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Failing to Secure the Peace: Practical Gendered Lessons from Haiti & Iraq

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Nadine Puechguirbal: First of all, before we start, I would like to say that it's a privilege for me to participate in such an event together with Cynthia Enloe because her work has really influenced my own work in the field. So, thank you.

What I am going to be talking about is what happens when we don't integrate gender in peacekeeping. Or what happens when we integrate it wrongly, or when we think we've integrated it – like a lot of people in my mission think they're gender sensitive – but we really haven't. I'm going to just use a few concrete examples and then we'll see at the end if we have more time for questions.

I would like to start by talking about the situation in Haiti. We had a hurricane a few months ago and one city, the city of Gonaïves was really badly damaged following the flooding. So the UN community, the international community, everybody was mobilized to go to Gonaïves and organize the humanitarian assistance. I found it really interesting to realize how gender insensitive the humanitarian community was. You know, I used to work for the Red Cross ten years ago before going to work for the UN. It was amazing to realize that nothing has really changed in the humanitarian mentality. So let me give you a few examples.

I did a few trips to Gonaïves with a Haitian women's organization. I accompanied the Minister for the Status of Women, and I did my own trip to just find out for myself what was going on there. We did an assessment to measure the impact of the flooding on women and girls. You have to know that at the very beginning when the first trucks with food were trying to reach the distribution point they were just completely looted by strong young men. And of course, the women who were in charge of families and communities and really needed the relief items never got anything.

So the humanitarian community thought – "oh, we have a problem." They started a distribution system through the women. "We are going to have women as the direct beneficiaries of our assistance." Fair enough. So they organized the distribution points. They made sure that the population was informed about this new system. They asked the women and the young girls to line up and receive the rations.

But then if we think about the security of those women and girls - I think this was never considered, never even thought about, and I'll tell you why. In the organizing committee, there was not a single woman. It was the local community together with the international community that apparently never even considered that there might be a problem with having an all-male committee. It was the same as during peace processes when men want to represent women. So of course, the distribution points were established according to some rules that were not really what women wanted, and the distribution points were sometimes very far away from the home. The same for the water points, they were far away from home.

Now, thinking about the security aspect - nobody had thought that those women might be endangering their lives when they leave their homes and go to fetch the water or receive the food. Security was organized around the distribution points by the peacekeepers - so I was told, "You don't need to worry - the security will be organized by the peacekeepers and the women will be safe." Okay, so the women will be safe while they're at the distribution point, but nobody really cared about what happened when they left the distribution point. I was told, "We can't do anything because we don't have the human resources, we don't have the equipment, and we don't enough peacekeepers, so the women just have to organize themselves within their own communities."

We started to receive reports of sexual violence against women at the very same time. No wonder, right? But that's not the end of the story. The other problem we had is that when I visited the distribution point, we realized that women had been queuing and waiting in line for hours under the sun, since seven in the morning and now it is midday and they still haven't received any food. Why? Because there were some coordination problems between the people in charge of the warehouse, the people in charge of the truck, and the people in charge of the security. They couldn't reach an agreement on when the trucks could be loaded and when they could get out of the warehouse. And if the women are waiting, the attitude was, "well, there's nothing we can do."

I remember raising this issue with the coordination committee, and they told me, "You should be happy already, you got what you wanted - women are direct beneficiaries of the food." In terms of security it's interesting. We think of security as meaning immediate security on the spot. What happens afterwards isn't thought about.

I remember watching those women wait in the sun and not complaining about anything, just wanting to get their food and leave. You had pregnant women; you had old women, and the young men around just watching them and waiting. We don't really know what happened after. So we talked to those women, we talked to people in the community and they started to report a few cases of sexual violence. My office facilitated a trip to the city for a Haitian women's organization so they can do their own assessment. Now we see if we can cross-check information, and if the facts are true we can start proposing a solution for their own protection.

What I found very interesting in this case is first of all, that none of the women were consulted about the organization of humanitarian assistance. Again, it tells us why we still see women as perceived beneficiaries, as victims. "They don't need to participate in the decision making process because we can do this for them." It's now 2004, and I saw this same thing ten years ago. I'm just wondering why are we still in that situation in 2004? And why the humanitarian community can't have a gender-sensitive approach? And I was told many times, "it's an emergency, we have no time for gender, we'll add gender later." And I keep responding that "later will be too late."

