

# Global Etiquette on Gender Issues in Peacekeeping and Peace building: An Integrative Panacea Approach to Global Peace

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## ABSTRACT

This discourse examines such issues as gender mainstreaming peace building process; and role of gender in peace keeping and peace building in modern society. It queries most concepts and approaches to conflict resolution and management which have virtually ignored or marginalized genderism. Gender approach to conflict resolution and peace building challenges non-gender participation in policy making, programmes and institutions of crisis prevention and conflict management. It is also concerned with the balancing the gender's participatory activities and their new acquired experiences in the course of a conflict would have socio-political and socio-economic consequences for the post-conflict settlement and peace-building process globally. Gender balance and equality in a wider sense of social justice, is therefore an essential requirement for any sustainable development and peace-building activity in contemporary human society.

**Keywords:** Gender, Peace building, Peacekeeping.

## INTRODUCTION

The intention of this treatise is to show the relevance of gender balancing, especially the inputs of women in the pursuance of global peace. Gender approach to issues implies the analysis of social relations between men and women, boys and girls in a given context that may be culturally or historically determined<sup>1</sup>. Experience has proved that there are gender

factors in disputing, negotiating and resolving differences in human society and the sole goal is to promote and install peace. There are differences between men and women and on how they experience conflicts and go about their prevention, management and resolution in traditional society. The conventional perceptions of women and men including the relations that

exist between them, has started to occupy the centre stage in human society. Research has showed that men and women's<sup>2</sup> different realities lead them to interpret, understand, express and handle conflict differently. Women around the globe tend to discuss and associate themselves with issues in more depth, thus expressing keen feelings and concerns more openly, and use more conciliatory or problem-solving strategies to resolve conflicts. Men on the other hand use more rational language to talk about conflicts and are less likely to express their feelings deeply.

### Conceptual understanding of gender

Gender is a socially defined pattern of roles, rights, responsibilities, entitlements, and obligations of females and males in societies<sup>4,5</sup>. The social definitions of what it means to be female or male vary among cultures and change over time. Gender identity<sup>6</sup> is an individual's internal, personal sense of being male or female. For transgender people, their birth-assigned sex and their own internal sense of gender identity do not match. Society in general, inclusive of some scholars<sup>7</sup>, believes that gender implies the state of being male or female. Still, on the other side, the term has increasingly obtained a social meaning to show the connection between males and females in society. The concept of gender as it is utilized in social science seems to be relatively new but the word itself has a longer history.

In different dictionaries, gender<sup>8</sup> is a grammatical term used to classify nouns as male, female or neuter hence such a definition of gender is the basis for why gender categories have been so central to the ways of portraying the world. The grammatical use of gender implies two usages of it: gender as a synonym for sex hence gender can also mean to produce or to procreate. All these three meanings

continue to be subjects of debates and fundamental to many feminist studies<sup>9</sup>. Undeniably, the distinction between gender and sex sounds more crucial and it becomes compulsory to investigate what various authors say about it. Peterson and Runyna (1999) state that gender refers to socially learned behavior and expectations that distinguish between masculinity and femininity. By mentioning that, the difference between gender and sex is clearly stressed. The latter is comprehended as the biological distinction between males and females. As traditional societies place different values on masculine and feminine attributes, Peterson and Runyna further consider gender as the basis for relations of inequality between men and women. Additionally, they attest that gender is a particularly powerful lens through which all of us see and organize reality. This sex-gender distinction seems to stand at variance with naturalistic view of masculinity and femininity, which emphasizes the idea that gender, is biologically given. This naturalistic view is rooted on the fact that female's reproductive role and hormones made them naturally vulnerable, and on the other hand, the male physique and hormones make them to be aggressive and competitive in nature (Ottuh, 2010). Most feminists acknowledge sexual dimorphism<sup>10</sup> of human species; they identify the physiological and physical differences between women and men. Nevertheless, they insist that gender is a cultural phenomenon, and that gendered forms of behaviors were learned – and thus could be unlearned. Others<sup>11,12</sup> utilized the functionalist principle of socialization to analyze gender and gender roles. In the process of socialization, human beings learn how to become humans through different agents of change, such as families, schools, workplaces, literature, mass media, etc. With the same process and through the same

agents, girls and boys are taught behavior deemed appropriate for their gender.

