

Patrick A. Albright



Army Chief of Staff Mark A. Milley shakes hands with Capt. Kristen M. Griest, one of the latest Soldiers to earn the Ranger tab (Aug. 21, 2015).

# Integrating Gender Perspectives Within the Department of Defense

BY ANNE A. WITKOWSKY

Last year marked the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, and the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325. The Fourth World Conference on Women marked a critical shift in the conversation on gender equality and resulted in the unanimous adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a comprehensive agenda aimed at achieving the goals of equality, development, and peace for women throughout the world.<sup>1</sup> UNSCR 1325, adopted in 2000, recognized the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women and underscored the importance of women's equal and full participation in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peacebuilding, and peacekeeping.<sup>2</sup> Taken together, the Beijing Conference and the adoption of UNSCR 1325 are the seminal events that led to international consensus on the elevation of women, peace, and security (WPS) principles as priority issues for all states and firmly established the link between equality and rights for women, on the one hand, and the well-being of society overall, on the other.

When included as meaningful participants in the negotiation of peace agreements, women enlarge the scope of those agreements to include the broader set of critical societal priorities and needs required for lasting peace.<sup>3</sup> For example, women played a key role in the negotiations that led to the 1996 Guatemalan Peace Accords and ultimately helped shape a deal with a significant human rights orientation, including gender sensitive provisions.<sup>4</sup> According to NATO's Civil-Military Cooperation Centre of Excellence, greater awareness of gender issues results in an enhancement of overall situational awareness and better advice to senior decisionmakers, who can then make better-founded, judicious, and balanced decisions.<sup>5</sup>

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Recognizing that women's inclusion in conflict prevention, management, and resolution—as well as post-conflict relief and recovery—advances peace and security, in December 2011, U.S. President Barack Obama issued Executive Order 13595 directing the release and implementation of the U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (NAP). The NAP, developed by U.S. Government stakeholders in consultation with civil society and congressional staff, aims “to advance women's inclusion in peace negotiations, peacebuilding activities, and conflict prevention; to protect women from sexual and gender-based violence; and to ensure equal access to relief and recovery assistance, in areas of conflict and insecurity.”<sup>6</sup>

The Department of Defense (DOD) is committed to meeting the objectives of the NAP and has made significant gains through more than three years of implementation by integration and institutionalization of WPS principles into the Department and key DOD policy guidance. DOD strives to support programs that will increase women's participation in peace processes and decisionmaking, particularly through partner engagements and trainings, and is taking steps to advance activities that address the impact of violence and conflict on women. As a relatively new policy initiative, the effort to institutionalize and integrate these principles has required extensive cooperation throughout the Department of Defense, and commitment at a range of leadership levels in Washington and in the field. It will take time before the effort is fully integrated into the guidance documents and training cycles of the Department's activities. Much, however, has already been accomplished.

## Integration and Institutionalization

The Department of Defense implements U.S. leadership's objectives through policy frameworks, strategic guidance, and planning documents. Infusing WPS principles into key documents is critical to establishing WPS policy, assigning responsibilities, delegating authorities, and identifying key objectives. In 2012, then-Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta issued a memorandum directing DOD implementation of the NAP, noting that the NAP's goal is critical to our national security. The Department also developed an implementation guide for the NAP that serves as a tool for applying the NAP objectives into the strategic, operational, and tactical environments. As a result of the issuance of the Secretary's memo and the implementation guide, the Department has taken a number of steps to integrate and institute WPS principles.

In an effort to address WPS in our education system, WPS was incorporated within the Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) system as a Special Area of Emphasis (SAE). JPME provides rigorous and thorough instruction to military officers “in an environment designed to promote a theoretical and practical in-depth understanding” of issues important to the services.<sup>7</sup> SAEs constitute subject matter that senior leaders in the Department believe should be covered in the professional military education (PME) colleges and help ensure the relevance of the colleges' curricula. As such, the inclusion of WPS as an SAE underscores the importance of WPS principles and enables them to gain traction and increase understanding among the joint force.