But that is not the end of the story. Here is another dimension: at the same time, the humanitarian workers decided to organize shelters. You have to know that in Gonaïves people lost everything. They lost their houses, so they found a temporary place in the shelter. But we all know through our experiences with refugee camps or camps for displaced people that the "temporary" will very often last. So the humanitarian community was not really willing to work on those shelters because they said, "well, it's temporary - we'll relocate people later." It's been

going now for one month I think. And in those shelters I've found many women, young girls, and children hanging around without anything, in complete destitution, completely abandoned. It was really shocking. I can tell you the great Haitian feminists who were working with me and doing their own assessments, they were really shocked by what they saw. They told me they were really shocked by the lack of dignity. Those women had been stripped of all their dignity. They were just left in the shelter, they were not given anything, and they were certainly not put in charge of the organization of the assistance of the shelter.

And then there is the problem of not having gender-disaggregated data. I was handed a piece of paper and on it was written *Population of Shelter: 200 people*, which does not help me a lot, because you don't know how many men, women, boys, and girls. You can't assess their vulnerability. You can't tell who has the most needs if you don't know if there are pregnant women, old women, and teenagers. There were a few cases reported to us of violence against women in those shelters and fighting for who was going to take over the shelter in terms of controlling the territory and the power. The same happened in the medical centers.

I've been thinking about all of this, and how we could improve it. Along with the women's organization, we suggested that the women should be consulted first. How do they want to organize their own communities? What are their needs? Try to again collect gender-disaggregated data so we can do better work and we can better target the vulnerable groups.

I find it most difficult to make the humanitarian community understand that we can't work without gender-disaggregated data. Without it, we won't be able to deliver the same level of assistance to men and women or teenagers or children. I face the same problem over and over again; it seems that it's incredibly difficult for people to break down data collection by gender.

In terms of security, I find it really interesting that at the United Nations "security" means that we secure the UN staff, and then we secure the UN assets, and eventually we secure the population. We find in our mandate in the resolutions adopted by the Security Council some elements of protection for the population, but it's always very vague. I also find it very interesting when they talk about "protecting women from violence," but they don't say how. Very often, as we're seeing in the Congo, we had a lot of cases of sexual violence and those women were never protected by anyone, not the UN.

So we have all this in our mandates, but it is not really implemented on the ground. In Gonaïves the "security" was mainly securing the food, securing one area for it, but not really thinking about the violence women could be exposed to. And what does this tell us? What is the security concept for the UN? Security is a very broad concept, and in my experience I've seen that on the ground the population is expecting more than the UN means by it. I think that when the UN arrives with a mission, we create a lot of expectations. And if "security" is in our resolution and in our mandates, and then the population sees that the UN is going to spend more time protecting its own people and its own assets, I would say it becomes a credibility problem.

So in the case of Gonaïves it would be very interesting to see also what is going to happen now in those cases of violence. We hope that we won't reach the point of what happened in the refugee camps in Western Africa when a lot of the relief workers were abusing the refugee population, mainly the women and the girls, exchanging food for sex. I hope we won't reach that point in Gonaïves, but you know it's a very poor community now.

Again, I don't think the international community understands that a lot of women and girls are single heads of households. They have nothing, they lost everything, and somehow they may be obliged to sell themselves if they can't get access to the food. And remember that after a while you can be cuing for two or three hours in the sun and when the truck is empty you go back home and have nothing. Then you come back the following morning. Some women may change strategy and some relief workers or peacekeepers may use it as a way to abuse women and girls.

So I think we really have to reconsider the way we approach the humanitarian assistance, and I'm not sure I have a solution. It's just what I've been observing. We made a few recommendations, and we've been trying to think about the security issue because security is not only the physical protection of the distribution point. To me, it is also people being in a position to secure medical assistance, to secure food, to secure shelter, and not being obliged to fear for their own protection. You will see very often the word "security" is used only in the very physical, material way. It's just all these dynamics you find on a mission, and it's very hard for us to come to terms with the situation without wondering – why can't we learn from our mistakes? Why are we facing the same problems in Haiti? The humanitarian assistance workers don't see that their behavior is going to jeopardize the women within their own communities.