### Conceptual understanding of peace, peacekeeping and peace building peace

The peace is from the Latin word, *pax* meaning "freedom from civil disorder," the English equivalent came into use in various personal greetings from about 1300 as a translation of the Hebrew *shalom*. Such a translation is, however, imprecise, as *shalom*, which is also cognate with the Arabic "*salaam*", has multiple meanings in addition to peace, including justice, good health, safety, well-being, prosperity, equity, security, good fortune, and friendliness. At a personal level, peaceful behaviors may imply such terms as: kindness, being considerate, respectfulness, being just, and tolerance and other behavioral patterns that generally tend to exhibit goodwill. The early English term is also used in the sense of quiet, reflecting calm, serene, and meditative approaches to family or group relationships that avoid quarrelling and seek tranquility - an absence of disturbance or agitation. In many languages the word for peace is also used as a greeting or a farewell, for example the Hawaiian word *aloha*, as well as the Arabic word *salaam*. In English the word peace is also occasionally used as a farewell, especially for the dead, as in the phrase *rest in peace*<sup>13</sup>. Peace therefore, is a sign of harmony characterized by the lack of violence, conflict behaviors and the freedom from fear of violence. Commonly understood as the absence of hostility, peace also suggests the existence of healthy or newly healed interpersonal or international relationships, prosperity in matters of social or economic welfare, the establishment of equality, and a working political order that serves the true interests of all. However, the focus of this paper is on peace building and peace keeping.

### Peace-building<sup>14,15</sup>

Peace-building is a term that describes the interventions that are designed to prevent the start or resumption of violent conflict by creating a sustainable peace. Peace-building activities address the root causes or potential causes of violence, create a societal expectation for peaceful conflict resolution and stabilize society politically and socioeconomically. The exact definition varies depending on the actor, with some definitions specifying what activities fall within the scope of peace-building or restricting peace-building to post-conflict interventions. Civil society organizations began using the term peace-building in the 1970s. As the United Nations and governments began using the term, it has taken on different meanings. Common to all definitions is the agreement that improving human security is the core task of peace-building which also includes wide range of efforts by diverse actors in government and civil society both at the community, national and international levels to address the root causes of violence and ensure civilians have freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom from humiliation before, during, and after violent conflict. There are two broad approaches to peace-building. First, peace-building can refer to *direct work* that intentionally focuses on addressing the factors driving or mitigating conflict. When applying the term "peace-building" to this work, there is an explicit attempt by those designing and planning a peace-building effort to reduce structural or direct violence. Second, the term peace-building can also refer to efforts to coordinate a multi-leveled, multispectral strategy, including ensuring that there is funding and proper communication and coordination mechanisms between humanitarian assistance, development, governance, security, justice and other sectors that may not use the term peace-building to describe

themselves. The concept is not one to impose on specific sectors. Rather some scholars use the term peace-building as an overarching concept useful for describing a range of interrelated efforts. Some use the term to refer to only post-conflict or post-war contexts, most use the term more broadly to refer to any stage of conflict. Before conflict becomes violent, preventive peace-building efforts, such as diplomatic, economic development, social, educational, health, legal and security sector reform programs, address potential sources of instability and violence. Peace-building efforts aim to manage, mitigate, resolve and transform central aspects of the conflict through official diplomacy as well as through civil society peace processes and informal dialogue, negotiation, and mediation. Peace-building addresses economic, social and political root causes of violence and fosters reconciliation to prevent the return of structural and direct violence. Peace-building efforts are also aimed at changing beliefs, attitudes and behaviours to transform the short and long term dynamics between individuals and groups toward a more stable, peaceful coexistence.

### Peacekeeping

On the other hand, Peacekeeping can be defined as the active upholding of a peace between countries or communities, especially by an international military force<sup>17</sup>. It can also be mean the deterrence, control, moderation and termination of hostilities between or within states, through an unbiased third-party intervention. Peacekeeping can also be defined as a unique and dynamic instrument developed by the organization as a way to help countries torn by conflict create the conditions for lasting peace. It is also the activity of keeping the peace by military forces especially when international military

forces enforce a truce between hostile groups or nations. Peacekeeping also refers to activities that tend to create conditions that favor lasting peace. Within the United Nations group of nation-state governments and organizations, there is a general understanding that at the international level, peacekeepers monitor and observe peace processes in post-conflict areas, and may assist ex-combatants in implementing peace agreement commitments that they have undertaken. Such assistance may come in many forms, including confidence-building measures, power-sharing arrangements, electoral support, strengthening the rule of law, and economic and social development. Accordingly, UN peacekeepers (often referred to as Blue Berets or Blue Helmets because of their light blue berets or helmets) can include soldiers, police officers, and civilian personnel. The United Nations is not the only organization to implement peacekeeping missions. Non-UN peacekeeping forces include the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) mission in Kosovo (with United Nations authorization) and the Multinational Force and Observers on the Sinai Peninsula (Hansen, 2000). The Nonviolent Peace force is one Non-Government Organization (NGO) widely considered having expertise in general peacemaking by non-governmental volunteers or activists.

