

**Reform or More of the Same?
Gender Mainstreaming and the Changing Nature
of UN Peace Operations**

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The last fifteen years have been a time of dramatic change in terms of reform of UN peace operations, major shifts in academic thinking around the issues of conflict, security, and development, and the recognition of women's roles in conflict and their right to participate in peacebuilding processes. These three concurrent changes all have the same goal of creating the conditions for a more inclusive and sustainable peace in the face of the post-Cold War instability experienced in many parts of the world. However, the ongoing failure to effectively integrate gender issues into peacebuilding discourse and practice would indicate that this has not been achieved. This paper will explore the evolving rhetoric of the UN's peacebuilding agenda, explaining the continuing exclusion of women as a result of the failure to see gender issues as a security concern, despite the increased recognition of the links between both gender and development and development and security.²

First, this paper will provide a brief overview of the various reforms that were initiated by the UN in the area of peace and security during the 1990s, with a focus on the potential of the concept of human security to redress the marginalization of gender issues. Second, the paper will examine the changes in thinking about security and development that have occurred since the passing of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security and what impact this has had in terms of bringing gender issues into the mainstream of the UN's peacebuilding agenda. The mainstreaming project has had some limited success, particularly at the rhetorical level and in progress driven by the establishment of a gender advisor within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and in various peacekeeping missions.³ However, it has also often had the paradoxical effect of marginalizing gender issues even more. A rhetorical commitment to gender mainstreaming often disguises the reality that due to a lack of political will, organizational accountability, and competing or contradictory discourses, rather than being mainstreamed gender issues become lost along the way and what results is tokenistic gestures that contradict the essence of what mainstreaming seeks to achieve.⁴ In conclusion, this paper will argue that attempts to reform UN peace

² As a caveat, it is important to point out that this paper is concerned with examining the UN's rhetoric around peacebuilding and gender issues, rather than a detailed account of its practice, which is beyond the scope of this paper. Although the paper will touch on some of the problems in bridging the gap between the two in the concluding section, the broader project of which this paper is a part examines this aspect of the subject in the context of Sierra Leone from 1999-2005.

³ For a discussion of progress made see Linda Etchart (2005) "Progress in Gender Mainstreaming in Peace Support Operations," in Rawwida Baksh, Linda Etchart, Elsie Onubogu and Tina Johnson, *Gender Mainstreaming in Conflict Transformation: Building Sustainable Peace*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat: 56-81.

⁴ For example,

In the absence of a commitment from senior management at OCHA, providing a 'gender perspective' become nothing more than someone (usually a junior program officer) combing through any OCHA or CAP document and inserting the words 'women', 'girls', and 'gender' in as many places as possible so that the end produce would read as gender sensitive.

See Angela Raven-Roberts (2005) "Gender Mainstreaming in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Talking the Talk, Tripping over the Walk" in Dyan Mazurana, Angela Raven-Roberts and Jane Parpart, eds. *Gender, Conflict and Peacekeeping*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.: 50.

operations to bring about a sustainable, equitable, and inclusive peace cannot succeed unless the obstacles to fully ‘securitizing’ gender issues are addressed.

The End of the Cold War and the New Challenges Facing the International Community

The proliferation of civil conflicts at the end of the Cold War and a sense of donor fatigue and disillusionment with conventional relief and development models prompted a fundamental change in the international community’s engagement with the developing world.⁵ It became evident that donor programs and policies designed to alleviate poverty and under-development were failing to adequately address the social, economic, and political inequalities that fuelled violent conflict around the world, and at the same time, were equally unable to deal with the aftermath of these wars. Furthermore, the distinction between humanitarian agencies implementing relief programs and agencies involved in longer-term development programs was perceived to be increasingly unsustainable as aid flows decreased during the 1980s and 1990s, and new demands for efficiency were being made.⁶ Some academics and practitioners advocated a policy dubbed the ‘relief to development continuum’ that sought to bridge the gap between these two activities and to link priorities, thereby avoiding the band-aid solutions that were disconnected from broader sustainable development and conflict management strategies. A controversial debate arose within the development industry about whether this ‘continuum approach’ was in fact feasible, both politically and operationally,⁷ and how the inevitable interaction between aid, development, and conflict could be positively managed.⁸

In addition to these changes in the aid and development industry, globalization, HIV/AIDS, small arms trafficking, trans-border black market economies, terrorism, and the widespread regional instability that emerged in the aftermath of the Cold War meant that the West was no longer insulated from the problems

⁵ During the 1990s, the international community (including both multilateral and bilateral donors) pledged more than \$100 billion in aid to more than 35 wartorn countries around the world. Shepard Forman and Stewart Patrick (2000) “Introduction,” in Shepard Forman and Stewart Patrick, eds. *Good Intentions: Pledges of Aid for Postconflict Recovery*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner: 1.

⁶ Margaret Buchanan-Smith and Simon Maxwell (1994) “Linking Relief and Development: An Introduction and Overview,” *IDS Bulletin*, 25 (4): 2-16. Pearce argues that although the continuum approach (with clear cut-off points between phases) may be an institutionally useful device, it is not useful as an accurate conception of the reality of a situation. See Jenny Pearce (2004) “Sustainable peace building in the South: Lessons from South America,” in Afshar and Eade, eds.: 240.

⁷ Philip White and Lionel Cliffe (2000) “Matching Response to Context in Complex Political Emergencies: ‘Relief’, ‘Development’, ‘Peace-building’ or Something In-between,” *Disasters*, 24 (4): 314-42; Iain Smillie (1998) *Relief and Development; The Struggle for Synergy*, Humanitarian and War Project, Occasional Paper No. 33. Providence: Watson Institute.

⁸ Anderson, Mary B. (1999) *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace – Or War*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.; Peter Uvin (1999) *The Influence of Aid in Situations of Violent Conflict*, Informal Task Force on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation. Paris: OECD Development Assistance Committee.

facing developing countries around the globe, and ‘insecurity’ was recognized as having multiple causes and consequences. The world was no longer operating within the realist rules of the Cold War and new forms of protracted political, economic, and social crisis began to proliferate in many of the countries that had been affected by proxy wars throughout the 1980s.⁹ These ‘complex emergencies’ required a re-evaluation of assistance strategies and heralded the reorientation of the international community towards peacebuilding, and broader, less-traditional notions of security. In addition, the fact that complex emergencies often occurred in ‘failed states’¹⁰ further reinforced the idea of an inter-relationship between conflict, development, and security. These states rarely possess the institutional structures or capacity necessary for effective governance and peacebuilding, factors that are exacerbated, or some have even suggested are causally linked, to their underdevelopment, poverty, and marginalization.¹¹ More recently, the literature surrounding ‘fragile states’ reinforces the dilemmas the international community faces in engaging with and supporting development in poverty-stricken countries with ineffective and potentially unstable governance structures through which assistance must flow.¹²

Against the backdrop of these emerging challenges, the UN, unhindered by the ideological obstacles that had constrained action in the previous decades, sought to adopt new approaches to ‘ending the scourge of war.’ However, not only did the UN face difficulties in operationally adapting to the dual challenges of conflict and underdevelopment with any consistent success, but academic thinking around issues of conflict, development, and security studies was also found to be lacking in its explanatory ability. As it became apparent that the international community’s tool-box of frameworks and strategies for addressing conflict through traditional peacekeeping missions was no longer appropriate, theorists and practitioners alike began to search for new ways of approaching contemporary conflict. This opened the field up to the new concept of peacebuilding that quickly gained currency and was embraced in both the policy and practice of the United Nations.

⁹ Mark Duffield (1994) “Complex Emergencies and the Crisis of Developmentalism,” *IDS Bulletin*, 25 (4): 38.

¹⁰ See Jennifer Milliken, ed. (2003) *State Failure, Collapse and Reconstruction*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

¹¹ For example, see Paul Collier *et al.* (2003) *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*. Washington: World Bank and Oxford University Press.

¹² For example, see Lisa Chauvet and Paul Collier (2004) *Development Effectiveness in Fragile States: Spillovers and Turnarounds*. Centre for the Study of African Economies, Oxford University. Available online at: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/32/59/34255628.pdf#search=%22development%20effectiveness%20fragile%20states%22>; DFID (2005) *Why We Need to Work More Effectively in Fragile States*. London: Department for International Development.