So we can do gender training with peacekeepers, we can teach about respecting the local population and the culture. And there again we see the gap between the concepts of security. What does it mean for me? *As a peacekeeper* it means that I don't want to be shot, but I can misbehave. There will be no consequences, no one holding me responsible, because I have the power and I can buy everyone and everything within the community and I can show that I have the power. *Security for a woman* within her own community means "I may be raped by the peacekeeper." So I think she has a completely different definition of the word. And it's interesting because in the case studies I've been doing on gender training, we've been trying to put the peacekeepers in a situation where we show them that by jeopardizing the security of women within their (the women's) own community, the peacekeepers are actually also jeopardizing their (peacekeepers') own security, because the perception of the mission will change and the men of the community will be very angry at the peacekeepers.

I think in the case of Gonaïves that's exactly what's going to happen. We are losing control of the situation. Sooner or later we're going to forget Gonaïves to talk about something else, and those women and young girls are going to stay in the "temporary" shelters. Sooner or later we're going to have protection issues, because if you're the young men in control of the shelter you're in a gang. You have to know that in Haiti we really have a problem with gangs and the city of Gonaïves is organized according to gangs that have a certain power in some areas. After a while I think if we keep considering women as powerless individuals, not involving them in the reconstruction of the city, we are going to reinforce the gender roles within the community.

Carol Cohn: Could we turn to elections for a moment? Would you take a minute to connect this humanitarian assistance effort that fails to think about gender, and the narrow definition of security, to another part of MINUSTAH's work, which is to prepare an electoral process? What impact do they have on your ability to prepare an effective electoral process that's going to become the basis for sustainable peace?

NP: It would be the same pattern, I think, in terms of securing the electoral process. What does it mean? Regarding "security" - for the United Nations, "securing" the electoral process means that on Election Day all of the polling stations will be secured. So the civilian police are going to organize the security, and the military and everybody will be involved. What I haven't heard yet is how are we going to ensure that men and women are going to vote? And I know, because I've been talking to a lot of people, feminists and non-feminists alike, and they are very concerned about violence during Election Day.

In Haiti you find very few women who want to get involved in the electoral process as candidates and as voters. *Why?* Because past elections in Haiti were marred by violence, and they are scared. We've had a lot of cases of really violent elections, so now the women, who have so many responsibilities, fear for their lives. Remember, 60% of single head of households in Haiti are women. They don't want to leave their own families and children behind and take the risk to go and vote. So we have to ensure that on Election Day those women, and those who live in very remote areas, and those who are scared to walk a long way to the voting station are going to feel secure enough to go.

I think we haven't considered the protection *of women* in this case of elections because we keep talking about ensuring the security *of the location*. Again, it is parallel to what I said regarding securing food distribution points; the peacekeepers will be present at the location where you are going to vote. What's happening around that point, whether women can even leave their house to vote – no one has thought about any of this. Maybe the community itself could tell us how they're going to organize this. Maybe the women, if we consult them, will tell us how to deal with the violence. If we want to have a good process, and elections that are really representative, men and women need to feel safe and we really need to focus on that. Many men have personal weapons in Haiti. Women don't. And obviously, when we talk about security I think the UN people think that it will be safe because we'll have enough peacekeepers around the polling stations, so they don't see how the wider security situation can affect the women. I really want to get statistics out of that Election Day. I really want to see how many women are registered, how many women went to vote. And then we'll see – maybe it will be too late, but at least we'll have a better picture of where the problem was, and can learn from that for next time. Thank you.

CC: With gratitude to Nadine for a very stimulating presentation about gendered failures to secure the peace in Haiti, we turn now to Cynthia Enloe, who will bring a similar lens to thinking about the gendered failure to secure the peace in Iraq.

Cynthia Enloe: In thinking about Iraq, I thought I'd try to imagine what keeps people – both men and women – in various organizations from thinking that *the security of women* is important? I'm very interested in how any of us take something and manage to treat it as if it's "not serious." "Serious" is such a loaded word. It's such a strived-for attribute. Just think of how much work all of us do to be taken "seriously," and how many of us think we're jeopardizing our status as a serious person thinking about security, a serious person talking about diplomacy, a serious person talking about international political economy, a serious person talking about politics -- just think about how much one thinks one is jeopardizing one's hard-fought, tenuous hold on the status of being a "serious person" when you raise the topic of gender. You have the feeling that if I raise gender, my purchase on the hard won status of

being serious is in jeopardy in some circles. Not in this room, right? But outside this room....