### Nexus between peacekeeping and peace-building

Peace-building involve s a range of measures targeted at reducing the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundation for sustainable p e ace and development. Peace-building is a complex, long-term process of creating the necessary conditions for sustainable peace. It works by addressing the deep rooted, structural causes

of violent conflict in a comprehensive manner. Peace-building measures address core issues that affect the functioning of society and the state, and seek to enhance the capacity of the state to effectively and legitimately carry out its core functions.

Peace-building is primarily a national challenge and responsibility, and national factors will largely shape its pace and sequencing. An early and sustained focus on national capacity development is a central theme of the United Nations (UN) participation in peace-building. Peace-building is a fundamentally political process requiring ongoing political mediation, the strengthening of national capacities at several levels for conflict management, and sensitivity to the political, historical, economic and cultural context and dynamics. Peace-building entails a range of activities aimed at making peace self-sustaining and reducing the risk of relapse into conflict. Peace-building may begin prior to the arrival of a peacekeeping mission and always continues beyond its departure. It is supported by a variety of national and international actors and happens at different levels - political, operational, technical, national, sub-national, etc. and across many closely linked sectors. Peace-building priorities vary in response to the demands of each context, but typically include support to (i) basic safety and security including protection of civilians and rule of law, (ii) inclusive political processes, (iii) delivery of basic services, (iv) restoring core government functions, and (v) economic revitalization. The restoration or extension of legitimate state authority, including a basic degree of political consensus and financing, is typically one of the fundamental conditions for sustainable peace. While the above reflects the concept as articulated in the numerous reports of the UN Secretary-General<sup>18</sup> - starting with the agenda for peace in 1992 and the 2004

report on peace-building in the immediate aftermath of conflict, the roles and responsibilities of different actors and inter-governmental organs within the UN operations and the relative importance of different types of support remain the subject of discussion among Member States. For this reason, different constituencies continue to use the term, peace-building in manners that may differ from each other and from the notion as spelled out in reports of the UN Secretary-General. In addition, the fragmented international system to support peace-building creates a number of systemic obstacles to coherence, continuity and predictability. This includes the need to draw from disparate financing streams of varying reliability and with different funding cycles across different parts of the UN operation and beyond.

Peacekeeping on the other hand, has evolved from a primarily military model of observing cease-fires and separating forces to incorporate a mix of military, police and civilian capabilities to support the implementation of comprehensive peace agreements and help lay the foundations for sustainable peace and legitimate governance. Peacekeeping is a technique designed to preserve the peace, however fragile, where fighting has been halted, and to assist in implementing agreements achieved by the peacemakers. Over the years, peacekeeping has evolved from a primarily military model of observing cease fires and the separation of forces after inter-state wars to incorporate a complex model of many elements that include the military, police and civilian populace that work together to help lay the foundations for sustainable peace. Over the last 20 years, UN multidimensional peacekeeping therefore has become an important international peace-building instrument, usually playing a more prominent role at the early stages of a post-conflict peace-building

effort, which can last decades. Ten of the current 16 UN peacekeeping operations are multidimensional in nature and have been mandated by the Security Council to perform a broad range of peace-building activities. Within the UN, effective support requires integrated action across the peacekeeping, development, human rights and humanitarian pillars of the system. Integration arrangements on the ground ensure that peacekeeping missions and UN agencies work in close partnership and maximize the UN's overall contribution. Beyond the UN, close collaboration with key partners, such as international financial institutions and regional organizations, has become critical.

In some areas, such as economic revitalization and the delivery of basic services, peacekeeping missions may play a supporting role. However, peacekeeping operations have to be mindful of unintended consequences in these areas, such as effects on the local labour market, and can make a positive contribution when they work effectively with key partners. Peacekeepers can be regarded as early peace-builders who contribute to the overall peace-building effort in three key ways. They articulate peace-building priorities by supporting consensus among national counterparts and the broader international community, and guiding overall strategy development and implementation. Peacekeeping enables other national and international actors to implement peace-building tasks, by providing a security umbrella, monitoring commitments entered into by parties to the conflict, expanding and preserving political space, coordinating assistance efforts, delivering administrative and logistical enabling support and coordination or direct management of various resource streams.

