relationship between SRSG for Sexual Violence Margot Wallström and the new gender entity?

UNIFEM was very active in lobbying for the SRSG position, and once the new entity is in place there must be close cooperation. The main thing we achieved with resolutions 1820 and 1888 is that sexual violence is defined as a security issue. However, for UNIFEM it is important that the new entity will have a broad mandate for peace and security, not exclusively focusing on sexual violence. We want to improve women's access to the peace and security activities of the UN.

What would UNIFEM's role be in the transitional period?

UNIFEM is not changing anything in terms of activities in preparation for the new entity. In the last few years UNIFEM has almost doubled financial and human resources, and we will continue to focus on increasing our activities and capability on the ground. There are still a lot of needs that UNIFEM is not able to attend to. UNIFEM will focus its activities on the following priority areas: improving security for women; fighting violence against women; discouraging the spread of HIV/AIDS; encouraging women's participation during conflict and the peacebuilding phase; and the impact of climate change on the economic empowerment of women. UNIFEM will also operate regional programmes in Asia and Latin America on the migration of women.

In terms of strengthening and improving security for women, and encouraging women's participation, we have a thematic unit called 'Women, Peace and Security' within UNIFEM consisting of 16 people – including consultants. We also second personnel to other UN units and entities, such as the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA). Currently personnel from UNIFEM do a six-month long secondment at the DPA Mediation Support Unit to develop a Joint Strategy on gender and mediation. The purpose of this strategy is to provide gender expertise to mediators and to increase the pool of women candidates for mediation positions. UNIFEM also has seconded one high level consultant to the Peacebuilding Support Office to assist them in drafting their report on *Women and Peacebuilding*. Moreover, a joint UNIFEM – UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) guideline paper titled 'Inventory of good practices on prevention and protection of women in conflict situation' will be published on 30 June in New York.

In addressing the issue of women and climate change, the Pacific Islands have been one of the focus areas of UNIFEM's climate change programmes. UNIFEM also works closely with UNEP, UNDP and civil society organisa-

tions that are members of the *Global Gender and Climate Change Alliance*.

What plans does UNIFEM have to mark the 10th anniversary of the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325?

We believe Resolution 1325 has not been fully implemented. Only 3% of peace accords are signed by women, and women make up only 6% of higher UN representatives, which is far from achieving the goals set by the resolution. Women count for peace – and this is also the theme chosen by UNIFEM for the anniversary year. I believe the best way of commemorating the 10th anniversary is to implement Resolution 1325 fully.

For this reason, we are refraining from celebrating. Instead, UNIFEM wants to reach out and demonstrate that the UN is listening to women's voices world-wide. For that purpose, UNIFEM has initiated, together with DPKO, a week-long event starting from 7 June titled *the Global Open Day for Women and Peace*. The event aims to provide civil societies and local NGOs dealing with women and peacebuilding issues a direct access to all UN high representatives present in the field to express their concerns and/or recommendations. All recommendations from civil society will be recorded and put together as a document to be presented to the UN Security Council in October this year. ■

Women and Peacebuilding

Summary of meeting with Brian Williams, PBSO

When Under Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support (PBSO) Judy Cheng-Hopkins visited Norway on 7 June she was accompanied by Chief of finance at PBSO, Brian Williams. The PRIO GPS Update had a brief meeting with Mr Williams to find out what the PBSO is doing in relation to women and peacebuilding.

According to Mr Williams, PBSO as a whole focuses on women and peacebuilding in a number of ways. In particular, the PBSO management think it is important to get beyond the 'women as victim' focus. Thus, in addressing gender issues, the PBSO has two overarching priority areas: advocating women's political participation, which has been successful in countries like Burundi; and funding women's projects. The aim is to

achieve a hard target of channelling 15–20% of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) funding on gender issues.

Williams stated that the PBF is currently adopting the ‘gender marker system’ for all projects. The gender marker system is a classification system to evaluate both gender equality results and funding of gender equality programmes on a scale of 0 to 3. Currently,

6% of PBF funds have been spent on gender empowerment programmes (marker 3), while 5% of PBF funds have been spent on programmes principally focusing on gender impact (marker 2).

The Peacebuilding Fund has 4 priority areas and 13 outcome areas. Outcome 8 specifically focuses on helping women overcome specific post-conflict hardship and to end gender-

based violence and discrimination. As of today, there are 20 projects funded by the PBF with a special focus on women and/or gender equality. The PBF is currently providing funding for projects in 16 countries.

