

## Raising EU and NATO Effectiveness: The Impact of Diverse Boots on the Ground

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A balance between men and women in NATO and European Common Security and Defense military missions creates concrete benefits: Increased credibility for the organizations, more effective military missions and operations and the ability to better reach out to local populations. At the same time, there is a continuing gender imbalance in these organizations, especially when it comes to senior positions. The NATO Brussels Summit in Brussels July 11 and 12, 2018 is an opportunity for NATO and all allied and partner countries to coalesce around a comprehensive strategy for defending against and deterring this activity in the future that would increase the involvement of all member and partner countries.

While the EU and NATO have undertaken action and provided recommendations to improve the number of women in senior positions, these measures have not been sufficient to date. Facing unprecedented security threats, the EU and NATO need to step up their operational effectiveness: Creating more diversity in the military increases the success of military missions. This policy brief proposes measures applicable to both organizations to improve the implementation of current policies.

Terrorist threats posed by radical Islamist groups, Russian meddling in Ukraine, and continued instability in the Middle East and parts of Asia contribute to a difficult security environment for the EU and NATO. In addition, the nature of security challenges has changed through the emergence of non-state actors and the rise of non-conventional threats such as cyber-attacks and hybrid warfare. In such an environment it is crucial for EU and NATO military operations to function optimally. One way to increase their effectiveness and credibility is to improve the role of women in them.<sup>1</sup> Having a more balanced representation of genders makes missions more reflective of the countries carrying them out as well as of the countries in which they take place thereby enhancing the credibility of missions vis-vis the public in the West and the local population. Not only can the presence of more women improve the performance and work atmosphere of teams within the missions, but it also contributes to a more effective engagement with the local community.

Stimulated by the reference to the need to develop a collective security framework by its president, Jean-Claude Juncker, the European Commission has been more assertive in initiating

1 See, for example, Katharine A.M. Wright, "NATO'S Adoption of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security: Making the Agenda a Reality," 2016, *International Political Science Review*, 37(3); Women in International Security Brussels, "Women in CSDP," European Parliament, 2017.



proposals such as the European Defense Action Plan (2016), the European Defense Fund (2017), and the recent announcement of the Action Plan for Military Mobility (2018).<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile some member states want to increase security cooperation through Permanent Structured Cooperation.

The EU has recognized that diverse forces and leadership will contribute to stronger security and defense policy. High Representative and Vice-President of the Commission Federica Mogherini stated in the Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy that the development and implementation of EU strategies to tackle security challenges need to advance the role of women.<sup>3</sup> NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has also recognized the importance of the inclusion and promotion of women in security and defense.<sup>4</sup> Both have used similar arguments in favor of gender equality in the military.<sup>5</sup> According to them, it is not only a matter of principle, it also contributes to making societies more secure and increases the strength and effectiveness of their institutions.

In this context it is relevant to focus more closely on gender diversity within military missions and operations with an eye toward effectiveness. This policy brief provides insights on gender policy and implementation through a comparison of EU and

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NATO military missions and operations.<sup>6</sup> While both institutions have significantly different defense structures, their military missions and operations have one important characteristic in common: an underrepresentation of women. They also show promising similarities when it comes to the implementation of gender policies.

## Gender diversity: A Must for Military Missions

The EU and NATO have both expressed their commitment to gender equality and to the promotion of women within their institutions as is evident in their policy documents to implement the landmark United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on Women, Peace and Security. Adopted in 2000, this laid the basis for legislation on the creation of gender policy in military forces. The resolution aims at the integration of gender considerations into all aspects of security work [including] participation in conflict resolution and peace processes, peacekeeping operations, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, security sector reform, protection and rights of women. It also encourages increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions, as well as consultation with local and international women's groups.<sup>7</sup>

NATO has since developed a Policy on Women, Peace and Security within the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. It has also initiated National Action Plans for members and partner countries, which have to provide the organization with reports on the implementation of UNSCR 1325.<sup>8</sup> While NATO is seen to be more ahead on these matters than the EU, the latter adopted in 2008 a comprehensive approach to improve gender equality.<sup>9</sup> This commitment to

2 Jean-Claude Juncker, "State of the Union Address 2017," September 2017; European Commission, "European Defence Action Plan," November 2016; European Commission, "The European Defence Fund," June 2017; European Commission, "The Action Plan on Military Mobility," March 2018.