So I began making a list of things that people assume, but never put on the table for discussion and debate – not to mention never feeling they have to back-up these assumptions with data and evidence. What are all the silent assumptions that are made to trivialize security issues for women? And here's my in-progress list:

The first assumption is, well, women are insecure anyway. Now imagine if that assumption was put on the table for discussion, rather than it just being a comfortable assumption. Imagine if it had to be explicitly examined. A lot of things that are assumed are assumed so that people don't have to think about hard things. A lot of assumptions are made so that you don't have to spend scarce resources. A lot of assumptions are made so that people who are already completely stressed out don't get any more stressed out. That is why we are so devoted to a lot of our assumptions – because we are already stressed out. Who wants to be stressed out more? You think, "I like this assumption, let's hope no one asks me to defend it. Let's just hope everyone else shares it." So silent assumptions are very comforting, especially to stressed out people.

The second assumption is that women's experiences of insecurity are no different than men's experiences of insecurity. And this is of course what Nadine was so brilliantly charting out for us as being untrue. But again, it's the same motivation for not gender-disaggregating data. Every time gender is not used to disaggregate data, it is so that the consequences of revealing what you would reveal if you disaggregated the data don't have to be dealt with.

There's an enormous incentive not to gender-disaggregate data. For instance, what percentage of tenured faculty at Fletcher that are women? Why isn't that scrawled in graffiti all over the wall? Why isn't that something that all of us know? Isn't that weird? So gender-disaggregation has consequences. It makes inequities visible. Once you make inequities visible you are also likely to make visible the power dynamics that create those inequities. Who wants to do that? So to not have a gender analysis of insecurity is a way to lessen the number of issues on the table. There's a lot of incentive to be uncurious. Incuriosity is a political act. Every time one chooses to be uncurious about something one is choosing a political outcome. Incuriosity is very politically comforting and it's very politically empowering to some people.

Assumption number three: any intimidation of women will stop once other forms of insecurity are moved back. This is kind of the security thinker's version of trickle-down economics. You think women's security flows directly from "security" as it is usually defined. Even if it doesn't flow directly, even if you think that the kinds of insecurity that women experience are distinctive -- particularly vulnerability to sexual assault -- you could still imagine that once you deal with the male militias and try to focus your attention on getting them to hand in their weapons, that then everything else could be dealt with. This means that you don't have to think about women's forms of insecurity. You can just think about the thing that you'd rather think about, which is the men with guns. It will trickle-down in security planning, just as in economics. Trickle- down, again, is a lazy person's approach to causal analysis. You assume that that is the most important thing to thing

about with this issue [men with guns], the issue you've been trained to think about, that you get some kudos for because you use the skills you learned -- and that you don't have to think about the forms of insecurity that in fact you've never been trained to deal with.

Assumption number four. This is a very potent one. **There will always be violence against women. It's just part of the human condition.** (I hate "always." "Always" is so ahistorical. It is really a word that makes you stupid. "Always" is a way to turn off your mind. If something is "always" there you don't have to explain it because it's always been there. It's like saying prostitution is the oldest profession, so that you don't have to think about prostitution. Because if it's the oldest profession that means it's always been there….) If *there will always be violence against women. It's just part of the human condition*, that means it's not part of the crisis, it was here before the crisis, it will be here after the crisis. It's not the thing we've been trained in. It's not something that you can use professional skills on. It's just always been there and it will always be there. So when you are scarce on your money, scarce on your time, scarce on your Land Rovers, that's very comforting, the "always." Plus, it sounds so cynically sophisticated. Well, it's not sophisticated. Because what would happen if you took all these silent assumptions and said, "we're putting it on the agenda to discuss"? That's the point about these. What would happen if you took all these assumptions that allow women's insecurity to not be dealt with seriously – what would happen if you put them on the table and they had to be analytically and explicitly chewed over? Then what would happen? They are most powerful when they are allowed to sit there under the table.

Assumption number six. (I'm skipping five.) **Insecurity that is male on male (for instance, armed militias fighting each other) is more detrimental to political stability and stable governments than male on female violence is.** That is, male on female violence may be awful, it may horrify you, but nobody ever taught us to try and figure out the causal analysis between domestic violence, or rape, and governance. That doesn't mean we couldn't learn how to do it. That doesn't mean that it doesn't take explicit professional skills that we all better develop. But since nobody's taught us how to do it, we can't even imagine how tackling domestic violence and tackling rape would, in fact, have anything to do with enhancing governance. And because we haven't figured it out analytically, we then don't know how to argue it when it comes up on the table, it is then left silent. It somehow isn't as pressing. It isn't as "serious."

