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**GROUP OF THE PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE OF SOCIALISTS AND DEMOCRATS IN
THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

**"WOMEN IN THE PEACE PROCESS - UNSCR 1325: 10 YEARS ON
14-15 APRIL 2010, BRUSSELS**

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Introduction

I am responsible within the International Staff at NATO Headquarters for taking forward our policy on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security. I am the chair of our civil-military task force and group of nations taking forward the work. I have been asked to talk about gender mainstreaming in NATO-led operations. First, I will take a few minutes to put this into the overall context of NATO's approach to the implementation of UNSCR 1325 with its Partnership for Peace Partners.

Why is NATO involved?

NATO's involvement began in earnest in 2007, when a group of NATO and Partnership for Peace nations raised the question: "How can NATO support UNSCR 1325?" These nations already had National Action Plans or were in the process of developing their Plans. They wanted to see more support from the international community.

This resulted in an approved NATO/Euro-Atlantic Partnership policy in December 2007 - supported in this framework by 50 NATO and Partnership for Peace nations. Since then, we have been working on practical implementation of the policy, following a 5 point internal action plan:

Action Plan

1. Mainstreaming 1325 in our policies, programmes and documentation.
2. Implementation in NATO-led operations.
3. Development of education and training in NATO civilian and military institutions and possible assistance for nations without expertise in this area.
4. Identify synergies, useful exchanges with other International Organisations (e.g. UN, EU, OSCE).

5. Develop public diplomacy to raise awareness of the issues.

The action plan is supported by a civil-military task force, an informal group of nations (19) and the NATO military committee on gender perspectives. This committee changed its terms of reference and name in June last year. It was originally the NATO Committee on women in the armed forces and has been a pioneer for gender issues at NATO HQ.

How can NATO help on the policy level in NATO-led operations?

For NATO, the approach is firmly within the framework of building and maintaining sustainable peace and security.

It was decided in 2007 that our initial focus should be on military operations. This is where NATO can add value to the whole process. So, as part of our policy, the NATO Military Authorities were tasked to develop guidelines for implementation of the Resolution, and its associated Resolutions including Resolution 1820 on sexual violence, in all NATO-led operations. This task was completed in September last year and a Directive has been issued to all NATO Commanders, as well as NATO and its Partnership for Peace nations.

The military directive is comprehensive and recognises the need to mainstream gender perspectives in operations. It is based on 3 areas: prevention, protection and participation:

- prevent the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women and children;
- protect women and children;
- foster participation of women in all aspects of operations and levels of command. This includes training, operational planning, actual operations (armed, peace support and humanitarian) and stability/reconstruction efforts.

The directive covers education and training, monitoring and evaluation. It includes a code of conduct and practical operational checklists. The military staffs are now working on concrete actions to consolidate implementation, including integration into planning and lessons learned processes, exercise scenarios and scripts impacting all levels of command - strategic, operational and tactical.

The military directive also identified the need for gender advisors in operations. I am happy to say that Autumn last year saw NATO's first gender advisor posts for operations. Netherlands and Norway took up posts at HQ ISAF in Kabul, Afghanistan in the General Staff with our top Generals. There are also gender advisors at the Headquarters of Allied Command Transformation in Norfolk, USA. And in the near future there will be gender advisors in KFOR and at Allied Command Operations Headquarters in Belgium.

The NATO Military Authorities were also asked to review the education and training requirements to support the directive - seeing what is already available, and how to

integrate 1325 into the NATO Education and Training institutions, such as the NATO School in Germany and the NATO Defence College in Rome.

This work is ongoing, but gaps have already been identified and solutions proposed. While many NATO and Partnership for Peace nations have gender awareness courses, we need to do more. On the NATO level - we will develop modules of instruction on gender-related issues associated with UNSCR 1325 for all NATO personnel. We will focus on pre-deployment training at NATO institutions and training for gender advisors.

In 2009, as part of the focus on the military aspects of the policy, a group of nations undertook a study on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan. The results were presented in May last year. The 3 main conclusions of the study related to operations are:

1. Integration of 1325 is a multidimensional process requiring a comprehensive strategy. You need to bring together all the different work strands to have a clear overall picture of what you need to do and what is being done.
2. Political and military leadership plays a crucial role in promoting and assuming responsibility for integrating 1325. The top-down approach is essential and Commanders should be held accountable for progress.
3. Expert functions are needed to enhance competence and support the use of 1325.