3 European External Action Service, "A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy," June 2016.

4 NATO, "The Secretary General's Annual Report," 2016, p. 82.

5 HR/VP Federica Mogherini at the International High-Level Conference: Achieving Gender Equality – Challenges and Opportunities in the European Neighborhood Policy, November 2015; Jens Stoltenberg at the Gender Equality Conference, March 2016.

6 Security organizations such as the OSCE are excluded as their missions are characterized as monitoring and have more of a civilian than a military character. In addition, the membership of the OSCE is not only transatlantic and includes countries with considerably different political dynamics.

7 NATO, "NATO/EAPC Policy for Implementing UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, and Related Resolutions," July 2011, para. 1.1.

8 NATO, "NATO/EAPC Policy for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security and Related Resolutions," June 2014.

9 Women in International Security, "Gender and Human Rights in CSDP Missions and Operations," the meeting took place on June 28, 2018.

gender equality also belongs to the core EU values as the Treaty of the European Union (Articles 2 and 3) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Articles 8 and 10) stress the commitment of member states to non-discrimination and equality between women and men.

However, there remain imbalances in EU and NATO military missions when it comes to implementing the commitments. In 2016 the proportion of women working in different Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) military operations ranged from 3 to 8 percent. For NATO the proportion of women in military operations increased from 6.4 percent in 2014 to 6.8 percent in 2015. Representation of women in the alliance's armed forces reached 10.9 percent in 2016.<sup>10</sup> Such underrepresentation undermines the credibility of both institutions, impedes the effectiveness of their military missions, and hinders a better outreach to populations where missions are deployed.

First, continuing imbalances in their military missions — flowing from the inability to put promises into action — diminish the credibility of both the EU and NATO in the eyes of the populations on the ground. This credibility is further undermined by the failure to have missions reflect the reality of diversity in Western societies, as a start in terms of gender diversity. In other words, there is a disconnect between the rhetoric of the EU and NATO and their actions when it comes to diversity in responsibilities related to military missions. Solving this problem could lead to more popular support for military missions within the member states and partner nations of the organizations. The EU's 2016 baseline study on integrating human rights and gender into the CSDP states, "the gender imbalance does affect the CSDP public profile".<sup>11</sup>

Second, the underrepresentation of women impedes opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of military missions and to fulfill defense strategies and policy aims in an optimal way. Promoting women's participation

in military missions will increase the talent pool for personnel and produce more diverse teams as different skills, expertise, and perspectives are pooled. Diverse teams have a higher collective intelligence, increase innovativeness, and lead to improved and more accurate group thinking.<sup>12</sup> Therefore they make better decisions. Women in police forces have been shown to be less reliant on physical force and to communicate more effectively, which helps to defuse potentially tense and violent situations.<sup>13</sup> These skills are also very valuable for defense missions, as they help to prevent crisis escalation.

Third, the presence of women has proven crucial in enabling EU and NATO missions to reach out more effectively to a wider segment of the population in the host state. For example, it is often culturally more acceptable for a woman than for a man to reach out to women in traditional societies such as the ones in Mali, Somalia, or Afghanistan. In deployed missions women have proven more suited to providing the necessary assistance and to opening channels of communication to victims in cases of sexual violence in warzones. Diverse teams with women also contribute to generating broader support for military operations by the population of the host state, as they are more sensitive also to the needs of the other half of the population (women).<sup>14</sup> This in

“ **There is a disconnect between the rhetoric of the EU and NATO and their actions when it comes to diversity in responsibilities related to military missions.** ”

10 NATO, "NATO Annual Report on Gender Perspectives in Allied Armed Forces: Progress Made in Pre-deployment Training and Work-Life Balance," December 2017.