I'm going to skip to *assumption number ten*. And this is the worst. When you've been taught by others how important it is to develop a feminist curiosity in order to make sense of security, to make sense of militarism, to make sense of politics and humanitarian aid, you tend to get quite radical. "Radical," of course, comes from the Greek word that means "root" – to be radical may mean that you wear pastels, that you speak very softly, that you've never been seen carrying a banner. But you are radical insofar as you ask root questions. That's what makes one radical and that's what developing a feminist curiosity does, because it encourages one not to just ask about gender -- having a feminist curiosity about gender means that you ask about the power dynamics that cause and flow from the manipulations of masculinity and femininity.

So here's **assumption number ten** *that keeps women's distinctive security concerns off the table and not dealt with as a serious issue. Because* **"the oppression of women is good for political**

order." That may sound really outrageous, but then try to think about the history of domestic violence. And try reversing it: if the physical insecurity of women were seen as bad for political order, why it that most domestic violence programs haven't been initiated by political elites? They never are. Rape crisis centers weren't founded by political elites. Domestic violence wasn't named and addressed first by political elites. In fact, almost all the efforts to tackle trafficking of women, wartime rape, date rape, marital rape, domestic violence of all sorts, almost all those efforts have been resisted by governments with all kinds of economic systems and all kinds of religious and political ideologies. So I'm not saying that all people you're sharing a table or a Land Rover with believe this, or even know they believe it, but way deep down whole institutions and whole political cultures have operated historically as if they believed it.

CC: We've just heard two really provocative presentations, and I'm sure that many of you have comments and questions. (Not to mention, we still have assumptions five, seven, eight, and nine to fill in!) Let's get a few questions and then ask our speakers to respond.

Q: My question is for both of you, but specifically for Nadine. When I heard you speak last year you were talking about the Congo, but now that you're speaking about somewhere as close as Haiti…I start making parallels between what happened in Massachusetts and in other university communities during the Sandinista period where thousands of volunteers took themselves down to Nicaragua and people literally went there in delegations and built schools and medical centers. For a while there were these volunteers that went there on their own dollar made life better for people in Nicaragua. After the hurricane I was calling groups here trying to find a way to volunteer. What's your sense? I'm just trying to move up a step from useless.

Q: I also have a question for Nadine. I've worked on refugee and IDP (internally displaced person) issues. You were talking about the question of security at the UN, and I'm wondering is the problem in the defining of "vulnerable groups"? I've found that we actually organize in parallel frameworks to the UN and NGO's, which then leads to this gap between what mandates are set up to do and what happens on the ground, because there is a resistance that is formed. So as someone who works at the UN, how do you begin to challenge the definition of who victims are? And does this cause a bigger problem for the UN in the future because there's this active resistance towards anything that's trying to be done on the ground?

Q: My question kind of relates to that. How do you approach changing the peacekeeping officers' definition of security with regard to the elections, especially because I think that will affect Iraq and Haiti. So how do you encourage them to extend the boundary of that?

NP: Let's start with the issues of the volunteers who want to go to Haiti. I think it's great to want to contribute to the reconstruction of a place, but volunteer work can be very counter-productive if it's not well organized. First of all, volunteers need to be briefed and well-coordinated and have to meet the needs on the ground. And especially when we don't have any gender-disaggregated data, and we think we are going to assist "communities"? "Communities" are composed of men, women, girls, and boys who have different needs. I've seen in Haiti a lot of volunteers not knowing what to do. It's not sustainable. We can't do volunteer work in an emergency. It can maybe provide some relief in the very short term, but it often creates more problems in the long term. That's why I think that volunteer work, if it isn't well coordinated

and really targeting the problems, can do more harm than good. We have to be very, very careful. When we work in the field we don't have time to take care of the volunteers. It's going to create a burden for the operation.