### Gender mainstreaming and peace-building process

What is gender mainstreaming? It is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in any area and at all levels. The International Labor Organization defines gender mainstreaming as set of processes that include gender-specific activities and affirmative action, whenever women or men are in a particularly disadvantageous position<sup>19</sup>. Gender mainstreaming is a term which first emerged as a concept at the Fourth Women World Forum held in Beijing in 1995 (True, 2009). The Beijing forum was held in order to address women inequality and called for women empowerment (United Nations, 1995). Gender mainstreaming was recognized as the primary mechanism to achieve these goals. It is a strategy for making women as well as men concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of gender mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality. Mainstreaming gender is a crucial practice in post-conflict reconstruction but how practitioners understand gender is preventing gender equity rather than ensuring it. Gender is a socially constructed designation, as opposed to sex which is a biological fact. Because gender is socially constructed, these constructions inform how people will understand issues relating to gender. This means that in post-conflict reconstruction, gender constructs within gender mainstreaming programs will determine how gender groups are handled. Unfortunately, the presence of unchallenged gender constructs leads to assumptions that marginalize gender groups, particularly

when identifying the victims and perpetrators of violence.

Historically, gender mainstreaming was conceived in the 1990s as a means of bringing gender into all aspects of policy and programming work. The intent was to ensure that policy makers, practitioners and institutions consider how their decisions may have a gendered effect. The Beijing Platform of Action in 2000 significantly promoted gender mainstreaming as it called for governments and actors to promote a gender perspective in policy making and programming. In 2000, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 further validated gender mainstreaming by supporting it as a means to encourage greater consideration of women in conflict prevention, resolution and the peace-building process (Gibbins, 2011). The promise and potential of gender mainstreaming is significant for post-conflict transitions where such programming can greatly change realities for marginalized groups, particularly women. Yet gender mainstreaming appears to have its limiting gender realities. Gender mainstreaming can be gender biased itself because of unchallenged gender constructs that prescribe who inflicts violence. Conventional logic is that men are the perpetrators of violence while women are victims. Empirically, this is often the case, but this assumption entrenches a paradigm of males as perpetrators and females as victims that marginalizes both men and women in post-conflict reconstruction. Constructing females as victims marginalizes women in the peace process. Peace-building literature has a tendency to disproportionately portray women as victims. Moreover, women and girls become defined by their victimization while their contributions to the war effort and the social change they shaped during the conflict are dismissed. For example, women

were notably excluded from peace settlement negotiations in Burundi, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Kosovo. Excluding women from peace negotiations is rationalized by stereotyping women as passive victims who have suffered in warfare but did not actively participate in the conflict<sup>20</sup>. Female armed combatants are an increasingly visible example of this problem; gender mainstreaming and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programs in particular have been criticized for not including female soldiers or bush wives. When women are acknowledged in the peace process, they are often reduced to the construct of a peacemaker, mother figure or war widow. These limiting identities deny women active roles in the peace process and overall peace-building. For women and girls to be fully involved in securing peace post-conflict, they must be considered as actors and not merely victims.

Men and boys are also marginalized by gender constructs that fail to recognize the possibility of male sexual victimization. While the majority of sexual violence is inflicted on women or girls, men and boys can be victimized themselves, whether by rape as a weapon of war in situations of detainment or interrogation, being forced to observe, or coerced to participate in acts of sexual violence. Male sexual victimization exists in the majority of all conflict situations; yet the emphasis on viewing males as perpetrators of sexual violence marginalizes the men and boys who experience sexual violence during or after conflict. For gender mainstreaming to realize its full potential and to transform gender realities in post-conflict situations, gender constructs cannot remain unchallenged. The paradigm of males as perpetrators and females as victims both denies women and girls agency in the peace process while obscuring needed attention to

how men and boys can be victimized by gendered violence. Post-conflict reconstruction practitioners and those in the field should consider the presence of gender constructs within their own work so that gender marginalization is not a reality of gender mainstreaming. Notably gender mainstreaming is an ongoing process with a goal of gender equality, rather than being the goal itself. The concept derives from and is influenced by feminist theories and it was developed in order to support the theoretical analysis of a variety of concepts but especially gender equality. Some scholars see gender mainstreaming as a combination of liberal feminism, difference feminism and post-structural feminism (Cohn, Kinsella & Gibbings, 2004). Just like liberal feminism, it accepts the demands for the equal representation of both women and men; like difference feminism, it accepts the differences between men and women and that these differences should be taken into account in all policy making stages, from designing a policy until its implementations with women's empowerment as the ultimate goal; and like post-structural feminism, some of the approaches of gender mainstreaming understand the diversity of some policies and try to include this diversity in the policy making process.