UN Reform in the 1990s: The Evolution of Peacebuilding

The first elucidation of the UN's new role and potential reform agenda came in the form of UN Secretary-General (UNSG) Boutros Boutros-Ghali's 1992 report entitled *An Agenda for Peace*, which set out the beginnings of a blueprint for international interventions in wartorn countries.¹³ It was responsible for coining the term 'post-conflict peacebuilding,' loosely defined as efforts "to identify and support structures which will tend to consolidate peace and advance a sense of confidence and well-being among people [...]. Preventive diplomacy is to avoid a crisis; post-conflict peacebuilding is to prevent a recurrence."¹⁴ The term is used expansively in the report, encompassing a wide range of goals and activities, but importantly does not directly challenge the fundamental primacy of the sovereign state.¹⁵ Nevertheless, the *Agenda for Peace* was the first stage in a shift away from traditional national security discourse towards more inclusive (and interventionary) approaches focusing on human rights and collective action based on liberal principles.¹⁶

More problematically, it contained few concrete recommendations about exactly how peace could be 'solidified' and the roles and timeframes of the various organs of the UN system intended to be involved in this process. Bhatia also argues that the 'definitional haze' of the report in fact contributed to future confusion over the UN's role in securing peace and the various dimensions of its peace operations.¹⁷ Indeed, ever since the publication of the *Agenda for Peace* the UN has been grappling with questions of sequencing, coordination, spheres of responsibility, and other challenges that reflect a lack of understanding of how best to respond. The document also failed to make explicit the important connections between democracy, the rule of law, and human rights in conflict-affected regions, despite alluding to a changing context that is making international security more complex.¹⁸ Boutros-Ghali used the *Agenda for Peace* as a basis for

¹³ Boutros Boutros-Ghali prepared this report in response to a request from the Security Council that he recommend ways to strengthen the UN's capacity for preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, and peacekeeping.

¹⁴ United Nations (1992a) *An Agenda for Peace, Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-keeping*, Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992, UN Doc. A/47/277 - S/24111; New York: United Nations: paragraph 55 and 57. Post-conflict peacebuilding was one of four key roles that the Secretary-General envisaged as being the core of the UN's future involvement in peace and security issues. The other roles were preventive diplomacy, peace making, and peacekeeping.

¹⁵ As the UNSG writes in the report, "The foundation-stone of this work is and must remain the State". Op. cit. United Nations (1992a): paragraph 17.

¹⁶ Sorpong Peou (2002) "The UN, Peacekeeping and Collective Human Security: From *An Agenda for Peace* to the Brahimi Report," *International Peacekeeping: Special Issue on Recovering from Civil Conflict*, 9 (2): 52-4.

¹⁷ Michael V. Bhatia (2003) *War and Intervention: Issues for Contemporary Peace Operations*. Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, Inc.: 11.

¹⁸ Christine Chinkin (2004) "Gender, International Legal Framework and Peace-building," in Kari Karamé, ed. *Gender and Peacebuilding in Africa*. Oslo: NUPI: 29.

instigating changes in UN policy, structure, and procedures related to peace and security issues,¹⁹ and it remained the most important conceptual framework guiding UN conflict-related policy in the first half of the 1990s.²⁰

Concurrent to the refocusing around peace and security issues in the early 1990s, developing countries began to urge the UN leadership to refocus attention on the ‘crisis of development’ that they perceived to have been marginalized within the reform process. Given that the majority of the conflicts that emerged in the post-Cold War were in the most underdeveloped regions of the world, there was also a security imperative for re-examining development issues. The resulting report issued in mid-1994 by Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Development*, provided little in terms of practical recommendations but did begin to advocate for a more holistic approach, arguing that development was the most important foundation stone for peace.²¹ These two documents together represented the acknowledgment that to address conflict effectively meant addressing the root causes, and that neither peace nor development could be achieved without the other: “[e]mergency relief and development should not be regarded as alternatives [...] Peacebuilding means action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict.”²²

Despite Boutros-Ghali’s grand visions of sustained, long-term, and coordinated UN action in the areas of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, the legacy of the UN’s involvement in peace operations in the early 1990s was inconsistent. Some degree of success was achieved in places like El Salvador and Mozambique, but there were more visible failures such as Somalia and Rwanda. Following on from these experiences and in an attempt to refine and expand upon the original ideas in the two previous reports, *A Supplement to the Agenda for Peace* was released in 1995. The scope of what was considered relevant to conflict and security was broadened even further in this document, to recognize the fact that “only sustained efforts to resolve

¹⁹ Joachim Müller, ed. (2001) *Reforming the United Nations: The Quiet Revolution*. London: Kluwer Law International/United Nations: 51.

²⁰ Michael Lund (2003) “What Kind of Peace is Being Built? Taking Stock of Post-Conflict Peacebuilding and Charting Future Directions,” Ottawa: IDRC: 2-3.

²¹ United Nations (1994a) *An Agenda for Development: Report of the Secretary-General*, A/48/935. New York: United Nations: paragraph 3.

²² Op. cit. United Nations (1994a): paragraph 21-2. The other key dimensions of development that were emphasized were the economy as the engine of progress, the environment as a basis for sustainability, justice as a pillar of society, and democracy as good governance.

underlying socio-economic, cultural and humanitarian problems can place an achieved peace on a durable foundation.”²³

Throughout this time of conceptual repositioning, expectations of what the organization sought to achieve on the ground, namely extending its involvement to ensure the foundation of a stable, legitimate, and long-lasting peace, were also growing. For example, the peacekeeping budget of the UN increased from \$230 million to \$3.6 billion from 1987-1994, and the number of peacekeeping operations it authorized tripled.²⁴ The *Supplement*, whilst expanding on the concept of post-conflict peacebuilding, still failed to offer operational guidance on how it could be integrated into peacekeeping mandates and structures, or to set out a truly comprehensive framework for reforming the peace and security operations of the UN. While engagement in conflict-affected regions increased, the mandates and resources of these peacekeeping missions were rarely extensive enough to achieve the broad aims of post-conflict peacebuilding, and the UN found itself frequently, and problematically, engaging in countries where consent was non-existent or where there was in fact little peace to keep.²⁵ The new era of multidimensional peace operations had begun, on a rhetorical level at least, but the UN had yet to find ways of effectively engaging in these contexts.

Following on from Boutros-Ghali and the vision set out in the *Agendas*, the United Nations under its new Secretary-General Kofi Annan launched the most ambitious reform agenda in the organization’s history in 1997.²⁶ This introspection was designed to refocus the UN in the face of criticisms about its conduct, purpose and capabilities, and sought to breathe new life into the organization. The UN’s reputation was tarnished by the peacekeeping disasters of the early 1990s, and after the exuberance of the post-Cold War years many were beginning to take a jaded view of the organization’s inability to meet its overarching goal of promoting peace and security throughout the world. Annan’s plan encompassed a range of reforms including changes in the functioning and management of the Secretariat to create a more streamlined organization, the

²³ United Nations (1995a) *Supplement to an Agenda for Peace: Position Paper of the Secretary-General on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations*, A/50/60-S/1995/1, paragraph 22. Available online at: <http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/agsupp.htm>.

²⁴ Michael W. Doyle (2001) “War Making and Peace Making: The United Nations’ Post-Cold War Record,” in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict*. Washington: United States Institute of Peace: 534.

²⁵ The type of peacekeeping during the 1990s where the UN would enter countries without the explicit consent of the state in question and where neither a ceasefire nor a peace agreement was necessarily in place became referred to as ‘second-generation’ peacekeeping. This signalled the transition from earlier more traditional forms of peacekeeping that the UN undertook during the Cold War.

²⁶ United Nations (1997a) *Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform*, A/51/950, 51st Session of the General Assembly. Available online at: <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N97/189/79/IMG/N9718979.pdf?OpenElement>.

devolution of significant decision-making authority to the country-level, and the amalgamation of the various UN funds and programs into one unit, the UN Development Group (UNDG), to improve cooperation and resource-sharing.