What I've seen are national volunteers who are really reluctant to participate in the relief operation because they were not properly prepared, they had their own families to take care of, and they were not psychologically prepared. No system has been provided to assist them, so I think it was putting a lot of burden on those volunteers. It's just a question of getting organized and getting a proper assessment. Because what is happening now in Gonaïves is that we are not properly meeting the needs of women and girls and in the mid- and long-term we will have more problems than we have right now. This may have consequences later. Young people, old people who were already more vulnerable than other groups and don't have the proper assistance won't be able to recover.

Also, very often we bring in outside assistance when we already have the human resources in the country itself, but because they're perceived as "beneficiaries" we don't think they would be able to participate in the reconstruction with minimal assistance at the beginning. We need to use the local resources before bringing in any outsiders.

And to answer your question about the vulnerable groups – if you looked at every single definition at the UN or within the humanitarian community I think we're talking about perceived beneficiaries who are going to receive the assistance right? Nowhere have I seen beneficiaries put in a position of power. There have been some attempts in refugee camps to empower women and in Gonaïves give the food through the women.

Very often humanitarian people think they have a brilliant idea to give the food through the women, without thinking about the structure of the community. And this reminds me of a case in a refugee camp in Tanzania when the High Commissioner on Human Rights organized a system of distribution through the women, empowered the women in all kind of activities – food delivery, a kind of micro-project. And the husbands or the partners of the refugee women were complaining, and saying, "We see that UNHCR is a better husband." They were deprived of their own status as provider, and this created a lot of security problems within the camp and created a lot of pressure for the women.

What I find interesting in the humanitarian community is that you have the "vulnerable group" and women are part of the vulnerable group. And all of the sudden the humanitarian community wants to be seen as doing something for the women, and they put the women in charge of food distribution, but isolate them from the community. I think what happened in Tanzania is the men withdrew completely from the organization of care and decided to do a passive resistance until the situation changed. So UNHCR had to revise their own program and occupy the men. They had to give the men some activities so they could feel some value again.

What I've seen in the humanitarian community is this disparity between the givers and the people who receive. I've seen a lot of people in the humanitarian community who feel good because they are the givers. And you unconsciously put yourself in a position of power over the beneficiaries because they're so powerless in their own situation. Then the humanitarian community, as the givers, will feel that you can't empower those refugees because you will give away your power. I have a lot of colleagues who disagree with me, but I think they are in

denial; I think the very humanitarian mentality is that they feel good about what they are doing and very few of them would think about empowering the local people they are helping.

It's always striking for me that we can't remove the woman out of the "vulnerable group." In all the UN texts women are part of the "vulnerable group" together with children and the handicapped, and the old people. I find this interesting because finally we are using sex as a variable, treating women as a minority group within another minority group. Within handicapped we have male and female, right? So why do we put the women with those groups anyway?

I haven't seen a lot of evolution in the humanitarian mentality. Each time I've been told, "It's an emergency; we have no time to think in gender terms, we'll do it later." I would like to think of one example of a gender-sensitive operation, where gender has been mainstreamed from the beginning, when we know our target groups and know what our limits are from the very beginning, and we know how vulnerable the people are, and we can use the local resources instead of bringing all the support from the outside.

I think the question about definitions might be better for Cynthia to answer because I don't think the peacekeepers who are working for peacekeeping operations are really prepared for the peacekeeping task. I think it was Sandra Whitworth who said soldiers are not born, they are made.

So just to finish on that question – the peacekeepers are trained to be soldiers, trained to kill and to go to war. Then you send them to a peacekeeping mission where they can't use force except in self-defense and you ask them to do a lot of work being military observers – like in the Congo. So you ask them to secure an environment, to secure an election, but still they can't use force. I think there is a contradiction in the very definition of who is a peacekeeper and what the mandate of the peacekeeper is. And we don't have time to start this discussion, but peacekeepers are mainly men. In my mission we have only 1% of women in the military. Brazil, for instance, contributed 2,000 troops and not a single woman. The women who are in the military in Haiti are mostly nurses or only in support roles.

CE: Part of it is because you get extra pay on peacekeeping missions. So the government and defense ministries select the most privileged units of the military to do the most privileged operations. And who are those? They're the Special Forces and combat units -- and the UNDPKO does not get to choose which units are sent as peacekeeping units. It will often be the most combat-defined units that get the privilege, i.e., the extra pay and chances for promotion. There are lots of reasons to go into a peacekeeping mission and they have very little to do with peace. They have to do with stripes on your sleeve and your pension and that's one of the structural problems in the distortion of militarized, masculinized peacekeeping.