The United Nations officially incorporated gender mainstreaming into its policies at the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in 1997, which gave emphasis to the need to include gender perspectives in all areas of the United Nations from economic policies to security issues. However, it was not until 2000 with UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 that a commitment was made to mainstream gender perspectives into issues of peace and security, including peacekeeping operations. Up to this point, UN peacekeeping activities were criticized for being gender-blind, failing to take into

account the different impact of conflict and post-conflict environments on women and men, along with those who take part in the post-conflict peace-building. Men dominated during the conflict in military peacekeeping roles but also post-conflict during the reconciliation process. In this context UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security was ground breaking because it had the potential to transform UN peacekeeping activities and marked a historical moment for the UN Security Council (Gibbings, 2011). Indicatively, it was the first time that the Security Council dedicated an entire session solely on gender issues and particularly on women's participation in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Despite UNSCR 1325 ground-breaking nature, the transformative potential of the Resolution, especially on peacekeeping operations, has been called into question. The primary critique has been the weaknesses embodied in the language of the Resolution, particularly its essential nature. For example when gender is mentioned it refers to women in particular and not to both genders. This is problematic because it can be inferred that women are naturally born peacemakers and this is why they should be included in peacekeeping and peace-building activities. However, characterizing women as a homogenous group of natural born peacemakers eradicating the differences among them. Furthermore, the use of gender specific language highlights a significant contradiction with the Resolution. This is that UNSCR 1325 targets women specifically and not both genders, yet calls for gender mainstreaming. As a result the gender mainstreaming advocated by the Resolution is in danger of becoming women mainstreaming. Despite the problematic rhetoric of UN SCR 1325, gender mainstreaming surrounding UN Peacekeeping operations has not been a complete



failure. Not only has women's participation in governmental positions grown in post-conflict societies but they have played important roles in decision making processes. Post-conflict statistical evidence provided by the UN, shows a rise in parliamentary seats taken by women in areas where peacekeeping and peace-building activities have taken place. In addition, another positive impact of gender mainstreaming within the UN peacekeeping and peace-building activities is that specific training was provided to the UN peacekeepers, and gender training materials related to the gender implications of the peacekeepers were developed. Despite the fact that the gender-specific policies only focus on certain areas of peace-building, such as in the economic sector or the governmental reform, they have proven beneficial for the population living in post-conflict regions. Nevertheless, in spite of the historical importance of UNSCR 1325, gender mainstreaming within peacekeeping and peace-building activities, while not a failure, has not been an overarching success either. This is because of the lack of clear understanding of the concept not only by the United Nations as an institution but also by the various governments that have tried to implement gender mainstreaming under the UN mandates.

At the beginning of 2006, women constituted approximately 1% of military personnel and 4% of police personnel in UN peacekeeping missions (UN Dept. of Peacekeeping Operations, 2005). Women also account for 30% of the international civilian staff and 28% of the nationally recruited civilian staff (UN Facts and Figures on Women, Peace, and Security, 2005). While women are said to be underrepresented at all levels of UN peace support operations, participation is nonetheless increasing. In fact, the UN has recently deployed the first all-female UN

peacekeeping force, comprised of 105 Indian policewomen, to Liberia. This deployment sends a strong message: women can bring unique benefits to conflicts zones. Research shows that women peacekeepers can play a key role in field missions. According to UNIFEM 2000 Independent Experts Assessment on Women, War and Peace, the presence of women in peace operations (including female police, interpreters, and specialists) makes a positive difference<sup>20</sup>. According to the report, the presence of women:

- a. Improves access and support for local women;
- b. Facilitates communication with victims of assault, sexual abuse, violence, etc.;
- c. Can provide a greater sense of security to local populations (women and children);
- d. Helps create a safer environment for women in which they are not afraid to talk;
- e. Makes male peacekeepers more reflective and responsible;
- f. Broadens the repertoire of skills and styles available within a mission; and
- g. Can help to reduce conflict and confrontation.

In light of this information, several participants noted the need to put more focus on ways to improve gender considerations in policy planning. Women need to be brought into the planning process and need to be part of creating solutions. It has been observed that current mission planning is largely conducted by men. Men also make up the large part of the peacekeepers. Greater female participation at all stages of peacekeeping, from planning to monitor, evaluate and closing of peacekeeping operations was discussed. It was recognized that it is not sufficient to consult with experts in gender before implementing a peacekeeping operation; the voices and recommendations of women

need to be incorporated during meetings of stakeholders, meetings between Peacekeeping forces and representatives of development agencies.