11 European External Action Service, "Report on the Baseline Study on Integrating Human Rights and Gender into the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy," November 2016, p. 4.

12 Anita Woolley and Thomas W. Malone, "Defend Your Research: What Makes a Team Smarter? More Women," *Harvard Business Review*, June 2011, <https://hbr.org/2011/06/defend-your-research-what-makes-a-team-smarter-more-women>; David Rock and Heidi Grant, "Why Diverse Teams Are Smarter," *Harvard Business Review*, November 2016, <https://hbr.org/2016/11/why-diverse-teams-are-smarter>; Sander Hoogendoorn, Hessel Oosterbeek, and Mirjam van Praag, "The Impact of Gender Diversity on the Performance of Business Teams: Evidence from a Field Experiment," *Harvard Kennedy School*, 2013, <http://gap.hks.harvard.edu/impact-gender-diversity-performance-business-teams-evidence-field-experiment>.

13 National Center for Women and Policing, "Men, Women, and Police Excessive Force: A Tale of Two Genders" (under NCWP Publications), April 2002, <http://www.womenandpolicing.org/>.

14 This paper provides two concrete examples of this for NATO and the EU, one under "the EU CSDP Missions and Operations section" and one under the section "NATO missions." It is, however, also sometimes the case that women in missions in male-dominated societies sometimes face difficulty in being accepted as interlocutors by male decision-makers.

turn leads to increased situational awareness as well as more effective training and monitoring. An increased role for women thus boosts operational effectiveness.

Taking all the above benefits into account, the following sections demonstrate that more should be done on both sides of the Atlantic to improve the implementation of the gender measures that are already in place.

## EU CSDP Mission and Operations

According to a 2017 European Parliament study, the proportion of women in EU civilian crisis-management missions grew from 20 percent in 2007 to 29 percent in 2016. However, the proportion of women in military operations remains very low (between 3 to 8 percent depending on rotation).<sup>15</sup> The EU currently has six military missions and operations.<sup>16</sup> The commanders of these are all men while women make up around the 7.5 percent of their personnel.<sup>17</sup> There is no data on the number of women in different positions within these, because of a lack of research on this issue. Several obstacles make it difficult to change the numbers: difficulties in recruiting women, absence of data, ineffective mechanisms for tracking and monitoring, and a lack of leadership in raising awareness of the importance of gender in terms of staff as well as of operational effectiveness.

The EU has adopted several policy documents to improve gender equality and to implement UNSCR 1325, including the 2008 Comprehensive Approach with its attending indicators.<sup>18</sup> It has also conducted research for its 2016 baseline study to identify gaps in implementation. These documents made several recommendations for improving the role of women in

CSDP missions and operations. Since gender advisors were not systematically included across CSDP civilian and military missions, the baseline study recommended having them in all missions as well as in operations. While this was achieved in all civilian missions during the first year of the implementation of the baseline study, the aim remains to achieve it for military missions and operations as well.

The position of principal gender advisor in the European External Action Service (EEAS) was created in 2015 to foster exchange and coordination regarding EU policy and action when it comes to the UNSCR 1325, whether externally or internally with EU institutions and delegations to enhance the visibility and importance of gender. Gender advisors and focal points are especially relevant for CSDP missions and operations as they aim to strengthen the implementation of gender policy within their mandate by providing strategic advice on gender mainstreaming. They are divided into full-time advisors characterized as expert positions, double-hatted advisors who often combine this position with a human rights portfolio, and part-time focal points characterized as non-expert positions. Gender advisors are seconded by the national

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authorities of member states. Gender experience is important to qualify for the position of advisor, while focal points do not require a background in gender issues. Gender advisors receive a mandatory training, which can take place in their own countries. As cross-country coordination is often lacking, training methods differ between member states and the quality of training for gender advisors can thus be different. Gender balance within the missions is, however, an issue for human resources and does not fall under the tasks of gender advisors. Having a gender advisor on board of a mission gives the topic of gender more importance (more so than gender focal points) and really makes a difference in terms of awareness of the

<sup>15</sup> Women in International Security Brussels, “Women in CSDP,” European Parliament, 2017, pp. 8, 20.