NP: And I think you want peacekeepers to really care about the protection of women. They are seen as the protectors, and they are going to protect the population and they see women as really nonexistent. If women are part of the community, that's enough. I remember working with military observers where they couldn't see women as relevant. First of all, I've heard many who are telling me – why do you want the women to go vote? They have enough to do at home, right? So we could have this long discussion about the definition of peacekeeper, but I don't

think they are very well equipped mentally to be part of the peacekeeping mission.

CC: Let's take another group of questions.

Q: I've been reading some of the UN documents pertaining to gender mainstreaming, and I notice that institutionally, "gender" is often really to mean only "women." I wonder if it might make a difference if we made men feel like stakeholders in gender mainstreaming? I know this gets into kind of dangerous territory when you talk about the benefits for men, but I wonder if they may be on board a little more if they realize we are talking about masculinity as well and talking about them as stakeholders?

CE: Often times there are two incentives to conflate "gender" with "women." The first incentive is that it is often the only way you can get women taken seriously, by slipping them in through this very sociological, diffuse notion of gender. So some people who want at least some attention paid to women, in some form, are quite comfortable with conflation because that's the only way you're going to get those concerns on the table anyway.

The second group that is quite comfortable with "gender" being conflated with "women" has a different incentive – they are the ones who don't want masculinity talked about. Because once you're talking about masculinity, you're talking about the people at the table. And you're talking about the kind of bonding that goes on even among rival political party heads in preparing for an election, and that becomes very touchy.

So there are two incentives for that conflation, one quite well meaning and the other defensive. Some of the people who become most skilled in raising issues of practices of masculinity are the very smart feminists doing work on HIV/AIDS prevention. Because they've really figured out you have to talk about a masculinized notion of sexual prowess. You have to involve people with their masculinized notions of self-esteem. And those of us who don't think that's in our bailiwick, there's a lot of skills being developed out there about how to raise masculinity in a way doesn't re-privilege it.

NP: You mention men as stakeholders in gender mainstreaming. In different peacekeeping operations, when you give those guys some responsibility and they feel that you take them seriously they are willing to do something on gender. In the Congo, we created a gender-sensitive checklist for the military observers, because we were sick and tired of having reports by those guys saying they talked to "the community," and they talked to the male elders and they had nothing to report. So we asked them, "Can't you give us more information about what men and women do in the community?" So we created this ten question gender-sensitive list where we wanted to know who has the power at the local level. Is it a man? Is there a woman working with him? What is the local structure? Who has the religious power? Who has the cultural power? What are the needs of the men, the women, the boys, and the girls? Have you witnessed any acts of violence?

And I noticed a couple of guys taking this very seriously, because it was their mission to introduce the checklist among the other guys and go to the field - and maybe they were bored and we provided them entertainment. You know peacekeeping can be boring sometimes when you're a military observer in a remote area. So I think we try to interest them in the work of

gender in a non-threatening way. And I've realized that if you give them something to do that is, of course, not an additional workload and not threatening to them, they're happy to do it. But you have to try and involve them in your work and improve their relationship with the local community also. But it's not the system that's doing that. It's our initiative as Gender Advisors trying to find strategies for gender mainstreaming. So you see the problem we have – in every single mission we have initiatives, but when the particular people who created them leave, nothing will remain and the next person involved will have to find new ideas to have a gender-friendly approach. Without the gender-friendly approach you can't really work on strategies for gender mainstreaming.

Q: I was wondering if you might comment a little on the way that Iraq has been talked about in the US? Women seem to be all over the place, so it's almost as if there's a sense that women really are included. Some examples would be the Jessica Lynch rescue; the presidential candidate and the president talking about "our men and women who are serving overseas," as opposed to just "our men" who are serving overseas; the Abu Ghraib scandal (I heard one woman talking about that as an example of how men and women are at base the same because women participated in behavior that's just as bad as men's). So there's all this conversation about gender with almost a bizarre sense of inclusiveness that women are now part of the military, but I haven't heard any sort of critical analysis about what that means.

CE: Well, with Iraq -- and of course it's so odd to be talking about Iraq here in the US -- there are much more intelligent conversations about women and Iraq going on in other countries I think. But one of the things that we are not getting here is that there are now a score of Iraqi local women's organizations. Iraqi women are thinking, strategizing, analyzing, and organizing. And why don't we hear about that?