### Gender Role in Peacekeeping and Peace building

Contrary to common belief, women are both victims of and participants in armed conflict. They are also players in the post-conflict phase, acting as agents of change. As a result, it is essential to understand the gender dimension of conflict if peacekeeping and peace-building are to succeed in the long-term. The different experiences and impacts are determined by the gender roles and identities of masculinity and femininity in each particular society. The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), in its Gender and Peace-Building Guidelines, says that men are more often combatants, and therefore suffer the majority of fatalities and injuries, but they are not always aggressors; they often play leading roles in peace-building initiatives (AAID, 2000). Women can also assist children affected by conflict to reintegrate into civilian life. The role of women is even greater when they are involved during the beginning stages of a peacekeeping mission. Sadly, women are often marginalized from mission planning, peace negotiations, and implementation of peace processes.

Gender must be recognized as a vital component of plans and programs to avoid, mitigate and resolve conflict situations, and to build sustainable peace. Doing this involves mainstreaming gender perspectives in all aspects of UN peace operations to ensure that these operations are relevant to all stakeholders involved, responsive to their needs, and effective in the promotion of equality. The deconstruction of assumptions and roles about men and women would help in the creation of gender sensitive peace

building. The first assumption is that peace building should seek to restore stability and order according to rules and norms that prevailed before conflicts broke out. As Meintjes, Pillay and Turshen (2001) affirmed that the return to peace is invariably conceptualized as a return to the gender status quo, irrespective of the nontraditional roles assumed by women during conflict situations. However, the question is, do women want to return to a pre-war environment that was defined according to the masculine norm of reference and a rigid division of labor that excluded them from public visibility and responsibilities? As we know, war changes gender relations by allowing women to get out of traditional roles and acquire more responsibilities in the absence of men. Oftentimes, women experiences of war are never taken into account or translated into social gain for a redefinition of gender roles that would be non-oppressive for women and girls in a post-conflict society. Hence Chinkin (2004) noted that concepts of reconstruction and rehabilitation may be misnomers in the case of women. Both concepts assume an element of going back, restoring to a position or capacity that previously existed.

The other assumption, Puechguirbal (2005) says, is that changes in gender roles through armed conflicts can only be a temporary disturbance, mainly due to the exceptional circumstances of war and that once peace is brought back, men and women will return to their traditional roles. The problem is that women are under so much pressure to fit into the patriarchal pattern of society reinstalled after war albeit disguised under the rhetoric of human rights. However, women might also feel relieved to return to normalcy after bearing the impact of war. Women may sometimes feel more confident about themselves after taking over male related jobs, roles and responsibilities

or taking up arms and becoming combatants. But are women in a position to uphold this confidence? A woman's new strength and determination are rarely acknowledged, because they may only be a strategy to hide their fears. Puechguirbal (2003) follows this with questions that how should one theorize on the post-war disappearance of women apparent new independence and confidence? Do independence and confidence, in fact, disappear? Or is it a matter of relief from wartime burdens? Is there a reversion to norms that had apparently changed but that, in fact, had only been suspended? Hale (2001) writes about Eritrean women who took an active part in the revolutionary war against Ethiopia in the 1960s as combatants. She says that at the same time that combatants were conducting social, economic and political transformations in the liberated areas, the remaining part of the society continued to live according to local tradition and culture, unaffected by the impact of the revolution on gender roles. She stresses that, in a way, we could say that civilian Eritrean society was frozen during the war. As a consequence, female combatants who had experienced more equitable gender roles at the front were confronted with a very complex reinsertion into a very conservative society that did not evolve at the same pace (Hale, 2001). An additional problem regarding the participation of women in peace processes is that very often the same male actors who used to be combatants are currently sitting at the peace negotiation table as acceptable peace makers. The same men in different clothes are the ones who are going to define the status of women in the post-conflict environment with the blessing of the international community. Puechguirbal (2010) has noted that the role of males in post-conflict processes is influenced by their experiences during the war through a very firm definition of gender roles. As heroic

mothers, women are often used in the nationalistic discourse to emphasize the ideological conquest of the nation: that biologically and traditionally, they are the home-keepers while men are physically and traditionally the protectors of women and children and the motherland. It is highly probable that women will be ordered to focus on their reproductive role to replenish the nation with sons at the end of the war. On the other hand, as victims of war, women as victims in need of protection cannot at the same time are viewed as confident actors in a peace process. This is another way of excluding women from the peace process as they are made to believe that they are weak, vulnerable and incapable of articulating their own needs.