Other steps have been taken by DOD's Geographic Combatant Commands, the entities responsible for command and control over

the joint military forces within a specific geographic area. WPS principles have been incorporated into some of the Geographic Combatant Commands' Theater Campaign Plans, which are plans that prioritize, organize, and integrate the Command's steady-state activities in a comprehensive manner.<sup>8</sup> For example, WPS objectives found in U.S. Southern Command's Theater Campaign Plan include key tasks specifically addressing women's integration into partner nation militaries and ministries of defense. The inclusion of WPS in such plans is important to meeting DOD's NAP implementation objectives because it integrates WPS into the Command's day-to-day activities.

DOD's regional centers<sup>9</sup> have also incorporated WPS into their guiding documents and have thus played a major role in making WPS a more integral part of DOD exchange

programming with partner militaries. The regional centers are institutions where military and civilian participants from nations across the globe engage in research, communication, and the exchange of ideas regarding security issues relating to a specific geographic region. The Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, for example, released a strategy document in support of the NAP with objectives that include ensuring WPS elements are incorporated into the curriculum, promoting and maintaining a WPS community of interest, and achieving a goal of 25 percent female participation in all resident courses.<sup>10</sup>

In order to promote a better understanding and integration of gender issues, many parts of DOD are also incorporating WPS into their regular training pathways. A number of DOD Components have developed specialized training on WPS to familiarize new personnel



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The Brazilian Army was the first army in South America to accept women into its ranks.



with the topic. U.S. Africa Command, for example, has added a WPS briefing to the Command's Newcomers' Orientation Course. The briefing aims to provide staff with an awareness of why WPS topics are important through an overview of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and the NAP, as well as how WPS issues are addressed in U.S. Africa Command plans, exercises, operations, and engagements. U.S. Northern Command developed a module on human rights and WPS for inclusion in the "USNORTHCOM 101" class that is provided to all new personnel. The module introduces WPS concepts to the command and increases personnel familiarity with basic WPS concepts. Similarly, U.S. Pacific Command introduced a WPS information brief to its Initial Staff Training and Orientation Program provided to all new personnel. Additionally, there has been an effort to increase senior-leader awareness of WPS and its value to operations. U.S. Pacific Air Forces, for example, introduced a WPS brief in its Squadron Commander's Course that is provided to all newly assigned Commanders in the Pacific. Ultimately, our intent is to improve overall mission effectiveness by providing DOD's workforce with the functional knowledge needed to integrate these areas into the Department's work.

Personnel training focused on combating trafficking in persons (CTIP) aims to enhance staff capacity to address gender considerations, specifically the protection of women and girls in conflict and crisis-affected environments. Forty-nine percent of the victims of trafficking are women and 21 percent are girls who also face physical health issues, including those related to reproductive health.<sup>11</sup> The Department's CTIP program office ensures that the DOD has the necessary tools to prevent

trafficking. CTIP general awareness training is mandatory for all military and civilian personnel. Additionally, combatant commands augment this training to provide instruction on trafficking issues specific to their area of responsibility, which is crucial as trafficking victims have been identified in more than 120 countries.<sup>12</sup> For example, U.S. Southern Command has released a CTIP module that covers specific CTIP issues relevant to the region, including forced labor and sex trafficking.

Of course, the efforts to integrate and institutionalize WPS and NAP objectives are insufficient without appropriate evaluation. DOD has sought to evaluate and learn from its work and has taken steps to improve data collection in order to track and report progress on WPS objectives, assess lessons learned, and identify best practices from existing programs. To that end, the Department has instituted a WPS Synchronization Group to coordinate WPS efforts within the Department, which is a valuable tool to further the sharing of lessons learned and best practices and advance the quality of future programs among the Combatant Commands, Military Departments, regional centers, and Senior Service Schools.