One of the ‘core areas’ of UN activity that Annan identified for reform was peace and security, specifically to develop the UN’s institutional capacity for preventive diplomacy and post-conflict peacebuilding.²⁷ As part of this broader, institution-wide reform process, Kofi Annan commissioned a group of high-level experts to make “frank, specific and realistic recommendations” on how to improve the performance of the UN in carrying out peace operations. The result was the release of the *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, more commonly known as the “Brahimi Report” after the panel’s chair, in 2000.²⁸

As the report itself points out, “United Nations operations [...] did not *deploy into* post-conflict situations but tried *to create* them,”²⁹ even though neither the mandates and resources that were provided nor the institutional structures and coordination mechanisms that were in place were appropriate or adequate for this purpose. According to the report, the key requirements for successful peace operations are “political support, rapid deployment with a robust force posture and a sound peace-building strategy.”³⁰ A peacebuilding strategy is later defined in the document as the process of “reassemb[ling] the foundations of peace and provid[ing] the tools for building on those foundations something that is more than just the absence of war.”³¹ By significantly broadening the scope of action even further to encompass positive as well as negative peace, the *Brahimi Report* also opened the UN up to criticism of over-extension, continued impotence, ongoing institutional impediments, and the use of rhetoric in place of concrete action.³²

The SG’s reform agenda benefited from the rapidly growing body of academic literature that pointed to some of the key limitations in the UN’s structures and practices related to peacebuilding that were evident at that time. Roland Paris has lamented the lack of ‘macrotheory’ within the academic study of peace operations,

²⁷ Op. cit. UN (1997a): paragraphs 63-6.

²⁸ United Nations (2000a) “Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations”, UN Doc. A/55/305-S/2000/809, 21 August. New York: United Nations.

²⁹ Op. cit. United Nations (2000a): paragraph 2.

³⁰ Op. cit. United Nations (2000a): paragraph 4.

³¹ Op. cit. United Nations (2000a): Paragraph 13.

³² Edward C. Luck (2002) “Prevention: Theory and Practice,” in Hampson and Malone, eds.: 256-68; op. cit. Lund (2003).

and the failure to link this research area with the broader theoretical debates within international relations.³³ Indeed, a brief survey of the available literature appears to reinforce his point. Most of the analyses of peacebuilding in the 1990s, both academic and policy-related, focused on the technical or practical aspects of these interventions, such as how to support the relief-to-development continuum, the optimal sequencing of post-conflict activities, or how to ensure more effective coordination among donors.³⁴ These concerns have tended to shield the political nature of peacebuilding from closer scrutiny, and have buried questions of power dynamics, conflicting interests, and hidden agendas beneath the ‘techno-speak’ of sectoral disbursements, funding cycles, and inter-agency coordination mechanisms. However, this in turn made them well suited for the purpose of reforming the UN, where analyses of the practical side of peacebuilding inducted more readily into the *Brahimi Report* than overt political critiques would have done.

Following the establishment of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in 1992 in response to the increased demand for complex peacekeeping in the post-Cold War world, the UN launched some 35 peacekeeping missions during the 1990s that provided an opportunity to put these new concepts into practice. In addition to the UN’s own conceptual shift, the rest of the donor community and other humanitarian actors were also developing operational guidelines and best practices to improve their ability to assist countries emerging from conflict.³⁵ For example, the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) was established in 1992, quickly followed by the US Agency for International Development’s Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) in 1994, the World Bank’s Post-Conflict Unit in 1997, and the Canadian International Development Agency’s Peacebuilding Fund also in 1997.³⁶ Both policy-makers and academics attempted to determine a taxonomy of post-conflict peacebuilding from the vast range of activities that were

³³ Roland Paris (2001) “Broadening the Study of Peace Operations,” *International Studies Review*, 2 (3): 27-44.

³⁴ For example, see Krishna Kumar, ed. (1997) *Rebuilding Societies After War: Critical Roles for International Assistance*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner; Shepard Forman and Dirk Salomons (1999) *Meeting Essential Needs in Societies Emerging from Conflict*, Paper prepared for the Brookings Roundtable on the Relief to Development Gap. Center on International Cooperation; Stewart Patrick (1998) *The Check is in the Mail: Improving the Delivery and Coordination of Post-Conflict Assistance*, Center on International Cooperation, New York University.

³⁵ For example, OECD (1997) “Policy Statement on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation on the Threshold of the 21st Century,” High-level meeting of the Development Assistance Committee, May 1997. Paris: OECD: 4. These ideas are further developed in OECD (2001) *DAC Guidelines on Helping Prevent Violent Conflict*. Paris: OECD.

³⁶ These units are only examples of the many others that exist within the different UN bodies and governments such as Britain, Germany, Sweden, UNESCO, UNDP, UN OCHA, UNRISD, WFP, and WHO. For a detailed list see Nat J. Colletta, Michelle Cullen and Johanna Mendelson Forman (1998) *Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Perspectives and Prospects*. Washington, DC: World Bank: 29.

included within this term.³⁷ Given that every conflict has a particular context and dynamics that need to be taken into account, the range and sequencing of the activities undertaken in post-conflict peacebuilding operations varies widely, but attempts were made to condense these operations into phases or ‘pillars’ to make operationalizing the concept of post-conflict peacebuilding within the context of UN peace operations a more manageable task.

However, it is noteworthy that while the documents discussed above and the explosion of policy and academic research on peacebuilding represented an optimistic step forward in offering a new vision to guide the UN, this was largely done without reference to the situation of women or of the need to ensure gender equality in development and peacebuilding processes. The prevalence of gender-based violence, the mass displacement of women and children, the feminization of poverty and the militarization of masculinity witnessed in conflicts during the 1990s all reinforced the need for a gender-sensitive approach. Whilst this was recognised in some quarters, particularly amongst the growing civil society movement that was tirelessly advocating for the participation of women in peace processes, there was a failure to take gender issues into the mainstream, or to separate men’s and women’s experiences of conflict, security, and development.³⁸

Ignoring Gender (Part One)? The UN and Peacebuilding in the 1990s

From this brief survey of the reform agenda of the UN in the 1990s it is reasonable to argue that at the outset, the various actors within the emerging peacebuilding industry showed little concern or sensitivity to the role of gender issues in peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Gender equality is not mentioned as one of the ‘essential complements’ to effective peacebuilding in the *Brahimi Report*, and indeed the word ‘gender’ features only eight times in the 74 pages. Seven of these times it was in reference to the need to ensure ‘fair geographical and gender distribution’ in the various UN operations, and once was to emphasise that all UN personnel should be sensitive to gender and cultural differences.³⁹ There is no mention of gender at all in the

³⁷ It is beyond the scope of this paper to enter into a detailed discussion of the various issues and activities that can be considered part of post-conflict peacebuilding. For useful overviews see Nicole Ball (2002) “The Reconstruction and Transformation of War-Torn Societies and State Institutions: How Can External Actors Contribute?” in Tobias Debiel with Axel Klein, eds. *Fragile Peace: State Failure, Violence and Development in Crisis Regions*. London: Zed Books: 33-55; and Tom Keating and W. Andy Knight, eds. (2004) *Building Sustainable Peace*. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press. Given that every conflict has a particular context and dynamics that need to be taken into account, the range and sequencing of the activities undertaken in post-conflict peacebuilding operations varies widely but attempts were made to condense these operations into phases or ‘pillars’ to make operationalizing the concept of post-conflict peacebuilding within the context of UN peace operations a more manageable task.

³⁸ For background information on the efforts of civil society, some UN agencies and committed member states to lobby for the inclusion of women and gender issues in peacebuilding processes see Felicity Hill, Mikele Aboitiz and Sara Poehlman-Doumbouya (2003) “Nongovernmental Organizations’ Role in the Buildup and Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, Vol. 28 (4).

³⁹ Op. cit. UN (2000a). These references occur on pages 11, 32, 33, 39, 41, 62, 71, and 72.

Agenda for Peace, and women only feature once in their ‘traditional’ place of being lumped with children as the ‘more vulnerable group’ in society.⁴⁰ This is somewhat surprising given the long history of attempts to include gender issues within development planning through the women in development (WID) and gender and development (GAD) strategies of the 1970s and 1980s, but it is indicative of the gender-blindness of the early days of the peacebuilding industry.⁴¹

However, by the mid-1990s, some degree of change was becoming evident, even if this was not reflected in Boutros-Ghali’s or Annan’s reform agendas. At the UN 4th World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, one of the twelve ‘Platforms for Action’ (Platform E) was dedicated to women and armed conflict.⁴² The preamble to the strategic objectives of this platform explicitly linked peace to gender equality and recommended that a gender perspective be mainstreamed into all policies and programs.⁴³ Following from this, in 1996 the UN Economic, Social and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) launched its “Women’s Contribution to a Culture of Peace” project. The aims of this initiative were the empowerment of women and support for their peace initiatives, as well as gender-sensitization with a focus on fostering an ethos of non-violence.⁴⁴ At the same time, academics and policy-makers were also beginning to recognize that gender relations and power dynamics influenced the effectiveness (in terms of design, delivery, and impact) of humanitarian assistance in emergency and conflict situations, and that women’s needs were often overlooked in aid programs.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Op. cit. UN (1992a): Para. 81.