<sup>16</sup> They are the EU Force Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EU Naval Forces for the Mediterranean and for Somalia, and the EU Training Missions in the Central African Republic, Mali, and Somalia. CSDP military missions are non-executive training missions whereas military operations have executive powers. Also, missions are under the common operational command structure whereas each operation has a separate operational headquarters. A list of all the EU military and civilian operations can be found at [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage\\_en/430/Military%20and%20civilian%20missions%20and%20operations](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/430/Military%20and%20civilian%20missions%20and%20operations).

<sup>17</sup> This number fluctuates due to personnel rotation.

<sup>18</sup> Council of the European Union, “Indicators for the Comprehensive Approach to the EU Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace, and Security,” July 2010.



issue and gender mainstreaming within the mission. The impact focal points have depends strongly on the particular person in the position.<sup>19</sup>

While the creation of gender advisors and focal points is a step in the right direction, it is not enough. Their efficiency could be significantly improved when it comes to structure and implementation. This can be done first of all by introducing more oversight and coordination regarding the specifics of their trainings, which is absent in the current system. Gender focal points need to be trained as they are often not prepared for their positions. Furthermore, the double-hatted position of some advisors can also be problematic, in particular for the larger missions, as it prevents them from focusing sufficiently on gender. More support from the EEAS and member states is also needed in terms of coordinating exchanges, communications, and providing support material and guidelines regarding the roles of advisors and focal points. A good example of such exchanges are the annual meetings in Brussels organized by the Council of the EU for the missions and operations to learn from each other and to discuss the implementation of their mandates. More such initiatives need to take place to ensure even and effective implementation through more online repositories of knowledge, webinars, skype calls and shared documents. The expertise of gender advisors and focal points should also be more interwoven with the overall activities of the missions and operations to create awareness for gender issues in all aspects of their work. Finally, there should be more strategic support and interest from the leadership of the missions and operations regarding the issue of gender.

The EU Training Mission (EUTM) in Mali provides one concrete example of what a gender perspective can mean for an EU mission. An expert deployed

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with the mission stressing the responsibility of Malian soldiers to protect the population and making clear that international law prohibits conflict-related sexual violence led to an increase in the army’s commitment to protecting women and children and to treating the population with humanity.<sup>20</sup> The civilian European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia also provides a good example of the potential of the network of gender advisors and focal points network. All members of the mission are initially trained in gender issues and provided with follow-ups by the gender advisor at every opportunity. In addition, the mission also publishes annual reports on gender mainstreaming to reflect on the implementation of its mandate. Such a report is important as it means that the subject of gender remains visible. This also provides real data to compare it with other missions.

All personnel in military missions and operations undergo pre-deployment training that includes human rights and gender. Taking into account that they have short term deployments (usually of four to six months), follow-up training may not be deemed necessary. In military missions and operations, such as the EU Training Mission in Mali and the EU Force Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina, gender is still combined with international humanitarian law and human rights.<sup>21</sup> This framing of gender in the context of ‘rights’ and ‘protection’ neglects the potential and benefits of gender equality in the frame of ‘operational effectiveness’, and it explains why gender is still regarded as a ‘low key’ issue. Highlighting the importance and full benefits of gender outside what are considered ‘soft issues’ is therefore necessary.

Another shortfall is in the monitoring of the implementation of gender policy. Gender audits and assessment groups could be introduced to identify implementation gaps. These could have the role of a watchdog, holding EU missions and operations accountable by monitoring gender policy across them. Engagement with civil society organizations is also relevant as they can provide external feedback on implementation.