### **Participation in Peace Processes and Decisionmaking**

The Department of Defense has a global presence, with personnel located around the world. This presence provides us with an unparalleled opportunity to convey WPS principles and the positive impact of women's participation in peace processes and decisionmaking to other countries and their militaries. The Department is committed to expanding the recruitment and retention of women in partner nations' security sectors and incorporating

women’s perspectives into partner nations’ peace and security policies. Through our peacekeeping training, seminars at our regional centers and the Combatant Commands, and our National Guard State Partnership Program, we work to integrate gender perspectives into partnership activities.

Core WPS issues are included in the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI), a U.S. Government security assistance program funded through the Department of State that is intended to enhance international capacity to effectively conduct UN and regional peace operations by training partner countries. Women constitute approximately four percent of the military and police personnel deployed to UN peacekeeping missions and one of GPOI’s objectives is to promote the role of women and enhance gender integration in

peace operations.<sup>13</sup> As part of GPOI training conducted by the U.S. military, all peacekeepers receive instruction on the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, gender issues, and human rights. As of June 2015, GPOI has trained approximately 5,300 female peacekeepers and trained both male and female peacekeepers to more effectively prevent and respond to gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse. In 2013, U.S. Southern Command, in partnership with the Naval Postgraduate School, created a specific GPOI-funded WPS program with the Chilean Peace Operations Training Center. The three-phase program aims to advance GPOI goals of increasing protection and integration of women in peacekeeping and peace building operations. Through Chile’s determined efforts and the support of such programs, Chile has



UN Photo/Martine Perret

Mongolian peacekeepers stand at attention as they receive their medals for their service in the Republic of South Sudan.

become a regional leader on gender integration in UN peacekeeping operations and is beginning to share its expertise with partner nations.

Another area where the Department has worked to advance the promotion of WPS principles with partner nations is through the National Guard State Partnership Program, which links a state's National Guard with the armed forces of a partner nation in a cooperative, mutually beneficial relationship. Examples include the Colorado National Guard's engagements with women from the Jordanian Armed Forces that focus on leadership development, empowerment, work/family balance, and sexual harassment; the Vermont National Guard's engagements with the Senegalese Armed Forces (SAF) aimed at the successful integration of women into the SAF; and the South Dakota National Guard's work with the Suriname Armed Forces on issues pertaining to women in the military.

Finally, training through the Combatant Commands provides an important avenue for furthering WPS aims and objectives. For example, U.S. Africa Command, along with U.S. Army Africa and the Namibian Defense Force, hosted a first of its kind week-long "Regional Gender Mainstreaming Seminar" in Namibia in 2014. The seminar brought together participants from seven African countries to discuss frameworks to promote, support, and encourage the integration of women into defense forces; best practices, challenges, and successes in integration; and the development of sexual and gender-based violence prevention and response initiatives.

## Addressing the Impact of Violence and Conflict on Women

### Protection from Violence

Women and girls are disproportionately affected by conflict, and sexual and gender-based violence is often used as a deliberate tactic to generate terror, societal destruction, and ethnic cleansing. As emphasized in the NAP, the United States is prioritizing efforts to prevent and respond to such crimes and DOD is committed to fulfilling the NAP's objective to advance the protection of women and girls from violence.

The Department has expanded its work to prevent and protect women and children from sexual and gender-based violence in crises and conflict-affected environments through its training, education, and awareness efforts aimed at increasing the capacity of partner nation militaries and security personnel to address these crimes. Among those efforts:

- U.S. Africa Command hosted a "Women, Peace, and Security Conference" at the U.S. Army War College in September 2014 with representatives from Africa GPOI partner nations and other select stakeholders to develop scenario-based training on preventing and responding to sexual violence in the context of peacekeeping missions. Recognizing the unique capability of scenario-based training as a means to prepare peacekeepers to address appropriately situations on the ground, the training is intended to be used when preparing units for a mission or while deployed in an operation.
- U.S. Marine Corps Forces Africa, in coordination with U.S. Africa Command and the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center, conducts a biannual

Peacekeeping Logistics Course in Ghana. The course includes a module on “Gender in Peace Support Operations,” which addresses the specific vulnerabilities faced by women and children during conflict, including gendercide, rape, forced impregnation, genital mutilation, forced prostitution, and human trafficking. The goal of the module is to provide participants with information on gender concepts to enhance their capacity for gender integrated planning and implementation in peace support operations.