Additionally, women themselves may not be conscious of the changes that happened in gender roles during a conflict in such a way that they would understand them as empowering. As Meintjes, Pillay and Turshen (2001) write, "It seems likely that many women do not consciously internalize or conceptualise the changes in their roles; without a conscious translation, there can be no concerted efforts to defend women's opportunities and gains in peacetime". Women have been taking on heightened roles as trouble-makers, like in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where women belonging to the Women Network for the Defense of Rights and Peace, organized in the eastern part of the country to request their participation in the peace process (Puechguirbal, 2005). They received threats from the local rebel group, which accused them of destabilizing the town. Their office was ransacked many times, and peaceful demonstrations were systematically said to have been interrupted by the rebels for security reasons (Puechguirbal, 2005). Seeing as how women's participation in peace building efforts is often perceived as an extension of their domestic

responsibilities and therefore not taken seriously, one questions why they represent such a threat to security? Or are they just a threat to male power holders? Certainly, in this case women cannot be seen as active agents of change for peace who have the potential to challenge the male power.

### Role of international organization in conflict resolution

Conflict is a state or situation that is devoid of peace. What is Conflict resolution? It is conceptualized as the methods and processes involved in facilitating the peaceful ending of conflict. The term *conflict resolution* may also be used interchangeably with dispute resolution, where arbitration and litigation processes are critically involved (Miller, 2003). Furthermore, the concept of conflict resolution can be thought to encompass the use of nonviolent resistance measures by conflicted parties in an attempt to promote effective resolution. Often, committed group members attempt to resolve group conflicts by actively communicating information about their conflicting motives or ideologies to the rest of the group (e.g., intentions; reasons for holding certain beliefs), and by engaging in collective negotiation. Ultimately, a wide range of methods and procedures for addressing conflict exist, including but not limited to, negotiation, mediation, diplomacy, and creative peace building. It should be noted therefore, that conflicts have different causes, levels of intensity and stages of violence. Against this background, a gender analysis always needs to consider its context, which is constructed by other factors such as ethnicity/culture, class, age etc. Women and men do not neatly fit into homogenous groups. The same holds true for peace-building activities: depending on their ethnic group, class or cultural identity, women and men

have different needs and roles during the crisis and later in peace-building activities.

There is no doubt that much hope is put into international organizations co-operating with local organizations when it comes to preventing and resolving conflict. Horrendous events such as the 1994 genocide in Rwanda as well as the wars in the Balkans at the beginning of the 1990's should not be allowed to reoccur. One single organization alone cannot guarantee peace in the world today. There are many ways of looking at international organizations and their role in the international system. Those with a distinct state-centric view of the world would argue that international organizations only are as strong as states allow them to be, while others would argue that states are not the only important actors, and that international organizations indeed have an important role in international relations. Nonetheless most scholars and politicians would agree that international organizations have increasingly become important within the areas of peace and security. Today international organizations such as the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU) have developed an increasing arsenal of instruments – political, military, economic and civilian – to act within these areas, and their role is only becoming bigger. Of the 43 recorded conflicts between 2000 and 2005, five were terminated with one party victorious, while 17 or 40% ended as a result of a negotiated settlement. This development, which began in the 1990s, should be seen in light of the sharp increase in international efforts and interests in confining and ending conflicts on the negotiating table rather than on the battlefield.

The United Nations (UN), the world's leading conflict manager, is constantly engaged in a high number of missions across the globe, deploying a greater number of personnel than any other

organization. That said, more so than ever before the UN is sharing the international scene with many different regional actors, who all require or prefer a UN mandate for their missions and operations. The UN main problem is the mismatch between its resources and its mission mandates, seen, for example, in Bosnia in the 1990s and today in Darfur (Zuckerman & Greenberg, 2005). The peaceful resolution of the conflict between Nigeria and Cameroon over the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula by the UN through its organ – the International Court of Justice, is a classic example of conflict resolution by an international organization. The European Union (EU) Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) is one of the most dynamic and high-profile policy areas of the Union. In the last decade, a common security and defense policy has developed from a distant dream to joint action. The EU has conducted over 23 military missions on three different continents and is gradually emerging as a security provider on the international scene, contributing with strategic visions and soft conflict-management instruments. North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a military alliance of unprecedented scope. It has 28 members spanning two continents and is currently engaged in operations on two continents. Celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2009, NATO has not only managed to survive after the Cold War, but has actively sought to adapt its *raison d'être*. Ever since the founding of the African Union (AU), there has been a significant gap between its declarations of intent and its actual activities and accomplishments. Africa is one of the most conflict-ridden regions of the world, with many African states having little or no control over their own territories. It can therefore be seen as somewhat bizarre that something like the AU exists at all. The AU is also plagued by profound disagreement between those who favor a more 'realist' outlook for Africa and