20 Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations, “Whose Security? Practical Examples of Gender Perspectives in Military Operations,” 2015, pp. 52-53.

21 EUTM Mali, “EUTM Mali’s Contribution to International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights and Gender Issues,” August 2017; Joseph Spiteri, “Human Rights, Gender and Child Protection in EU Military Operations,” European External Action Service, no date available.

19 Women in International Security, “Gender and Human Rights in CSDP Missions and Operations,” the meeting took place on June 28, 2018.

The above shows that, while the EU has undertaken several initiatives and measures to improve gender equality in its missions and operations, there are still several challenges that need to be addressed, especially when it comes to implementation. The following section compares these with the current situation within NATO missions.

## NATO Missions

In 2007 NATO members and their Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) partners initiated policies to bring gender issues into the alliance's organizational structures as part of its commitment to the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and to advancing the role of women in the NATO context.<sup>22</sup> This cooperation has proved significant for member-partner relationships and provided a framework for better NATO political and military effectiveness. It also distinguishes the alliance's efforts from the EU's with its political and military outreach to a broader community. NATO is, however, facing similar obstacles and challenges to increasing the number of women in its leadership and operations and to raising awareness of the significance of women to the overall alliance mission and, importantly, its operational effectiveness.

At the Chicago Summit in 2012, the Alliance's heads of state called for "mainstreaming UNSCR 1325 and related Resolutions into NATO-led Operations and Missions."<sup>23</sup> That same year the first secretary general's special representative (SGSR) on women, peace, and security (WPS) was appointed. The position was then institutionalized in 2014. The SGSR is the high-level focal point on all aspects of NATO's contributions to the WPS agenda and advises the secretary general on this agenda. The SGSR and her staff lead the development and implementation of the NATO/EAPC Policy on Women, Peace and Security and its accompanying Action Plan. The current SGSR Canadian Clare Hutchinson was appointed in early 2018 and brings substantial political background and operational experience to the office and to the secretary general's staff.

<sup>22</sup> The list of NATO partner countries can be found at <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/51288.htm>.

<sup>23</sup> NATO, "Chicago Summit Declaration," May 2012, para. 16. The need for greater gender balance was mentioned as early as 2002 though.

In 2016 NATO Secretary General appointed Rose Gottemoeller to the post of Deputy Secretary General, the highest position a woman has held at NATO. Previously as U.S. Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, she was chief negotiator of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START, 2011) Having a woman in a high-level position has raised the awareness level of the WPS subject matter considerably and introduced an influential advocate.

The International Military Staff has a dedicated gender advisor at NATO headquarters, who provides advice and support to the director general of the International Military Staff (IMS), including on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions.<sup>24</sup> The gender advisor represents the IMS in committees,

working groups and HQ task forces, and liaises with the International Staff and the NATO military authorities. This position serves as the secretariat for the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives. It collects and disseminates information on national policies concerning gender and the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions in NATO member and partner armed forces. NATO also has gender advisors at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe/Allied Command Operations and Allied Command Transformation as well as on the ground in NATO-led operations and missions. Gender focal points also assist in assuring gender mainstreaming, but their responsibilities are typically in addition to other responsibilities. As training is a national responsibility, it varies in effectiveness and would benefit from more coordinated standards.<sup>25</sup>

Although operating independently of NATO, the members and partners of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly provide a link between national legislatures

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<sup>24</sup> Resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122 and 2422.

<sup>25</sup> Interviews by the authors with officials and experts, 2017-18.

and the organization.<sup>26</sup> Their role in initiating real change is limited as an institution, but they have conducted hearings and produced reports examining, promoting, and reinforcing support for increased inclusion of gender issues and mainstreaming into the political and military activities of NATO.<sup>27</sup>

There is also NATO cooperation with international organizations to advance the overall agenda on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS). In particular, there has been a Regional Acceleration of Resolution 1325 (RAR) framework serving as a joint platform for NATO, EU, UN, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), as well to the African Union (AU), to share WPS best practices. These connections benefit acceptance and understanding of UNSCR 1325 in the broader international arena.