- WPS was integrated throughout the field training event of the U.S. Pacific Command-GPOI Capstone Training Exercise Garuda Canti Dharma, an Indonesia hosted and U.S. sponsored multinational exercise that took place in August 2014. The field training event included scenarios addressing women and children hostages, and protection of civilians. A subject matter expert also provided a day of classroom instruction on topics including sexual and gender-based violence, human rights, and equality. The exercise trained Indonesian National Defense Forces and GPOI partner nation defense personnel for deployment to UN peacekeeping missions.

- The Defense Institute for Medical Operations developed a leadership course to counter gender-based violence. The course is designed to empower healthcare policymakers and their implementing authorities to establish effective, evidence-based programs to combat gender-based violence. The five-day class, provided by a Mobile Education Team, uses case-based examples of successful intervention in gender-based violence in several contexts to show how successes can lead to clear-cut societal improvements in

women’s health, rule of law, and the stability, security, and progress of a society.

The Department of Defense has also advanced effective accountability mechanisms designed to address violence against women and girls. The Defense Institute of International Legal Studies (DIILS), whose motto is “*Justitia per orbem terrarum*” or “justice for all the earth,” develops and provides professional legal education and international engagement focused on human rights, international humanitarian law, and the law of armed conflict. Through mobile-education seminars on international human rights law and international humanitarian law, DIILS provides instruction on combating impunity for gender-based violence in the military. The seminars, conducted in-country, have included engagements with more than half a dozen countries within Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. DIILS also has a long-standing military justice engagement program in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), which provides instruction to the Armed Forces of the DRC and magistrates on sexual and gender-based violence, including the responsibility of each soldier to report and assist authorities in apprehending and prosecuting those responsible for violations.

### Conflict Prevention

One of the core principles of UNSCR 1325 is the recognition that women are disproportionately affected by conflict. The NAP also notes that rising discrimination and violence against women are often “early indicators of impending conflict” and conflict prevention efforts must be “informed by the differences in the experiences of men and women, girls and boys.”<sup>15</sup> The Department has taken steps to



prevent or reduce the impact of conflict on women and girls. For example, the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management facilitates an annual Health Emergencies in Large Populations (H.E.L.P.) course to provide first responders with an understanding of the major public health issues, including sexual and gender-based violence, to be addressed among populations affected by natural disasters, complex emergencies, and internal displacement. Recognizing that investing in health can reduce the risk of conflict and mitigate its impact, the course prepares participants to respond more effectively to disasters and humanitarian crises as part of an international response by incorporating innovative approaches in the planning and delivery of public health interventions and providing students from diverse backgrounds the opportunity to build relationships prior to a devastating event.

### Access to Relief and Recovery

The Department also seeks to address the distinct needs of women and children in reintegration and recovery programs. It does so through the delivery of relief and recovery services, regional center courses, and Combatant Command programs.

While generally acting in support of other agencies in disaster relief efforts, DOD is committed to addressing the needs of women and children in humanitarian assistance programs and disaster response planning and operations. The Department works with other U.S. government agencies, as well as civil society partners, to deliver relief and recovery services to women and children in communities affected by humanitarian disasters. For example, U.S. Africa Command's Humanitarian Assistance Program has funded construction

and rehabilitation of hospitals and clinics in the Democratic Republic of the Congo focused on treatment of survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. U.S. Central Command established vocational training programs throughout Afghanistan to teach women trades, thereby providing them with skills they can use to earn income and lift themselves out of poverty. Additionally, through hospital ships such as the USNS *Comfort* and USNS *Mercy*, DOD engages local populations on gender health and protection issues during port visits in both peacetime and humanitarian response operations. The hospital ships' activities promote the sharing of healthcare knowledge and best practices and enhance the Department's ability to work collectively in support of relief efforts.