One of the reasons is because one of the chief things they've done is talk about the violence against women in Iraq, and the extent to which that is marginalizing women in the new political system building. But when they talk about that they are making demands to change the priorities of the brand new US-created police force. They made demands on Paul Bremer when he was still the chief of the occupation forces. He didn't want to hear it. They make demands at local police stations – they don't want to hear it. But their analysis is that if, in fact, the violence against women is increasing – usually in the form of abductions -- that they are not being attended to at the highest levels.

So that's one thing we're not hearing about. The other thing is – and I'm just going to name it and you can figure out where to put it in the whole picture of the gendered politics of the US military occupation of Iraq. We now have documented – and this is a low figure because these are only women who have been willing to come forward and give their names and make the reports – we now have 243 documented reports of US military men raping US military women, mainly in Kuwait and Iraq, but also in Qatar and Afghanistan.

These are being handled primarily by the Miles Foundation down in Connecticut. The Miles Foundation doesn't talk about "militarism." They don't talk about "imperialism." They are in some ways liberal American feminists who are concerned about women getting justice inside of whatever organization they are in. I think the Miles Foundation is enormously important. Is it enough? No. But what they are bringing up to the surface is that this primary state

institution, the US military, which is controlling so much of the agenda of alleged peace-building and nation-building in Iraq, is, in fact, an institution that is riddled with violence against women and is extremely reluctant to address that violence against women. So how are they possibly going to be effective as an institution that will take seriously violence against women when it's against Iraqi women, so that they can fully participate in this not-yet-fully-existing political system? So if you took a raped American military woman and an Iraqi feminist who is organizing to try and press for a different kind of security system in Iraq, and you thought about both of them as key actors to try and understand what is the gendered order in Iraq today, I think we'd get much further than we would if we talked about Jessica Lynch and Lyndie England.

Q: Related to that – how would you change structures and institutions in Iraq to better have women's voices heard – particularly as you talk about the new political makeup or constitution? And how would you make the elections safer for women to participate?

CE: Nadine and Carol and I were talking about this last night. We were talking about one of the things that all of us -- as practitioners, as activists, as researchers -- are not talking about enough. That is how to think about political parties. The first time I learned this and it really hit home was from my friend and colleague who is a feminist anthropologist from Chile. I remember when there was a chance that Pinochet would be pushed aside in Chile – before the old regime is pushed aside there is the bubbling up of what the new political order is going to be. One of the things that she and all of her scholarly friends in Santiago said was – *the parties are coming up again.*

We don't think enough about political parties, and political parties are such crucial actors. Political parties are deeply masculinized in most societies, and they play such important roles in new electoral systems. For instance, in Iraq, one of the things that is not working is that US occupation forces have decided that they have to play with the most organized, and what they think of as the most powerful, actors. Therefore, they have dealt with groups led by clerics, by political parties, and militias which are all male and also masculinized. It's not just whether a group is male-led. Is it masculinized in its organizational culture?

And one of the things you'll notice in the new government, which has got thirty-seven people if you look at the President, the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, and the thirty-something members of the Cabinet -- one of the striking things is that there are six women out of the thirty-seven in the new governing hierarchy. You know what the striking thing is about the new women? With the exception of the Kurdish woman who comes out of a political party in Kurdistan, none of the others have any kind of a power base. The Kurdish woman seems to have a power base because she comes out of a party system. But look at the other women. None of them have power bases. And they didn't under the Bremer system when there were thirty of them. The striking thing when women are chosen for interim governments, one of the distinctive things to ask is, what are the criteria by which the *men* were chosen? You usually have to choose someone because they've got a powerbase. And what are the criteria by which *women* are chosen? It's often something like this - the new Minister of Agriculture in Iraq has an Iowa State agronomy PhD. She's very knowledgeable, but she has no power base. Will she be able to control land issues when she has no powerbase of her own?

Biography

Nadine Puechguirbal has been working as the Senior Gender Advisor for the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti since June 2004. She used to work at the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in New York as well as a gender advisor in the UN Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

Cynthia Enloe, Ph.D., is a Research Professor of Women's Studies and International Development at Clark University. Cynthia is author of *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (2001), *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives* (1999), and *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War* (1993). She will present the feminist perspective of the US war and occupation of Iraq.