⁴¹ For an overview of the WID/GAD process, see Shahra Razavi and Carol Miller (1995) “From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse,” Occasional Paper No. 1, UN 4th World Conference on Women.

⁴² UN (1995b) *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. New York: UN/Division for the Advancement of Women. Available online at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/>.

⁴³ Op. cit. UN (1995b): Paras. 131 and 141.

⁴⁴ Taken from information page of UNESCO website: <http://www.unesco.org/cpp/uk/projects/wcpinfo.htm>. For a more detailed discussion of the objectives of this initiative, see *Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Women’s Contribution to a Culture of Peace*, UNESCO Consultative Committee on Women, Manila, 25-28 April 1995.

⁴⁵ Bridget Byrne with Sally Baden (1995) *Gender, Emergencies and Humanitarian Assistance*, Report commissioned by the WID desk, European Commission, Directorate General for Development. Strasbourg: BRIDGE; GTZ (1996) *Gender-aware Approaches to Relief and Rehabilitation: Guidelines*. Eschborn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit; Turshen, Meredith and Clotilde Twagiramariya, eds. (1998) *What Women Do in Wartime: Gender and Conflict in Africa*. London: Zed Books; Vickers, Jeanne (1993) *Women and War*. London: Zed Books.

In 1998, The African Women's Report published by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) was devoted to presenting a gender perspective of post-conflict reconstruction in Africa.⁴⁶ This report affirmed the importance of gender to conflict and the need to recognize that "women in post-conflict situations are not mere passive sufferers and aid-dependent beneficiaries specially vulnerable to abuse, but have been and should be very much part of the solution."⁴⁷ While these reports and declarations were all important in terms of advocacy and awareness raising, their impact on the mainstream of conflict and security issues at the UN was negligible. Considerable resistance to gender issues was still evident both within the UN and within the governments of conflict-affected countries, and this was reflected in their early forays into peacebuilding. International actors consistently failed to consider how stereotypical conceptualizations of men, women, and gender relations shaped their actions in conflict zones, and rarely conducted any kind of gender analysis of their programs.⁴⁸ However, it is important to note that towards the end of the 1990s, a network of civil society actors along with the UN Development Fund (UNIFEM) and the UN Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) was gaining momentum and was mobilizing and lobbying for the international community to recognize the important contributions of women to peacebuilding and development.

Throughout the 1990s, most efforts to incorporate a gender perspective into peacebuilding policy and practice were informal, and were not accorded any real legitimacy due to their existing outside of the mainstream. However, long before the UN had begun to develop its concept of post-conflict peacebuilding, women's groups in conflict-affected regions were actively building peace at the community level outside of the 'formal' peacebuilding structures and some of these efforts were being noticed.⁴⁹ Around this time, feminist IR theorists were challenging the conventional discourse around peace and conflict, thereby exposing some of the gendered power dynamics that underpin war and peacebuilding.

The impact that conflict has on men and women is equally complex, although women tend to bear the brunt of violence and its aftermath, and patriarchal structures and power relations exacerbate gender inequalities

⁴⁶ United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (1998) *Post-conflict Reconstruction in Africa: A Gender Perspective*, African Women's Report 1998. Addis Ababa: UNECA.

⁴⁷ UNECA (1998): v.

⁴⁸ For example, see Chris Corrin (2000) *Gender Audit of Reconstruction Programmes in South Eastern Europe*. New York: Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children and Urgent Action Fund. Available online at: www.gla.ac.uk/centres/icgws; Donna Pankhurst (2004) "The 'Sex War' and other Wars: Towards a Feminist Approach to Peacebuilding," in Haleh Afshar and Deborah Eade, *Development, Women and War: Feminist Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxfam: especially pages 17-20.

⁴⁹ For example, see Sheila Meintjes, Anu Pillay and Meredith Turshen, eds (2002) *The Aftermath: Women in Post-conflict Transformation*. London: Zed Books.

in these contexts. Furthermore, the tendency to see women as victims and not implicated directly in conflict often masks the reality of their situation. Women's responsibilities as carers, heads of households and income-generators often grow as a result of conflict (in contrast to men, who usually experience a decrease in responsibilities), and they are frequently victims of sexual violence, displacement, and have to adapt to the destruction of social networks and the loss of traditional coping strategies.⁵⁰ The ability of individuals to survive during conflict is influenced by the degree of their access to power, resources, and opportunities. In this respect, women can face more difficulty than men in adapting to transformed social, political, and economic relations, as they are often excluded from decision-making processes and have fewer rights.⁵¹ However, in throwing gender relations into flux, conflict can also potentially open up new spaces for negotiating gender roles. Much work has been done on the specific roles of men and women in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding, and the findings of these analyses reinforce the need to ensure that the differences are acknowledged.⁵²

The advocacy of women's groups throughout the previous decade and the increased level of public awareness about gender issues due to the large-scale crises in Rwanda and Bosnia gathered pace at the end of the 1990s. At the same time, the failure to fulfil the various objectives of declarations such as the Platform for Action became increasingly evident, and the voices of feminists and others who were critiquing gender-blind approaches to addressing conflict became louder. In 1999, International Alert, a London-based peacebuilding NGO launched a global campaign, *Women Building Peace: From the Village Council to the Negotiating Table*.⁵³ Through this campaign, a coalition of 200 civil society organizations supported by certain actors at the UN such as UNIFEM, advocated for the adoption of a security council resolution on women, peace, and

⁵⁰ Meredith Turshen and Clotilde Twagiramariya, eds. (1998) *What Women Do in Wartime: Gender and Conflict in Africa*. London: Zed Books; Lindsey, Charlotte (2001) *Women Facing War*, ICRC study on the impact of armed conflict on women. Geneva: ICRC.

⁵¹ Judy El-Bushra (2004) "Fused in Combat: Gender Relations and Armed Conflict," in Haleh Afshar and Deborah Eade, eds. *Development, Women and War: Feminist Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxfam: 169.

⁵² For example, see: El Bushra, Judy and C. Mukarubuga (1995) "Women, War and Transition," *Gender and Development*, 3 (3); Mazurana, Dyan E. and Susan R. McKay (1999) *Women and Peacebuilding*, Essays on Human Rights and Democratic Development No. 8. Montreal: International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development; Sorensen, Birgitte (1998) *Women and Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Issues and Sources*, WSP Occasional Paper No. 3. Geneva: Wartorn Societies Project; Cynthia Cockburn and Dubravka Zarkov, Eds. *The Postwar Moment: Militarities, Masculinities and International Peacekeeping*. London: Lawrence and Wishart Limited; Sheila Meintjes, Anu Pillay and Meredith Turshen, eds (2002) *The Aftermath: Women in Post-conflict Transformation*. London: Zed Books.

⁵³ For a description of some of this work see Sanam B Naraghi-Anderlini (2001) *From the Beijing Platform for Action to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and Beyond: Achievements and Emerging Challenges*. London: International Alert. Available online at: <http://www.international-alert.org/publications/getdata.php?doctype=Pdf&id=106>.

security to address the absence of women and gender perspectives from formal peace processes such as peacekeeping, peace negotiations, justice and reconciliation, and post-conflict reconstruction. These efforts, coupled with the concerted pro-gender leadership within the Security Council, ultimately lead to the historic adoption of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (SCR 1325) on 31 October 2000.⁵⁴ Although gender issues had been discussed within various UN forums prior to this time, particularly in the context of broader development and socioeconomic issues, this resolution was the first official recognition by the UN body of the need to address gender issues in conflict prevention, management, and reconstruction mechanisms.