Finally, and importantly, NATO has also formally recognized the important role civil society and its national and often local organizations play in overseeing the promotion and protection of women's and girls' rights and empowerment. To better support NATO's implementation of UNSCR 1325 on WPS, the Civil Society Advisory Panel (CSAP) was established. It plays an invaluable role in getting direct information from those on the ground, an important aspect of understanding the complex of issues more thoroughly. The panel provides recommendations on the integration of a gender perspective into NATO's operations and assists in outreach to women's organizations in member and partner national settings.

Similar to the EU, NATO has adopted several policy documents in order to comply with UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions. Other NATO documents include the chapter on "Promoting Equality: Women, Peace and Security" in the secretary general's 2017 Annual Report, the 2016 Warsaw Summit Declaration, the

2014 Wales Summit Declaration, the 2012 Chicago Summit Declaration, the 2013 Secretary General's Second Annual Public Report on Implementing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, and Directive 40-1, Military Guidelines.<sup>28</sup> However, while gender has thus been emphasized at the highest level of the alliance, actions throughout its institutions still need to follow in many cases.

In accordance with the NATO/EAPC Policy and Action Plan on WPS, NATO members and partners are invited to submit an annual report on gender integration, recruitment, and retention policy within their military, as well as sex-disaggregated data. These reports have been collected from the member states by the IMS gender advisor since 1999. While there are clearly uneven national efforts, including substantial divergences on certain points, the more recent reporting has prompted states to collaborate with each other in order to improve their programs, sometimes even with partners providing guidance to members, with relative success. Much work remains to be done in national data collection and in implementing programs to further NATO policy but there has been significant improvement. The current SGSR has recognized and placed a high priority on increasing further data collection, measurement and evaluation,<sup>29</sup> much needed, as she articulated in a 2018 speech.<sup>30</sup>

The NATO Science for Peace and Security Program fosters and funds projects that provide critical indicators for measuring progress on gender issues and include research on them. One example is the "Summary of the National Reports", which reported in 2016 that over 95 percent of NATO militaries had positions for women, an increase from just 70 percent in 2014. But it also found that the percentage of women members of the NATO militaries that were

26 NATO Parliamentary Assembly, "UN Security Council Resolution 1325," and see also the debate on "Key Gender Role of Daesh Radicalization," October 7, 2017, Bucharest, Romania, and the 2015 Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces study on "The Role of Parliamentarians in Advancing the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda in NATO Member Countries," <https://www.nato-pa.int/content/un-security-council-resolution-1325>.

27 See <https://www.nato-pa.int/content/un-security-council-resolution-1325> on the role of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, including a Debate on "Key Gender Role of Daesh Radicalization," October 7, 2017 in Bucharest, Romania, a 2015 DECAF study on "The Role of Parliamentarians in Advancing the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda in NATO Member Countries" among others.

28 NATO, "Chicago Summit 2012," para. 16, [https://www.nato.int/cps/su/natohq/official\\_texts\\_87593](https://www.nato.int/cps/su/natohq/official_texts_87593). NATO, "Wales Summit 2014", Para. 90, [https://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/official\\_texts\\_112964.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm); NATO, "Warsaw Summit 2016," para. 131, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133169.htm#unscr1325](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm#unscr1325). All these paragraphs are on the implementation of UNSCR 1325. For additional background materials, see Women In International Security, "Combat Integration Initiative (CII)," <https://www.wiisglobal.org/programs/combat-integration-initiative/>.

29 "NATO and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda: A Conversation with Clare Hutchinson," The Women in Public Service Project, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC, June 27, 2018.