those who are more idealistic, which is frequently concealed by the AU consensus decision-making. The AU is heavily dependent on the rest of the world (UN, the EU and G8) for financial contributions, and such funding will probably continue in the future to support AU missions, such as those in Somalia and Darfur, as this is cheaper for the world's paymasters than UN missions. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the regional security organization for Europe and most of the northern hemisphere, comprises 55 participating states. Despite its large membership, it is not as well-known as other international organizations and has not been as significant either, due to the fact that other organizations and their member states prefer other institutional settings for their multilateral activities. However, during the Cold War, its predecessor, the CSCE, was an important factor in stabilizing East-West rivalry by adding elements of joint commitment and collaboration to a conflict-ridden relationship. Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) originates from negotiations in the mid-1990s between China, Russia and Central Asian states on border disputes. Devised by China as a forum to prevent separatism and to confront terrorism and religious extremism, it is at the same time expanding economic relations. Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) is a political and military alliance comprised of seven countries, its mission being to guarantee the security of each of its member states and the defense of their territorial integrity. CSTO is the product of a long and complicated process of creating Post-Soviet security architecture. The impetus behind CSTO is multiple: the threat of terrorism, extremism, western interference and fear of American intentions.

### Gender and international approaches to peace-building and conflict resolution

Generally, gender and international organization's approaches to peace-building and conflict resolution can take the following forms:

1. Process of arbitration. This is a peace building process whereby the parties in conflict have lost total control over the outcome and their situation than when mediation is adopted. In arbitration, the arbiter is the decision-making authority. Outcomes of intervention are binding because they are legally based.

2. Process of conflict transformation. This process focuses on going beyond conflict resolution to building long lasting peace relationship in a post conflict situation. In other word, it seeks to reframe the positions of the conflict parties.

3. Process of collaboration. A process in which parties tend to work together on their own for the purpose of peace building through dialogue, planning and executing common projects.

4. Process of negotiation. It is a process in which parties in conflict systematically engage in dialogue to resolve the issue in question.

5. Process of mediation. This is a voluntary intervention by a third party, which is informal and non-binding on the parties. In this process, the mediator seeks to facilitate the process of peace building through mediation.

6. Process of adjudication. This is a peace promotion mechanism that involves the use of law court. In this approach, the judge is the decision-making authority. The outcome is binding on the parties in conflict.

7. Process of counseling. When personal conflict leads to frustration and loss of efficiency, counseling may prove to be a helpful antidote.

8. Process of collaboration. This refers to parties working together on their

own accord so that peace building can be attained through dialogue and planning, and to execute common projects.

9. Process of conciliation. It is a process in which a third party intervenes in conflict. In this process, the conciliator is expected to communicate with the concerned parties separately with the aim to persuading them to embrace peace.

Apart from the approaches mentioned above, other peace promotion mechanism that gender and international organizations can employ in peace-building and conflict resolution include the use of peacekeeping operations, fact-finding missions, debates, diplomacy, representation, observer status, etc.

### Concluding remark

Taking up a gender approach in peacekeeping and peace building recognizes that only through changing social relations and institutional practices may gender equality emerge. The approach to gender mainstreaming comprises the integration of a gender perspective into the analyses and formulation of all policies, programs and projects; and initiatives to enable women as well as men to formulate and express their views and to participate in decision-making processes as it effects the attainment of peace in human society. Understanding the role of gender peacekeeping and peace building also implies that each conflict should be understood in its own uniqueness. Hence, conflicts have different causes, levels of intensity and stages of violence. Against this background, a gender analysis always needs to consider its context, which is constructed by other factors such as ethnicity/culture, class, age etc. Women and men do not neatly fit into homogenous groups. The same holds true for peace-building activities: depending on their ethnic group, class or cultural identity, women and men have different needs and roles during

the crisis and later in peace-building activities. Therefore, some suggestions become necessary here. That is, building the capacity of women as well as the men will therefore strengthen their role in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace building as well as increase their knowledge and skills in the ways and means by which their views can be expressed or shared to build a culture of peace in their communities. In addition, there should be gender training for peacekeeping and peace building personnel to serve as an important strategy for facilitating and enhancing the operational effectiveness of peacekeeping and peace support missions. Consequently, gender training should be prioritized by multiple actors working at various levels on peacekeeping and peace building issues. Furthermore, machinery should be set in motion to create systems that will encourage greater gender involvement in policy planning of peace operations and planning of missions. This could be achieved by ensuring, to the extent possible, that there are an equal number of women and men planning missions at the UN level; demanding that women and men have equal representation at the table when peace negotiations are happening; and ensuring that women and men are awarded delegate status and provided with the necessary resources enabling them to come as equals in international platforms.

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