SCR 1325⁵⁵ was a watershed and signaled a real change in the donor community in the sense that this resolution sought to make gender relevant and mainstreamed in all aspects of peace operations, placing responsibility (in theory at least) squarely on shoulders of international community. The Resolution recognizes the “important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and stress[es] the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.”⁵⁶ However, not only does it acknowledge the vital role that women can play in peacebuilding and suggests that their inclusion is an important dimension of these processes, it also recognizes that it is their *right* to participate.⁵⁷ Women and gender perspectives have historically been marginalized from the security sphere, despite the gender hierarchies inherent within the concept of security and the different ways in which men and women experience in/security.⁵⁸ Similarly, the Security Council has historically, and to an extent still remains, “an overwhelmingly male and masculinized preserve.”⁵⁹ This makes the adoption of SCR 1325 by the Security Council an even more significant achievement.

⁵⁴Richard Strickland and Nata Duvvury (2003) *Gender Equity and Peacebuilding: From Rhetoric to Reality, Finding the Way*. Washington, DC: International Center for Research on Women: 16.

⁵⁵ United Nations (2000b) Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. S/Res/1325.

⁵⁶ UN (2000b).

⁵⁷ Carol Cohn (2004) “Feminist Peacemaking,” *The Women’s Review of Books*, 21 (5): 8.

⁵⁸ See J. Ann Tickner (2001) *Gendering World Politics: Issues and Approaches in the Post-Cold War Era*. New York: Columbia University Press: 36-64; Gunhild Hoogensen and Svein Vigeland Rottem (2004) “Gender Identity and the Subject of Security,” *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 35 (2): 155-171; Prasenjit Maiti (2001) *Discoursing on a Gendered Security*, Burdwan University, India. Available online at: <http://www.justlawlinks.com/NEWSLETTER/newsletter/art-01-06.htm>.

⁵⁹ Carol Cohn and Cynthia Enloe (2003) “A Conversation with Cynthia Enloe: Feminist Look at Masculinity and the Men Who Wage War,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*. Vol. 28: 1189-90.

The adoption of SCR 1325 finally provided the international community with a concrete framework that could be adapted and incorporated into existing peacebuilding policies and programs, and theoretically brought gender issues into the mainstream. In addition to forming the basis of donor policies related to gender and peacebuilding, SCR 1325 has also played an important role in awareness-raising, education, and advocacy, and has become the centre of a global civil society movement dedicated to promoting the inclusion of women in building peace around the world. For example, groups have emerged in countries such as Canada with the central purpose of lobbying their governments to include women in their peacebuilding and foreign policy agendas more broadly.⁶⁰ In addition, these organizations conduct research at the grassroots level to build up knowledge in the area of gender and peacebuilding and to provide multilateral and bilateral donors with proven strategies to improve their capacities in this field. SCR 1325 is largely focused on empowering women through capacity building and increasing their participation in the various dimensions of peacebuilding. It is also an important part of the growing international legal framework that recognizes the particular rights and protection needs of women and girls. As such, it offers an important tool to persuade a range of actors such as the UN agencies, Member States, parties to armed conflict, NGOs, peacekeepers and others to place increased priority on the inclusion of gender issues within their policies and programs. Before exploring whether or not the potential of the resolution has been realized over the past five years, the next section will consider whether the changing approaches to security and peacebuilding during the 1990s outlined above also presented an opportunity to bring women and gender issues out of the margins.

Potential for Change? The Concept of Human Security in the Emerging Peacebuilding Industry

Although not explicitly labelled as such, the reforms of the 1990s and the changed anatomy of UN peacekeeping missions signalled a shift towards an important new buzzword: human security. This change in the way security was perceived by the international community, from a state-based, territorial concept founded on ‘national interest,’ to a broader, individual-based ‘human security’ reflected the beginnings of the erosion of the international norm of non-intervention that had constrained any form of complex peacebuilding operations in the past. The term human security was first articulated in the UN’s 1994 *Human Development Report* and was subsequently adopted as a central pillar of several governments’ foreign

⁶⁰ The Canadian Committee on Women, Peace and Security (CCWPS), established in 2001, is a national coalition of members of civil society and the government sector whose mandate is to lobby for the fulfilment of the goals set out in SCR 1325. CCWPS (2003) *Conflict, Peace and Security: What Have We Learned and Where are We Going?*, Report of the First Annual Symposium of the Canadian Committee on Women, Peace and Security. 22 October. Ottawa: CCWPS. SCR 1325 is one, if not the, only Security Council resolution to have an active body of supporters who lobby continuously at the inter-governmental, regional, national, and local levels for the implementation of the recommendations contained within the resolution.

policies, in addition to being evident in the UN documents discussed above.⁶¹ According to the original definition,

Human security can be said to have two main aspects. It means, first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. And second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life – whether in homes, in jobs or in communities.⁶²

Human security thus aims to incorporate both development and security needs by advocating each individual's right to freedom from want as well as freedom from fear, and places the individual at the centre of analysis. This concept was developed at a time when security assumptions based on the state were destabilized by events such as the genocide in Rwanda and the growth in critical security studies within IR literature.⁶³ It recognized the reality that states, the supposed guarantor of people's rights and freedoms within the international system, either through negligence or through direct actions, could in fact contribute to their citizens' insecurity.

The concept of post-conflict peacebuilding articulated first by Boutros-Ghali and then extended by Annan, essentially broadened the remit of the UN to a wider range of roles that could be considered to encompass the aims of human security. Human security has been subject to intense criticism since its inception for being vague and 'all-encompassing,' and for diluting the important traditional security agenda of protecting the state from external threats.⁶⁴ While the ambiguity can be problematic, it also serves a useful purpose in terms of enabling a wide range of issues and actors to fall within its parameters that were outside the purview of the traditional approaches, thereby extending the ability of actors such as the UN to engage in conflict-affected regions. At the same time, although it intends to improve effectiveness by adding important substance to the evolving concept of peacebuilding, a human security approach can actually further complicate the realization of peace operations by extending the goal beyond the cessation of overt armed conflict to other more complex meanings of 'security.' A human security perspective necessitates a long-term focus, and in doing so, it is an important conceptual bridge between the objectives of peacebuilding on one hand, and sustainable development on the other. It therefore became an important link in the discussions

⁶¹ Canada's Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the leadership of Lloyd Axworthy was one of the major proponents of the human security approach. See Rob McRae and Don Hubert, eds. (2001) *Human Security and the New Diplomacy: Protecting People, Promoting Peace*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

⁶² United Nations Development Programme (1994) *Human Development Report, 1994*. New York: Oxford University Press: 23.

⁶³ For example, Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams, eds. (1997) *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

⁶⁴ Roland Paris (2001) "Human Security: Paradigm Shift or Hot Air?" *International Security*, Vol. 26 (2): 88-90.

around how to link the security and development agendas of peacebuilding, and provided the rationale for ensuring that these two separate goals did not undermine each other.

However, one of the key problems with human security is that it can mask gender-differentiated insecurities by encouraging a gender-neutral approach. Feminist approaches within critical security studies have attempted to show that, “girls and women experience human insecurity differently from men and are subject to gender hierarchies and power inequities that exacerbate their insecurity [and] because of their lower status, girls and women are less able to articulate and act upon their security needs, as compared with boys and men.”⁶⁵ There is clear evidence from around the world reinforcing the argument that those with the least power are typically those who are least secure. For example, women and girls often have to live off less food than men and boys in the same families and receive less education or access to opportunities to secure a living.⁶⁶ This weakens their coping mechanisms and leaves them more exposed to the negative effects of conflict and instability. Even whilst emphasizing the importance of an individual-level focus, the male experience is often prioritized over the female by human security approaches, and the experience of ‘universal man’ dominates.⁶⁷ At the same time, insecurities that are experienced by men in specific ways, such as the impact of the increased militarization of society, can sometimes be over-looked. Therefore, differentiating between each individual’s experiences of (in)security becomes important, and it becomes problematic to assume that human security as a concept is capable of doing this.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Susan McKay (2004) “Women, Human Security and Peace-building: A Feminist Analysis,” in Hideaki Shinoda and Ho-Won Jeong, eds. *Conflict and Human Security: A Search for New Approaches of Peace-building*, IPSHU English Research Report Series No. 19, p. 153. Available online at: <http://home.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/heiwa/Pub/E19/Contents.htm>. Also see Gunhild Hoogensen and Svein Vigeland Rottem (2004) “Gender Identity and the Subject of Security,” *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 35 (2): 155-71; and Lene Hansen (2000) “The Little Mermaid’s Silent Security Dilemma and the Absence of Gender in the Copenhagen School,” *Millennium*, Vol. 29 (2): 285-306.