30 "NATO and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda: A Conversation with Clare Hutchinson," The Women in Public Service Project, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC, June 27, 2018.

in officer positions had remained stable at around 20–25 percent over four years.<sup>31</sup> These numbers suggest an enduring glass ceiling blocking women from achieving more senior leadership positions in NATO's headquarters and in operational missions as well as a reluctance of women to apply for these positions. With the increasing improvement in such indicators, the alliance has an opportunity to better address many and varied areas of concern.

The 2016–18 annual national reports show progress, but there remains work to be done to close the gap generally at NATO headquarters and in missions as well as in individual countries. Scandinavian countries have well developed training courses for gender focal points through the highly regarded Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations. But even those members and partner countries who have sent their military and civilians to attend the training have sometimes fallen short in implementation. NATO's inclusion of partner countries in gender programs often prompt the countries to undertake action, share ideas, and initiate programs that can promote gender mainstreaming. In fact, at points the partners have developed new approaches and advised NATO leadership itself as well as member states. Overall the reporting has further facilitated an exchange of information and best practices in gender policies. This contributes as an important component of NATO's three core tasks: collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security essential to the alliance.

In a review of cases in which military missions have benefited from incorporating gendered views successfully in operations, the Nordic Centre related the case of a commander in the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan Cdr. Raedestad who, when preparing for an operation realized – from the perspective of his function as gender advisor– that the heavy vehicles and maximum force protection necessary would damage roads in a remote village. These roads were used by village children needing to bus to school daily, while village women typically rode a donkey to visit the nearest midwife on the roads. The operation was reconfigured with lighter vehicles,

a success both for the mission and for less friction and more trust with the villagers at the time of the mission.<sup>32</sup> In this Nordic Centre case study, bringing gender perspectives into a NATO operation – to men and women — resulted in a more broadly successful mission at the time of operations and improved future relationships with the villagers.

*....a gender perspective is much more than female members in the team. It is about having and using knowledge about the gender roles and situations of both men and women in all activities of the mission. -BG Claesson, Commanding Officer, Multi-national Force, ISAF 2012-13<sup>33</sup>*

Efforts to implement UNSCR 1325 have impacted NATO policy in its efforts toward gender mainstreaming.<sup>34</sup> But, as far as NATO has advanced, problematic shortfalls remain in training for decision-makers as well as for gender advisors, gender focal points in NATO missions and personnel on the ground. But it is not a problem that has gone unrecognized and the NATO/EAPC Action Plan 2016-18 provides a framework for thoughtful leaders who recognize the importance of gender inclusion to the enhanced security and stability objectives of NATO in the future.<sup>35</sup>

## Recommendations

The EU and NATO have taken first steps to bring about more diversity in their military missions, but more needs to be done to ensure these are implemented. Below are three recommendations for the EU, NATO, their member states, and partner countries to improve implementation. They concern political attention, political pressure and accountability, and a stronger follow-up of implementation.

<sup>32</sup> Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations, "Whose Security? Practical Examples of Gender Perspectives in Military Operations", 2015: pp. 18-19.

<sup>33</sup> Cited by Chantal de Jonge Oudraat, et al of Women in International Security, *Gender Mainstreaming: Indicators for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 and its Related Resolutions, The 1325 Scorecard*, Washington, DC, 2015: 7.

The North Atlantic Council first adopted Bi-SCD 40-1 in 2009. The Directive was updated in 2012. Bi-SCD 40-1 aims to ensure the implementation of UNSCR 1325 (and related resolutions) in its Command and Force Structures, as well as in all NATO operations.

<sup>34</sup> NATO, "NATO/EAPC policy for implementing UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, and related Resolutions", July 2011, para. 1.1.

<sup>35</sup> A Policy and the Action Plan is expected to be endorsed by the NATO heads of state and government at the July 11–12, 2018 summit in Brussels, and is thus not included here.

<sup>31</sup> NATO, "Summary of the National Reports of NATO Member and Partner Nations to the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives", 2016, [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fi2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2018\\_01/1801-2016-Summary-NR-to-NCGP.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fi2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_01/1801-2016-Summary-NR-to-NCGP.pdf).



