

## FACT SHEET

### GENDER PERSPECTIVES ON DISARMAMENT AND ARMS CONTROL

#### Why is gender important to disarmament?

Men and women are differently affected by, and involved in, issues related to weapons, including weapons of mass destruction, small arms and light weapons (SALW), landmines and cluster munitions. Therefore, mainstreaming a gender perspective into disarmament policies is crucial.

**SCR 1325 (2000)** endorses the role of women in international peace and security, especially in decision-making and peace processes.

**SCR 1820 (2008)** recognizes that widespread and systematic sexual violence is a threat to international security.

**GA Resolution 69/61 (2014)** recognizes the “valuable contribution of women to practical disarmament measures ...and in promoting disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.”

**SCR 2220 (2015)** stresses the importance of women’s full and effective participation in all efforts related to countering the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, in line with resolution 1325 (2000).

**SCR 2242 (2015)** encourages the empowerment of women to participate in the design and implementation of efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons.

There is wide recognition that the equal, full and effective participation of both men and women is vital to international peace and security. Since the adoption of Security Council resolution (SCR) 1325 (2000) and the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda, the world has witnessed an outpouring of efforts to engage women as “agents of change” in all disarmament and arms control processes. This positive trend has been advanced by involving women directly affected by armed violence as well as initiating women-led policy initiatives.

In 2015, an independent Global Study of SCR 1325 found that, despite a number of successes, many obstacles and challenges still persist in the full implementation of the WPS agenda.

#### Where is this perspective being addressed?

**United Nations General Assembly:** General Assembly resolution 65/69 (2010) recognized the contributions of women to disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control and encouraged women’s participation in all decision-making processes. The 67<sup>th</sup> session of the Assembly adopted an updated version of the resolution (67/48) requesting that the Secretary-General seek the

views of Member States on promoting the role of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. The sixty-eighth (68/33) and sixty-ninth sessions also adopted this resolution. The resolution adopted at the 69<sup>th</sup> session of the Assembly with 183 States in favour (69/61).

**Arms Trade Treaty (ATT):** The ATT includes a legally-binding provision related to gender-based violence (GBV). The risk of GBV thus forms an essential criterion in the export assessment that must precede the authorization of any export by States Parties of conventional weapons, ammunition and munitions, and parts and components within the scope of the ATT.

Member States and civil society have undertaken various capacity-building efforts to support the operationalization of article 7(4) of the ATT, which requires States parties in their export assessments to take into account the risk of arms being used to commit gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children.

**Small arms and light weapons:** In the UN Programme of Action (PoA) on SALW preamble, States express grave concern over the devastating consequences of the illicit trade in small arms for, *inter alia*, women. The participation and representation of women in small arms control processes were emphasized in the outcome document of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to consider the implementation of the PoA (A/CONF.192/BMS/2014/2).

Similarly, SCR 2117 (2014) urges Member States, UN entities, and intergovernmental, regional and sub-regional organizations to take further measures to facilitate women's full and meaningful participation in all policymaking, planning and implementation processes to combat and eradicate the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of SALW. In May 2015, the Security Council took a further step in developing a gendered understanding of small arms control through adoption of its second thematic resolution dedicated to SALW. SCR 2220 (2015) encourages Member States to strengthen the collection of sex disaggregated data to better understand the impact of illicit SALW on women. The resolution calls upon Member States, United Nations entities, intergovernmental and regional organizations to take into consideration the specific impact of conflict and post-conflict environments on women's security as well as to mitigate the risk of women becoming active players in the illicit transfer of SALW.

**Women's engagement in small arms control** is increasingly being addressed by both Member States and civil society. The UN continues to highlight the importance of integrating gender-balanced perspectives into policies to combat the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons.

**Conference on Disarmament:** The Conference on Disarmament held an informal meeting – the first of its kind – on gender and disarmament in August 2015. The discussion was set within the context of implementation of SCR 1325 (2000), including the high-level review of its implementation. The informal meeting addressed gender as an issue that cuts across all items on the Conference's agenda, including those related to weapons of mass destruction. The discussion was widely welcomed by delegations and interest was expressed in integrating this cross-cutting issue in the work of the Conference on a more regular basis in future. A second informal meeting on this subject was held in May 2016.



UNODA and the NGO Global Action to Prevent War launched a joint publication "**Applying a Disarmament Lens to Gender, Human Rights, Development, Security, Education and Communication: Six Essays**" in April 2013.

### **The role for the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)**

UNODA, through implementation of its gender mainstreaming action plan (updated in 2016), continues to further disarmament objectives through gender-sensitive programmes, activities and policies. UNODA's goals include:

- Exploring the linkages between the promotion of greater gender equity and disarmament
- Strengthening our capacity incorporate gender perspectives into our work
- Undertaking advocacy on including gender perspectives in disarmament discussions
- Supporting equitable participation in disarmament discussions

**For more information:** [www.un.org/disarmament/gender/](http://www.un.org/disarmament/gender/)