⁶⁶ McKay (2004): 154.

⁶⁷ It is important to note that security is not only mediated by gender, but also by other factors such as ethnicity, age, or class. In turn, Western, liberal notions of security are often prioritized over other local, culturally-mediated ones.

⁶⁸ Whilst some have argued for an integration of women, peace, and security issues within the concept of human security, others have raised concern at the possibility that important gender issues could then be marginalized or overshadowed by this broader concept. For an interesting overview of issues related to gender and human security see Enrique Gomáriz and Ana Isabel García (2003) *Gender and Democratic Security: Conceptual Framework and Methodological Criteria*. San José, Costa Rica: Fundación Género y Sociedad. Available online at: <http://www.generoy sociedad.org/pubs.php>.

One of the most important articulations of this concept is the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine that emerged from the report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty in 2001.⁶⁹ The Commission was established to explore ways of dealing with the conflictual international norms of sovereignty and humanitarian intervention that were thrown into stark relief after the failure to act in Rwanda in 1994 and the consequences of acting in Kosovo in 1999. R2P essentially encapsulates many of the issues that had been on the international agenda for a number of years: namely when, how, and under what circumstances the right to intervene is acceptable. However, by changing the terminology the members of the ICISS hoped to prompt a reconceptualisation of the responsibilities, as well as rights, that sovereignty brings, at the same time as avoiding many of the pitfalls previous discussions about intervention had encountered. The idea of human security is strongly reflected in the report, where security is extended to people as well as states. As the report points out, “the traditional, narrow perception of security leaves out the most elementary and legitimate concerns of ordinary people regarding security in their daily lives.”⁷⁰ The report also echoes the UN’s call for an integrated approach where emphasis is not solely on intervention, but also on the responsibility to prevent conflict (conflict prevention and peace-making), to respond appropriately when it occurs (peacekeeping), and to take action to rebuild societies when conflict has occurred (post-conflict peacebuilding). The Commission’s report is in no way binding, and its subject matter will likely make consensus at the international level difficult, but it was important in that it presented an alternate framework for looking at the issues behind the justification of a growing UN responsibility for action in conflict-affected countries. The R2P doctrine also received considerable support from the UN, particularly in the SG’s 2005 report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, and is developing into a new norm of the international system in the 21st century.⁷¹

Whilst the R2P doctrine is based on the security of people rather than states, and therefore offers a potential starting point for addressing the different security needs of men and women it falls victim to the same problems as human security, and is almost completely gender-blind. Given that only one of the Commission’s twelve members was a woman, gender balance and representation was lacking, and the gender expertise of the members was limited.⁷² This exclusion of women’s perspectives was the case despite the claims of the

⁶⁹ The Canadian Prime Minister, Jean Chrétien, announced the formation of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty at the Millennium Summit in September 2000.

⁷⁰ ICISS (2001) *The Responsibility to Protect: The Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty*. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre: 15.

⁷¹ Kofi Annan (2005) *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All*, Report of the Secretary-General, A/59/2005.

⁷² Jennifer Bond and Laurel Sherret (2005) *A Sight for Sore Eyes: Bringing Gender Vision to the Responsibility to Protect Framework*, INSTRAW: 22-3. Available online at: <http://www.un-instraw.org/en/images/stories/SecuritySectorReform/new%20voices%20gender%20r2p%20final.pdf>.

ICISS to be an inclusive and consultative process.⁷³ For example, the vast amount of literature documenting the dire consequences of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) processes that fail to effectively include women and girls this is not mentioned in the report. Women and girls often continue to face high levels of personal insecurity in the ‘post-conflict’ context as a result of the surplus of weapons, domestic violence, and the militarization of society. Another example is that gender justice is intimately linked to women’s human security, but the international community has repeatedly failed to address gender-based violence during post-conflict peacebuilding. According to a paper published by INSTRAW, the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, the report fails to incorporate the needs and contributions of women living in conflict-affected regions.⁷⁴ Furthermore, it persuasively argues that “to have an optimal prospect of promoting human protection and security, R2P must thus be re-conceptualized to include a recognition that social constructions of gender play a significant role in determining who achieves security and how it is experienced.”⁷⁵

The emphasis that human security places on the individual, coupled with the broadening definition of peacebuilding that was laid out in UN policy ranging from the *Agenda for Peace* to the Brahimi Report, in theory provided a potential opening to improve the integration of gender issues into the UN’s peacebuilding operations. Increased sensitization to the structural causes of conflict and the multiple sources of insecurity that exist in the contemporary global context should logically justify bottom-up approaches to peacebuilding that are sensitive to gender-differentiations in experience, needs, opportunities, resources, and rights. Although many non-governmental organizations, women’s groups, and feminist theorists appreciated this and produced countless documents that reaffirmed the fundamental importance of gender equality to sustainable peace, the impact on the UN mainstream was minimal. However, in response to SCR 1325 and the mobilization of civil society surrounding it, the majority of donors began to indicate support for the provisions within the resolution, and most eventually recognised gender equality as a ‘cross-cutting’ issue within their peacebuilding policies.⁷⁶

⁷³ It is important to distinguish between ‘women’s perspectives’ and a ‘gender perspective’ in peacebuilding. Women’s perspectives are more narrowly focused on how policies, programs, actions or other experiences impact on and are influenced by the particular role and experiences of women. Gender perspectives, on the other hand, are concerned with the relationship between men and women’s roles and experiences and such a perspective would therefore consider their differential impact or influence on those policies, programs, or actions. Whilst understanding gender relationships is critical to effective peacebuilding, it can also be useful at times to focus on and highlight women’s particular needs and interests in order that they do not go unaddressed.

⁷⁴ See Bond and Sherret (2005).

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*: 74.

⁷⁶ This applies to both bilateral and multilateral donors. CIDA, USAID, UNHCR, UNDP, World Bank, and others all have either dedicated departments for gender and peacebuilding or at the very least, comprehensive policies outlining their commitment to including gender issues (often as a ‘priority issue’) in their peacebuilding programs.

Each member of the international community, including bilateral, multilateral, and non-governmental actors, have internalized and operationalized the gender agenda differently, although rhetorically, most tend to adopt the stance that the equal inclusion of women in existing peacebuilding processes, along with the integration of a gender perspective, is essential.⁷⁷ Gender issues are supposedly ‘mainstreamed’ throughout the various UN bodies, however in reality this has meant that instead of becoming integrated they have become invisible. There is a dissonance between the official discourse of gender equality and what is actually happening on the ground. Understanding the failure to actually implement the many policy statements and commitments related to gender, peace, and security at the UN requires further in-depth research to more fully explore the complex relationship between discourse and practice.

The remainder of the paper will now turn to explore the linkages between the efforts to mainstream gender and the changing UN approach to conflict, security, and development over the past five years as the security and development agendas have become ever more consolidated in the peacebuilding industry.

From the Millennium Development Goals to *In Larger Freedom*: Consolidating the Link between Security and Development

In the past few years, theorizing around the so-called ‘security-development nexus’ has grown markedly, building on the insights of critical security studies and the ongoing experience of international involvement in peacebuilding. The logic of this research agenda is to explore both how security and development agendas are linked through peacebuilding, but also to explore the tension that can exist between the two agendas where their outcomes can in fact undermine, rather than reinforce, each other. Traditionally, military or security aims were separated from socioeconomic development objectives, with different actors carrying out projects in isolated spheres. However, the role of aid in sustaining and even contributing to conflict, the increasingly recognized links between security sector reform (SSR) and governance, and the inability to address poverty in a context of violence and instability made it clear that some kind of policy coherence between the supposedly discrete fields of security and development was in fact necessary.⁷⁸ “Lying at the nexus of development and security, peacebuilding requires a willingness to rethink the traditional boundaries between these two domains,” and Tschirgi argued that the post-Cold War world provided the opportunity for the international community to do so.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ It is beyond the scope of this paper to explore the reasons behind and implications of these varying strategies, but it would be an interesting area of analysis to pursue.

⁷⁸ OECD (2001) “Security Issues and Development Cooperation: A Conceptual Framework for Enhancing Policy Coherence,” *DAC Journal*, Vol. 2 (3).