These Study recommendations have been taken into account while developing the NATO military directive. A practical result is the creation of the gender advisor posts in ISAF HQ in Afghanistan. The recommendations will also be taken into account in the further development of the policy at NATO in the Autumn this year.

How can NATO help on the practical level in NATO-led operations?

Afghanistan is a top NATO priority, so that is where we are developing the practical model for gender mainstreaming in NATO-led operations. It is early days, as our ISAF gender advisors have not been there very long. They are our pioneers, building the foundations to contribute to the operational effectiveness of our missions.

What are the NATO gender advisors doing?

The initial focus since Autumn last year has been on 3 main areas:

- first, **integration** into NATO HQ ISAF, enhancing awareness of the gender advisor's role and how they can assist in operations, adding the gender perspective to regular briefings and reports.
- second, **outreach** - establishing a network with Regional Commands, Provincial Reconstruction Teams, International Organisations, NGOs and local women's organisations.

- third, **contribution to operational effectiveness on the ground**- direct impact on operations is in the field. This is the role of the gender field advisors, as seen in the Provincial Reconstruction teams in Mazar-e-Sharif (led by Sweden) and Meymana (led by Norway). They advise the commanders on a daily basis on how to plan and execute the operations with a gender perspective. The Provincial Reconstruction Teams are led by their nations, so a gender advisors' network is being set up to exchange best practices and lessons learned, as well as provide a support system through ISAF Headquarters.

I will give you a few examples of the work of the gender advisers on the practical level:

- 1) Currently, they are contributing to the development of a directive for female engagement at the tactical level for ISAF. This directive will provide standardised direction and guidance for engagement with the female population in a culturally sensitive manner for all ISAF units. It will draw on best practices and lessons learned from the Regional Commands, Provincial Reconstruction Teams, US Female Engagement Teams in Helmand Province, UN, EU, NGOs and women's groups.
- 2) They are supporting the process led by the NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan (NTM-A) to fulfill the goal of the Afghan Ministry of Defence of 10% female representation in the Afghan National Army. They advise on education and training and host focus groups with local women to enhance recruitment. It is expected that 60 new female Afghan National Army Officers/NCOs will begin active duty in 2010.
- 3) In the regular campaign assessments, they provide disaggregated data by male/female to provide analysis of implications and how operations affect them in different ways. The intention is to provide gender specific information in the regular mission reporting to the UN.
- 4) Women make up 50% of the Afghan society and are vital to the reconstruction efforts. The gender advisors have facilitated contacts with the Afghan Women Business Federation, the Afghan Women Network and other NGOs led by Afghan women. The relationship has a dual benefit. For ISAF, it contributes to the situational awareness of the whole population, including women's needs. For the female population, it provides an official channel to ISAF where they can be heard, and feel more involved in the reconstruction of their country.

Under this initiative, a women's market was set up in the military compound of the ISAF Joint Command, in cooperation with the Afghan Women Business Federation. This event dispelled the myth of the stereotype role of women in Afghanistan. Focus is often on what not to do when relating to women in Afghanistan, rather than on how to involve women. The market provided a clear demonstration that Afghan women run their own businesses - 25 participated. They can enter a military compound. They do not all choose to wear a burqa. The event was talked about a lot. As a result, it raised awareness in the ISAF community. It raised the visibility of the gender advisor for the local population. It was a small step towards gaining trust and changing mind-sets of both the military and the local population.

Conclusion

In December 2007, NATO and its Partner nations recognised that the involvement of whole societies, through the implementation of Resolution 1325, not only advances the welfare of women and children, it also has a beneficial impact on the success of military operations, and therefore on sustainable peace and security.

In April 2009, the NATO Heads of State and Government highlighted the issue in their Summit communique at Strasbourg/Kehl, looking towards a comprehensive set of measures to be in place by Autumn 2010.

The key is practical implementation of 1325 and our priority both in NATO-led operations and the wider political context of our policies and programmes. The 10th Anniversary of the Resolution this Autumn provides momentum and an opportunity for change. It has to be grasped. NATO has its role to play as an organisation - as do nations.