PBSO is currently in the process of drafting the UN Secretary General’s Report on Women and Peacebuilding. ■

International News

The Meeting on the Global Efforts to increase the Participation of Women in United Nations Policing in Peacekeeping Operations was held at the UN Headquarters in New York on 4 June. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon emphasised the importance of empowering women within the United Nations and increasing the participation of women police officers in peacekeeping. His statement at the meeting can be accessed online:

www.un.org/apps/sg/sgstats.asp?nid=4595

Women and Agents of Change: Advancing the Role of Women in Politics and Civil Society A congressional hearing in the U.S. was convened by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on International Organisations, Human Rights and Oversight on 9 June. The hearing examined strategies that women have employed across the globe to exercise leadership in politics and civil society, highlighting the benefits of their participation. The hearing also emphasised on identifying best practices and concrete recommendations for how the US Government can strategically utilise and support women leaders as a resource for building sustainable peace and security. Statement delivered by Esther Brimmer, Assistant Secretary for Bureau of International Organisation Affairs, can be accessed online at

www.state.gov/p/io/rm/2010/142907.htm

The Global Open Day for Women and Peace was a week-long event starting 7 June. The purpose of this event was to provide local women’s organizations and activists in more than 20 countries direct access to the Special Representatives of the UN Secretary-General and other high-level officials. Concerns and recommendations expressed at these meetings will be compiled in a report to be presented to the UN Security Council in October.

The Global Open Day for Women and Peace was initiated by UNIFEM, together with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). For more information, visit www.unifem.org/campaigns/1325plus10/global-open-day/ ■

News from Norway

Judy Cheng-Hopkins, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, visited Norway on 7 June for bilateral meetings at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Later the same day, Cheng-Hopkins attended a seminar titled ‘Getting the UN to Deliver coherently on Peacebuilding’ hosted by the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI).

Inés Alberdi, Executive Director of UNIFEM, visited Norway on 7 June to meet with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Alberdi also met with women’s civil society organisations and gender researchers at a meeting convened by FOKUS, where she gave a presentation on the new gender equality entity. In January 2010 FOKUS was announced as the National Committee of UNIFEM in Norway. For more on FOKUS visit www.fokusvinner.no

The Contact Group for the implementation of the Norwegian Government’s Action Plan on Resolution 1325 met on 14 June. This group comprises of representatives of relevant ministries and directorates, NGOs and research environments in Norway. The meeting was hosted by State Secretary Gry Larsen. Taking the Action Plan as its starting point, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has just started a process of developing a strategy for more effective implementation of Resolution 1325. Sidsel Aas (formerly FOKUS, now independent consultant) will be the one drafting the strategy.

The OSLO Forum Network was convened on 15-17 June in Oslo. Co-hosted by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue in Geneva, the OSLO forum is widely acknowledged as the leading international network of conflict mediation practitioners. The aim is to improve conflict mediation and enhance the status of the profession through the ongoing exchange of field experiences. This year a separate session on gender was organised, titled *Tried and tested: Strategies for better gender practice in peacemaking*, with participants such as Margaret Vogt, Radha Kumar, Carla Koppell, Ian Martin, Azouz Ennifar, Fatima Gailani, Meredith Preston McGhie, Margrethe Løj, Nuala O’Loan and Tore Hattrem. Participation was by invitation only. All discussions were confidential and took place under the Chatham house rule.

Åslaug Haga was recently launched as Norway’s candidate to head the new UN entity for gender equality. Haga is a former leader of the Centre Party. She has also served as Minister of Cultural Affairs (1999-2000), Minister of the Interior (2005-2007) and Minister of Oil and Energy (2007-2008). She has also a diplomatic background, serving in New Dehli and New York.

Kristin S. Scharffscher at the University of Tromsø, will on 25 June defend her PhD on *Safety Management in Complex Emergencies: A study of humanitarian organisations in relation to gender-based protection*. The defense will take place at the University of Stavanger. ■

News from PRIO

Helga Hernes

participated in a panel titled ‘Gender Concerns and Practices of Security’ at *Gender*,

Peace and Security: Local Interpretations of International Norms conference at the Leonard Davis Institute for International Relations in Israel on 10-11 May. Hernes presented a paper on 'Gendering Security Concerns and Politics'.