⁷⁹ Necla Tschirgi (2003) *Peacebuilding as the Link between Security and Development: Is the Window of Opportunity Closing?* New York: International Peace Academy: 2.

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 and their aftermath present a significant challenge to the peacebuilding industry. The ‘terrorist threat’ is prompting a retrenchment, particularly in the United States, back towards conventional security strategy. Human rights, good governance and the rule of law, previously considered to be the linchpins of effective peacebuilding, are being deprioritized in the face of a renewed interest in national security. Furthermore, the UN’s role as leader of international peacebuilding efforts is being challenged by the growing unilateralism of the US, and it is facing difficulties in terms of keeping up its capacities and resources in line with the growing security and development needs of the international community.⁸⁰ Therefore, while the academic literature on peacebuilding continued to advocate for integrated approaches, and the experiences from the field supported the linking of security and development, the agendas in practice began to move further apart.

The final two reports released as part of Kofi Annan’s system-level UN reforms, *A More Secure World* and *In Larger Freedom*, were finalized in 2004 and 2005 respectively and therefore address some of these concerns.⁸¹ The High-Level Panel Report (HLPR) is based around the concept of collective security, and far from allowing the post-9/11 fallout to undermine the linkages between security and development, it continues to reflect the view that development and security are inextricably linked. One of the most important outcomes of this report was the recommendation for the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to unify the fragmented and ad-hoc approach that characterizes much of the international community’s peacebuilding efforts.⁸² Although some gender language was integrated into the resolution establishing the PBC, it is not clear that this will be translated into action once it becomes operational. The fact that the Peacebuilding Support Office will be headed by Carolyn McAskie may help to ensure that gender issues play a role in the PBC’s considerations, given her evident commitment to SCR 1325.⁸³

The dawn of the new millennium also witnessed renewed efforts from the international community to address the ongoing crisis of underdevelopment throughout the world, with the holding of the Millennium Summit

⁸⁰ Tschirgi (2003): 10-3.

⁸¹ See United Nations (2004) *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*, Report of the Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. New York: United Nations.

⁸² For more details about the proposed Peacebuilding Commission see United Nations (2004): paragraph 261-269.

⁸³ As the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Burundi from June 2004 until April 2006, Carolyn McAskie undertook a number of initiatives in support of the resolution within the context of the UN peacekeeping mission in Burundi. For example, promoting women’s participation in politics, addressing sexual exploitation and abuse, and achieving gender justice were all priorities of the mission from the outset. See Carolyn McAskie (2004) “Addressing Gender Justice in View of the Realities on the Ground: Perspectives of a Special Representative of the Secretary General,” Statement made by Carolyn McAskie at a conference on *Gender Justice in Post-Conflict Situations: Peace needs Women, and Women need Justice*, 15-17 September 2004, New York. Available online at: http://www.womenwarpeace.org/issues/justice/statements/McAskie_SRSG_ONUB_Burundi.pdf.

in 2000, and the launching of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).⁸⁴ Although neither conflict prevention nor peacebuilding are explicitly tied into the MDGs themselves, peace and security are central to the Millennium Declaration and the particular difficulties conflict-affected countries face in achieving the goals are elaborated on in the MDG progress report, *Investing in Development*.⁸⁵ Thus, the UN again rhetorically links security and development, this time through the notion of the conflict trap where poverty increases the likelihood of a relapse into violence, thereby reducing a country's ability to fully emerge from conflict. The promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women is one of the MDGs, but these issues are also supposed to be implicitly integrated into the rest of the goals. According to the UN, "attempting to achieve the MDGs without promoting gender equality will both raise the costs and decrease the likelihood of achieving the other goals."⁸⁶ However, the evidence suggests that few countries will reach this goal, and little effort is being made to use a gender perspective to enhance the prospects of reaching the others. Nevertheless, the fact that gender issues are considered to be a 'legitimate' focus of the MDGs is in stark contrast to the UN's rhetoric around security where they are rarely mentioned at all.

It would seem as though SCR 1325 and the efforts to link the security and development agendas should have provided enough momentum to ensure that significant progress was made in the early years of the 21st century in terms of finally making gender issues count within the mainstream peacebuilding agenda. The former provides the framework and the latter the conceptual 'space' to build on the plethora of feminist analyses of security. However, a quick gender analysis of these documents casts doubt on whose security and whose freedom is actually being protected and promoted. Both contain only passing reference to women's rights or gender equality, and where they are mentioned it is only in the context of either the MDGs or as victims that require protection. This is all the more surprising given the manifold increase in reports, guidelines, articles, and books written about gender, conflict, and development issues in the past five years.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ The Millennium Development Goals are a set of eight benchmarks ranging from halving extreme poverty to ensuring universal primary education for girls and boys that have been agreed to by member states and the main development institutions. The target for achieving the MDGs is 2015. More information can be found at: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>.

⁸⁵ UN Millennium Project (2005) *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*. New York: UNDP: 183-9. The text of the Millennium Declaration is available online at: <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>.

⁸⁶ United Nations Development Programme (2005) *En Route to Equality: A Gender Review of National MDG Reports 2005*. New York: UNDP: 2.

⁸⁷ For example, see Mazurana, Raven-Roberts, and Parpart (2005); Elisabeth Rehn and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (2002) *Women, War, Peace: Progress of the World's Women, Volume 1*. New York: UNIFEM; Tsjeard Bouta, Georg Frerks and Ian Bannon (2005) *Gender, Conflict and Development*. Washington: World Bank; Afshar and Eade (2004).

The final section of this paper will consider the continued absence of gender in the peacebuilding industry and the problems with mainstreaming gender into the security and development agendas.

Ignoring Gender (Part 2)? The Paradox of Gender Mainstreaming in Peace Operations

In a recent report for the International Peace Academy that provides a thorough overview of the fifteen years since the emergence of the peacebuilding industry, Cutillo isolates three basic questions that should be asked when evaluating peacebuilding: who is in charge, who coordinates, and who pays.⁸⁸ It could be contended that another fundamental question that is missing from this list is ‘who is affected and how.’ In asking this question it may be easier to identify the often-differentiated ways in which men and women are affected by peacebuilding interventions, and whose interests and needs are prioritized. As Olsson and Skjelsbaek point out, even when they are gender-blind, peace operations inevitably have unintended consequences on gender roles and relations in the societies.⁸⁹ By consciously asking these questions, negative consequences could surely be better managed, and gender-differentiated understandings of security may become more evident. The question remains whether gender mainstreaming facilitates or impedes this process of critical reflection.

The report of the Commission on Human Security, *Human Security Now*, is more successful in terms of acknowledging the different meanings of security for men and women than any of the other documents discussed above. The decision was made to integrate gender issues throughout the report rather than highlighting them as a particular area of concern, and a gender perspective does show through in some of the sections, particularly those related to conflict and poverty.⁹⁰ However, Bunch points out that “by not also taking up women as a subject, something is missing in the report [...] This gap goes to the core of the debate about gender mainstreaming versus women specific work, and illustrates why we need both.”⁹¹ It is also equally important to ensure that forms of insecurity experienced by men as a result of competing masculinities are also not lost from the analysis. Gender issues can also be co-opted in a number of ways, the most obvious example being the justifications used by president George W. Bush to rationalize the launching of the ‘war on terror.’ One of the defenses used by the US for the invasion of Afghanistan was to liberate oppressed Afghan women, thereby politicizing, and in a sense falsely securitizing, women’s bodies

⁸⁸ Alberto Cutillo (2006) *International Assistance to Countries Emerging from Conflict: A Review of Fifteen Years of Interventions and the Future of Peacebuilding*, Security-Development Nexus Program Policy Paper. New York: International Peace Academy: 54.

⁸⁹ Louise Olsson *et al.* (2004) *Gender Aspects of Conflict Interventions: Intended and Unintended Consequences*. Oslo: International Peace Research Institute.

⁹⁰ Charlotte Bunch (2004) “A Feminist Human Rights Lens on Human Security,” *Peace Review*, Vol. 16 (1): 4.

⁹¹ Bunch (2004): 4.

for geopolitical purposes.⁹² It is therefore important to be fully aware of all the ways in which gender relations play into peacebuilding, both intended and unintended, in order to achieve the ambitious aims that the UN has set out in its policy rhetoric over the past fifteen years.