The Department's regional centers have been active in this area as well. For example, the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies incorporates disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration into combating terrorism elements of its in-residence and overseas workshop programs, and includes a special emphasis on the reintegration of women and child soldiers as well as the radicalization of women and youth. Additionally, the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies' Seminar on Transnational Civil Security provides civil security professionals from Europe, Eurasia, and North America with the skills to prevent and prepare for domestic and regional crises and disasters as well as manage their consequences. The seminar curriculum broadly addresses the needs of women and children in disaster preparedness and consequence management.

## The Way Forward

In the years since the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, the passage of UNSCR 1325, and the issuance of the NAP, the Department of Defense has taken important steps to institutionalize and integrate WPS principles into its guiding documents and activities, incorporate these principles into its partner engagements and trainings, support programs that will increase women's participation in peace processes and decisionmaking, and advance activities that address the impact of violence and conflict on women.

Nevertheless, the anniversaries provide an important opportunity to reflect on what more we can and should do. We must continue to incorporate WPS into our existing lines of effort and activities. We must continue to develop best practices, case studies, and lessons learned, so that we may focus our efforts on activities that have impact. We must be able to demonstrate—through research, monitoring, and evaluation—the ways in which NAP implementation directly contributes to a measurable increase in security and the success of military operations.

In our efforts to accomplish sustainable implementation of this initiative through integration of WPS principles into the Defense Department's daily business, it is also important to expand and promote a community of interest and support. This issue of *PRISM* serves as a valuable means of engaging a broader audience of security experts on WPS and underscores the growing attention to and promotion of WPS principles across security sector activities. We hope that this issue will serve to further the discussion on women, peace, and security, and in turn generate more action towards making it a fundamental

element of peace and stability operations.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> UN Chief Executives Board Secretariat, "Fourth World Conference on Women (1995)," <<http://www.unsceb.org/content/fourth-world-conference-women-1995-0>>.

<sup>2</sup> UN Peacekeeping, "Women, peace and security," <<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/issues/women/wps.shtml>>, accessed 26 April 2015.

<sup>3</sup> The White House, "United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security," (December 3, 2011): 3.

<sup>4</sup> German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, "Promoting Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations and Peace Processes," (March 2014): 36 and 40.

<sup>5</sup> Sahana Dharmapurt, "Just add Women and Stir?" *Parameters* 41 (2011): 60.

<sup>6</sup> United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, 1.

<sup>7</sup> 10 U.S.C. Section 2151(a): "Joint Professional Military Education."

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, "Theater Campaign Planning: Planner's Handbook," (February 2012): 1.

<sup>9</sup> The Department of Defense has five Regional Centers; George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies (GCMC) - Garmisch, Germany, The Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS) - Honolulu, Hawaii, the William J. Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies (WJPC) - Washington, D.C., the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS)

- Washington, D.C., and the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies (NESA) - Washington, D.C..

<sup>10</sup> Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, "Women, Peace, and Security Strategy," April 23, 2015.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Global Report on Trafficking in Persons," (2014): 5

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> United Nations Peacekeeping, "Gender Statistics by Mission for the Month of August 2015," September 10, 2015. <<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/gender/2015gender/aug15.pdf>>.

<sup>14</sup> United States National Action Plan, 6.

<sup>15</sup> United States National Action Plan, 8

## Photos

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Page 34. Photo by Patrick A. Albright. 151229-A-YG824-001.JPG. Army Chief of Staff Mark A. Milley shakes hands with Capt. Kristen M. Griest, one of the latest Soldiers to earn the Ranger tab (Aug. 21, 2015). From <<http://www.nationalguard.mil/News/ArticleView/tabid/5563/Article/639417/2015-marks-enormous-advances-for-military-women.aspx>>. Reproduced unaltered

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