Ragnhild Nordås, Håvard Strand, Scott Gates and Inger Skjelsbæk

received funding for the Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict (SVAC) 1989 – 2010 Dataset project from the Norwegian Foreign Ministry until end of this year. The project seeks to advance the research on conflict processes, raise awareness of the problem of sexual violence in armed conflicts, and facilitate evidence-based preventative strategies. In addition to the PRIO researchers, Assistant Professor Dara Kay Cohen from Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota, Field Consultant Amelia Hoover from Human Rights Data Analysis Group, Yale University and Associate Professor Mia Bloom from Penn State's schools of International Studies and Women's Studies will be affiliated with the project.

Anita Schjølset

presented her forthcoming PRIO paper at a seminar titled *NATO and the Women: Exploring the Gender Gap in the Armed Forces* at PRIO on 15 June. Schjølset compared recruitment and retention strategies with female military participation across NATO countries and discussed the role recruitment of women nationally play for international missions.

Torunn L. Tryggestad

was interviewed by Kilden (The Norwegian Research Council's electronic news service) about the research activities of the PRIO Gender Team related to UNSCR 1325. The interview can be accessed on <http://eng.kilden.forskingsradet.no/c52778/nyhet/vis.html?tid=72132>

The 1325 Research Network

held its half yearly meeting at PRIO on 15 June. The meetings of this network serve as

an arena for network members to present their research and exchange ideas on new projects. Five network members presented ongoing and/or planned research projects on topics such as gendering of military operations, gender and development in post-conflict Swat, and sexual violence. ■

Recent PRIO Publications

Ashild Falch (2010) 'Women's Organizations: A Driving Force Behind Women's Participation and Rights', *PRIO Policy Brief* 3. The policy brief is available online at www.prio.no/Research-and-Publications/Publication/?oid=57847924

Ashild Falch (2010) 'Affirmative Action: Kick-Start with Limitations', *PRIO Policy Brief* 2. The policy brief is available online at www.prio.no/Research-and-Publications/Publications/?mode=type&type=12

Anita Schjølset (2010) 'Closing the Gender Gap in the Armed Forces: The Varying Success of Recruitment and Retention Strategies in NATO', *PRIO Policy Brief* 4. The policy brief is available online at www.prio.no/Research-and-Publications/Publication/?oid=58469347

John Linstroth (2010) 'Gender as a Category for Analysis' in Nigel Young, ed., *The Oxford International Encyclopedia of Peace*, vol.2. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press. ■

Other Recent Publications

Inés Alberdi (2010) 'La 'trece-veinticinco': la batalla de las mujeres', *El País*, Opinión, 28 May. The article is available online at [www.elpais.com/articulo/opinion/trece-](http://www.elpais.com/articulo/opinion/trece-veinticin-)

co/batalla/mujeres/elpepuopi/20100528elpepiopi_5/Tes

Jocelyn Kelly (2010) *Rape in War: Motives of Militia in DRC*, Special Report 243, June, United States Institute of Peace. The report is available online at www.hhi.harvard.edu/images/resources/reports/rape%20in%20war%20-%20motives%20of%20militia%20in%20drc.pdf

José Sanmartín Esplugues, Isabel Iborra Marmolejo, Yolanda García Esteve, Pilar Martínez Sánchez (2010) *Partner Violence against Women: Statistics and Legislation*, 3rd International Report. The report is available online at www.centroreinasofia.es

Luisa Blanchfield (2010) *A New United Nations Entity for Women: Issues for Congress*, Congressional Research Service, May 25. The report is available online: www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R41257.pdf

Rashida Manjoo (2010) Human Rights Council: Report of UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women 2010, A/HRC/14/22, 19 April. The report is available at <http://iansa-women.org/node/446>

Sara Meger (2010) 'Rape of the Congo: Understanding Sexual Violence in the Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 2, April, pp. 119-135, Routledge.

UN Office for Disarmament Affairs and International Action Network on Small Arms (2010) *Mainstreaming Gender for the Effective Implementation of the UN PoA: Update of the 2006 CASA Guidelines*. The report is available online at www.iansawomen.org/sites/default/files/un_poa_gender_guidelines_UNODARDB_IANSAS_2010.pdf ■



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The PRIO Gender, Peace and Security Update is published by the PRIO Gender Team with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway. If you wish to find out more about PRIO Gender Team's current research projects, please visit our website www.prio.no/gender. If you have any comments or inquiries regarding the newsletter, please contact the editors: sukchun@prio.no