## Political attention

There is still confusion within EU and NATO military missions when it comes to the role of women and the concept of gender. This is visible in the way gender policy is implemented. In a military context, gender is often framed as the need to protect women and as a 'soft issue'. Consequently, it is often combined with other such issues, most notably human rights. It is important to create more political awareness of women as being able to fulfill all requirements and tasks in a military mission; that is, to be seen as agents and not just as victims.

More attention should also be paid to the practical benefits of diversity. Policymakers and mission leadership should address gender equality as a matter of operational effectiveness and cost effectiveness, as well as a reflection of EU and NATO societies' diversity.

From a political and policy perspective, gender training at leadership levels should be enhanced. A cultural shift that encourages diversity and inclusion is needed across all levels of EU and NATO militaries. In this regard, it is also important to make those in lower and mid-level positions of missions aware of the benefits of diversity. By creating more awareness about the practical implications of equality, the issue of gender would rise on the political agenda.

## Political pressure and accountability

As awareness about gender issues is being raised among the policy community, NATO, EU, and national officials need to act. Political pressure is the first spearhead to improve the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and other existing policy documents. Member and partner states need to be pressured by civil society and leaders within the respective institutions (NATO and European Union) to take more action, especially regarding their military recruitment practices. As has become evident from the previous section, the member states are the ones that nominate their nationals to open positions in military missions. In order to create more diversity, EU and NATO member states need to be incentivized to nominate more women to senior and other positions in their militaries.

The leadership of the EU and NATO should be held accountable if promised gender targets are not achieved or if implementation of gender measures is inefficient. In such cases there should be stronger accountability mechanisms. Enhanced monitoring is a first step towards holding the EU and NATO accountable. This could be done by gender audits and assessment groups. Engagement with civil society organization can provide additional feedback on implementation.

## A stronger follow-through in implementation

All gender focal points should receive mandatory training prior to their installation. Political actors need to be bound by mandatory political commitments regarding the above issues and best practices should be evenly implemented across military missions. In order to achieve concrete and positive effects, measures should not be merely recommended, but required.

In order to create effective policies and consequent implementation, it is also highly important to conduct more research on this topic. More data-based insights are needed on the positions women occupy in EU and NATO military missions, not only regarding their seniority but also the measurable impact of increasing women's representation.<sup>36</sup> In this way greater clarity will be created on the extent to which women are involved in 'soft issues' and 'hard issues', or in stereotypical 'feminine' functions such as secretary and interpreter. Additional data would allow better follow through on implementing measures already in place and goals already adopted, i.e. share positive stories of impact and change. It is important that this research be conducted systematically across missions to get the full picture.

## Conclusion

The difficult security environment the EU and NATO face, with its new challenges, requires a more holistic security paradigm that enables the inclusion

<sup>36</sup> This impact has become evident in other sectors; for instance, in the medicine and business. See Anna L. Parks and Rita F. Redberg, "Women in Medicine and Patient Outcomes: Equal Rights for Better Work?" *JAMA Intern Med.* 2017;177(2); David Rock and Heidi Grant, "Why Diverse Teams Are Smarter," *Harvard Business Review*, November 2016.

of women. The EU and NATO also face similar challenges when it comes to the implementation of gender policy, most notably UNSCR 1325. This study of women in their military missions highlights challenges that include a lack of mandatory training for gender focal points, double-hatted positions, and non-mandatory assessment reports. It also stresses the low prioritization of gender issues, a gap in research to include on the ground operational data and feedback, and a lack of binding political measures. In order to tackle these challenges and problems, measures need to be taken with regard to political attention, political pressure and accountability, and a stronger follow-through in implementation. The EU, NATO, and their member states — and partners in the case of NATO — need to take action as an increased role for women in military missions is not only a matter of fairness and equality, but, most importantly, one of practical and concrete benefits in terms of increased credibility and higher effectiveness of military missions.

The views expressed in GMF publications and commentary are the views of the author alone.

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