Feminist theorists have been engaging with both security studies and development studies for decades, and have argued that international relations is a discourse of the powerful (read men), and that it therefore fails to reflect the full social reality of men *and* women. As a result, it reveals only part of the complex picture of contemporary international relations.⁹³ Furthermore, they hold that gendered discourse is used to reinforce, legitimate, and perpetuate the unequal structures of international politics. The work of Cynthia Enloe has been particularly influential in demonstrating the fundamental role of women and gender inequalities in perpetuating the current international security system. She also questions traditional assumptions around concepts such as the state and violence that are all too often taken as given.⁹⁴ By challenging the patriarchal structure and the underlying inter-relationship between militarism and masculinity, feminist approaches to security have the potential to destabilize the assumptions on which mainstream understanding of the world are based, a fact which may explain the quite significant resistance that these approaches continue to encounter. However, these critiques have not fully penetrated the dominant discourse of peacebuilding, and simply integrating gender issues into existing structures and processes through frameworks such as SCR 1325 turns a gender perspective into a problem-solving instrument rather than a critical lens.⁹⁵

This is one of the main paradoxes surrounding the attempts to engender peacebuilding practices. In order to engage with the dominant structures and processes of peacebuilding, it is necessary to ‘speak the language,’ thereby dulling the ability of feminists to bring any real structural changes about. As Sandra Whitworth convincingly suggests, it is not clear that anything beyond the technical solutions and problem-solving approach would be compatible with the UN system.

In order to be ‘heard’ within this context, arguments must be presented in a way that adopts the language of the UN, accommodates itself to UN-produced understandings of peace and security, and is alert to the hierarchies, protocols, and ‘stories’ by which UN personnel

⁹² Deniz Kandiyoti (2005) *The Politics of Gender and Reconstruction in Afghanistan*, Occasional Paper No. 4. Geneva: UNRISD: 1.

⁹³ Gillian Youngs (2004) “Feminist International Relations: A Contradiction in Terms? Or: Why Women and Gender are Essential to Understanding the World ‘We’ Live In,” *International Affairs*, 80 (1): 76.

⁹⁴ Cynthia Enloe (1993) *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War*. Berkeley: University of California Press; and (2000) *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women’s Lives*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

⁹⁵ Sandra Whitworth (2005) *Men, Militarism and UN Peacekeeping*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers: 120.

define themselves [...] Trying to insert gender into the dominant discourse of peacekeeping being produced within a UN context significantly limits the possibilities of critique.⁹⁶

Although the existence of SCR 1325 and gender mainstreaming guidelines for post-conflict contexts⁹⁷ provide useful frameworks, it is not clear that anything other tokenism results, and the central problem of bridging security and development with a gender-sensitive understanding of security is not addressed.

Pankhurst has suggested that “where the question of pursuing greater gender equality does arise at the point of a settlement, it is not uncommon for it to be seen as neither essential, nor urgent in peacebuilding.”⁹⁸ This ‘gendered politics of prioritization’ is another way of looking at the separation of gender issues from security objectives within the peacebuilding agenda. Donors have been criticized for perceiving that gender equality is something that can be postponed, until after all the other ‘more important’ concerns have been dealt with.⁹⁹ What has not been explored enough is *why* this is the case. Given that gender equality is now accepted as a central objective of development policy, why has it not achieved the same status within security policy? Clearly, gendered assumptions inform what key actors believe ‘matters’ in terms of securing peace. By looking at who is making the decisions, and whose viewpoints are feeding into these decisions, it may be possible to determine where donor priorities in peacebuilding lie. The challenge then becomes to reorient them through feminist analysis to be more inclusive and gender-sensitive.¹⁰⁰

It could be argued that the major international organizations have adopted an ‘add women and stir’ approach, focusing on bringing women into existing peacebuilding structures and processes and making their social, economic, and political roles more explicit and visible. Despite the transformative policy rhetoric that might indicate otherwise, the liberal feminist approach implemented in practice then restricts the ability of the international community to respond reflexively and appropriately to the challenge of promoting gender equality, “In short, [...] actually living up to the gender mandate is an uninviting proposition that generates

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ For example, see UNDP (2002) *Gender Approaches in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations*. New York: UNDP.

⁹⁸ Pankhurst (2004): 3.

⁹⁹ Lesley Abdela (2004) “Kosovo: Missed Opportunities, Lessons for the Future,” in Afshar and Eade, eds.: 89-92.

¹⁰⁰ It is important to note that some efforts are already being made to provide gender training to UN Security Council members, raise awareness through continued high-level lobbying and advocacy, and develop practical tools to assist policy-makers to incorporate women, peace, and security issues into their work. For examples of some of these initiatives see www.peacewomen.org.

uncomfortable situations and offers all too few rewards. Not surprisingly, the operative maxim seems to have become ‘add women and do NOT stir’.”¹⁰¹

Conclusion

Although the UN’s reform process, in particular the focus on human security approaches, theoretically offered a potential opening for women’s rights and gender equality to be brought into the mainstream, this did not happen. SCR 1325 has helped to advance gender equality within peacebuilding to a certain degree, and was certainly an important achievement. However, as Enloe points out,

...perhaps what was not grasped, and is still not absorbed by the members of those delegations or by the thousands of officials worldwide who found 1325 lying in their in-boxes, was the genuinely radical understanding that informed the feminist analysis undergirding 1325. That feminist understanding is this: that patriarchy – in all its varied guises, camouflaged, khaki clad, and pin-striped – is a principal cause both of the outbreak of violent societal conflicts and of the international community’s frequent failures in providing long-term resolution to those violence conflicts.¹⁰²

The lack of knowledge and failure of UN, donor and other actors to capitalize fully on the possibilities presented by the resolution means that the result is more often tokenistic gestures than real change. While an ‘add women and stir’ approach can be the most effective in an environment of limited resources and political constraints, the gendered nature of peacebuilding interventions requires constant questioning and indeed, significant transformation, of attitudes and structures that may not be possible through such methods. While this paper argues that it is crucial for gender equality to be seen as relevant to the dominant trends within peacebuilding, the danger is that gender then stops being a critical term and loses its radical political potential.¹⁰³ Therefore, the line between engaging with UN peacebuilding structures to make feminist critiques of peacebuilding and the critique itself then being neutralized through engagement with those structures is a fine one. As Whitworth argues, “a larger and more concerted effort must be made to challenge the role and limitations of the United Nations in framing contemporary debates on gender and security, to ensure that critical questions, not bureaucratic imperatives, inform feminist work on peace and security.”¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Claudia von Braunmühl (2002) “Mainstreaming Gender – a Critical Revision” in Marianne Braig and Sonja Wölte, eds. *Common Ground or Mutual Exclusion? Women’s Movements and International Relations*. London: Zed Books: 65.

¹⁰² Cynthia Enloe (2005) “What if Patriarchy Is ‘the Big Picture’? An Afterword” in Dyan Mazurana, Angela Raven-Roberts and Jane Parpart, eds. *Gender, Conflict and Peacekeeping*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield: 281.

¹⁰³ Whitworth (2005): 120-1.

¹⁰⁴ Whitworth (2005): 121.

This paper points towards several future research agendas that may merit further investigation. In addition to applying feminist critical security studies to the thinking around peacebuilding, more effort should also be made to bridge the divide between what is going on formally within the UN, and informally at the community level through the efforts of local women peacebuilders. Although the UN's mainstream discourse and practice may marginalize gender issues within the dominant peacebuilding agenda, there may be alternate discourses and practices on the ground that do succeed in challenging gender inequalities and present new openings and opportunities to break down patriarchal structures thereby creating a more equitable and sustainable peace. Furthermore, a closer analysis of the relationship between discourse and practice within the UN with respect to the women, peace and security agenda could reveal insights about the power dynamics that continue to relegate these issues to the margins. Although the dominant discourses that have emerged around peacebuilding and security are reinforcing this marginalization, there remains the potential to either resist or destabilize these structures.¹⁰⁵ A better understanding of what makes particular discourses dominate, and the resulting impact (if indeed there is any) on practices on the ground would be valuable not just for the study of gender and peacebuilding, but also for the multitude of other issues that are subject to the discourse-practice gap.

¹⁰⁵ Lene Hansen (2006) *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*. London: Routledge.